

RBC Heritage

Tuesday, April 12, 2022

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, USA

Harbour Town Golf Links

Morgan Hoffmann

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Morgan Hoffmann to the interview room here at the RBC Heritage. Morgan, first of all it's great to see you back, we missed you out on TOUR. Morgan announced in December of 2017 that he had been diagnosed with muscular dystrophy and last competed on the PGA TOUR at the 2019 Shriners Children's Open.

So, Morgan, like I said, it's great to see you back, many of us have read recently about what the last few years have been like for you. Could you just give us a brief update from your position on what you've been up to and how you're feeling.

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah. Well, first of all, it's amazing to be back. I've been telling everybody I feel like a little 12-year-old kid again playing an AJGA out here. I don't know if many of people know that I actually went to high school on Daufuskie Island at IJGA with the Gary GilChrist Academy, so we would come over here to Harbour Town to play here on the weekends.

And just playing this course is very euphoric for me. So I really wanted to make it back to this event.

But it was difficult because I broke my shoulder and two ribs in December on a motorcycle accident, so it's been a really tough rehab, but the swing speed is getting back slowly and playing with some good friends today. So it was a lot of fun to be back out here and this is a little different than Costa Rica, for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Morgan entered the 2018-2019 PGA TOUR season on a major medical extension which gave him 18 starts and he has three remaining. So was that history of this course, was that the main reason that you, did you have this week targeted as the first place you wanted to make one of those three remaining starts or what was it that led to you making your return here?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah, just it's one of my favorite courses in the world and you got to be very creative around it and I think my game is the creative type. I love hitting



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different shots and it's inevitable you're going to be in the trees at some point this week and having to move it around. And even in the fairway, trying to move it into greens.

So it's a really cool golf course, it's not like many of the courses on TOUR anymore that are crazy long and I think they're trying to do that on a couple tees, make it a little bit longer, but, yeah, this was something I really wanted to get back to, because it was a favorite of mine and I have good memories here.

So, yeah, out of the three starts, this is my favorite, for sure.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take some questions.

Q. Where did the motorcycle accident happen and was it just four months ago or 16 months ago?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah, in December, four months ago.

Q. Was it in Costa Rica?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah, it was on my driveway, actually. I was, it's really steep and rocky and there was some recent like dry leaves on the ground and I was going way too fast and just ate it. So it wasn't that great.

Q. How is your health right now?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Good. Good. Back in the gym every day and getting stronger. It feels really solid. My pecs are coming back from the atrophy, which is huge and very, very exciting. I'm being subdued to the excitement of seeing muscle firing again right now. So, yeah, every day is a success.

Q. Since you decided to come back, how much golf have you played since that time and where have you played?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Well it wasn't really an official decision until last week to decide to play here. But I've been trying to shoot to play -- I tried to play at Honda, that



was my real goal, but the motorcycle accident, ironically it happened on the day that I was heading to the gym to start my comeback in December because my muscles were feeling good, but kind of pushed things back a couple months.

Now, just, yeah, here and been at Ohoopie Match Club for the last -- Ohoopie Match Club, that's in Georgia, for the last 10 days or so practicing.

Q. Did you wonder if you were ever going to get back to this? Did you kind of think maybe I played my last golf tournament or was that never in your mind?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: That's a good question. I knew that golf has always been something that I love and I wanted it to be fun again. And I've always put a lot of pressure on myself and I think that's why on TOUR previous to this was the reason why I didn't reach my potential, at least in my mind. So I just wanted the main goal when I came back to be fun. Whether that's professional or amateur, but, yeah, I still had some dreams that I wanted to accomplish out here.

Q. My colleague Dan from Golf Digest came down and he wrote your story, which I think brought a lot of people that didn't know up to date on what your life was like. Curious to know what you thought of that story and what the aftermath has been like in terms of I'm assuming more attention and all that.

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah, definitely. A lot of attention, amazing positive feedback, everybody who read the story was, there wasn't really one negative thing. I think a lot of my close friends knew that there was some things blown out of proportion just to make it more interesting, more entertaining for the public to read and that was his job and he did great job and it was a nice perspective to have someone from this, from the United States to come down and be kind of flabbergasted by what we've taken on to as our lives.

Q. Follow-up to that, a lot of times in that story you mentioned that part of coming back, but not to play golf for yourself, but to bring the message of all the medical stuff you discovered and everything in your life that brought it public. Is that still true today and is that part of why you're here?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Is what true today? The medical?

Q. That you want to bring the message of what you feel that you've discovered medically to a broader audience.

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah, yeah, definitely, that's what we've really been, with our foundation, has been our goal for the last four years, to build this health and wellness center down in Costa Rica. Originally it was going to be in Florida, but since we kind of just fell in love with the area, the people, the terrain and the way that fruit grow down there, it's really special.

And now that I'm having some success with my health I can show people who are interested and who have questions on what I've done to heal something that has been deemed incurable, how to do it naturally and that's just my path and I think there's many paths to health and it's really exciting to give that advice to someone and not just say, oh, there's just this one way, because I found there's so many.

Q. Curious, who did you play with today and do your closest friends, did you keep in touch with them the last two years or did they just kind of know you were on this journey or whatever you were, like did you keep in touch with them?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah, good question. I had, today I played with Camilo and Luke Donald, they have been really good friends for the last 10 years or so. And then my friends I've kept in touch with, yeah, most of my friends, my closest friends are not golfers and we've definitely kept in touch. I've had some people come down and visit me and it's been really cool to have them come check out what we're doing.

But then on TOUR I think most of the guys that I grew up with, like Peter Uihlein and Rickie Fowler, Talor Gooch, Kevin Tway, my team at Oklahoma State, they're always amazing friends and kind of knew that I was off on my own journey. But when I came back, it's like family, great big hugs and it's very, been awesome, welcoming.

Q. Curious, does your prep like for a tournament look any different to when it did pre-break, based on your health?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: You know, mentally it's different, yeah. It was a lot more stressful, I think, preparing for a golf event. I feel like I needed to have needs and do things specifically and put a lot of pressure on myself and that's kind of what was my detriment out there.

Now it's been fun. Like I've had an amazing time and hit some great shots, hit some really terrible shots, and like I just have, obviously I want to play well and results would be special, but I think this week and whatever happens is already a success.

Q. When people read the story and have known a little bit about your story, I think there's a lot of people, I can't believe he did this, I can't believe he did that, I can't believe he's done this, I can't believe he went all over the world. When you look back on it or do you look back on and are you amazed at what has happened the last two years, what you've put yourself through and your journey around the world?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: You know, being this close to it, it's tough to kind of step out sometimes and really see what's happened, where I've been, what I've been through. But at this moment I'm trying to take a minute and look out from the outside defender's perspective and, yeah, it's, on paper it's definitely interesting, it's a crazy story, for sure.

I think that any athlete in this position or anybody with a drive for health would do something similar as well and I don't think I'm special in any way, I think I have been put in this motion for a reason and I just want to help people believe in themselves and get through really anything that they're going through. Because everyone in this room here has something that they're going through that most people probably don't know about. I made a decision to make it public and just because I had a platform that was capable of making a big difference and I hope that that happens.

Q. You've obviously had your mind completely transformed about science and health over the last couple years. Wondering if your religious faith has undergone any kind of similar transformation or adaptation or anything like that as all this other stuff kind of comes to the forefront.

MORGAN HOFFMANN: That's a good question. Religious faith? I was brought up Catholic, my mom was Catholic, and I didn't really connect with it. So I went a long time not really believing or focusing on anything in that matter. But since I started on this journey of soul searching, let's say, my spirituality has definitely changed and been opened up to so many different things and different aspects of life, whether that's physical or on different planes dimensionally. It's something that's hard to talk about here because not a lot of people understand and it can be deemed as crazy, but I think that's kind of what most people see me as anyway (laughing), but, yeah, some of the plant medicine has been truly amazing, mind blowing. And a lot of people call some of the things that I've embarked on as hallucinogenic, but the way I see them is so much different. I think it's like a, kind of a back door or a side door to really like different dimensions or different planes, I don't really have it down yet, I'm still questioning and trying to figure it all out.

Q. Quick follow up. A lot of people when they do psychedelics talk about seeing connections between people, between things that weren't perceived before. Has that been your experience? I've never done them, so, I would like to hear about it though.

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Definitely, definitely. It's really special because the experience is so real that I think it's not just a vision, it really is taking your, it's not your mind it's not your body it's kind of I would say your soul, your spiritual side, somewhere else and showing you different things.

And your intention going into it is really important. Everybody has a different intention, whether it's to heal something or to get over some trauma and for me I've been shown how to heal so many times just by closing my eyes and like having, whether a voice in my head or, like a visual for me specifically is like an envisioning like a white light all through my body which I've read thousands of times that that's very common in these type of practices to see that type of white light be very healing.

Q. Has your physical condition improved? You talk about muscles firing and all that, do you feel differently than you felt say two years ago like you're gaining on this?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Yeah, definitely. My muscles, ever since I went to Nepal about probably four years ago they have been slowly getting better. There hasn't been anymore atrophy, which has been amazing. And now, my right pec was the worst, it just, it kind of got down to my ribs, where all you could see is bone, and now like when I put my hand here and I flex, I can feel it again, which is pretty cool. And, yeah, it's been improving slowly and now I'm in kind of the testing process of pushing it back in the gym again to see how hard I can go.

Q. What do you expect from yourself this week?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Some smiles. Some golf on a beautiful course. That's really about it. I've been practicing hard and my game actually feels pretty solid. I have a great caddie on the bag this week and my clubs are dialed in, so I feel good. I don't really know. Obviously you come to tournaments to win and I've never done that before, so might as well shoot for the stars, right?

Q. What's your caddie's name?

MORGAN HOFFMANN: His name is Sante, he's from Columbia. I think he grew up with Camilo and Manny Villegas in Columbia.

THE MODERATOR: All right. It's great to see you back out here and we hope you have a great week.

MORGAN HOFFMANN: Thank you. Appreciate it.

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