

Biltmore Championship

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Asheville, North Carolina, USA

The Cliffs at Walnut Cove

Jacob Bridgeman

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, Jacob Bridgeman joins us here at the Biltmore Championship Asheville. Jacob, about an hour from Inman, and area that you know pretty well. Just get some comments on being here at our new event.

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, super excited to be here. I was pumped when I saw it come to the schedule. I'm a member at this community and it's a little bit far from the rest of them, but I have come up here a few times and played.

Like I said, just being close to home is always nice. I'm driving back and forth during the practice rounds, so it's very comfortable.

Q. What can we expect here at Cliffs At Walnut Cove this week?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, I think what they're known for is the best hospitality, that southern feel. They're going to take care of everybody. I think all the courses that they have, they have seven, they're going to be in great shape. Really pretty views, a bunch of very nice home, and just the people around should have a pretty good support system in the community.

Q. Six top 10 finishes this year including the win at the Genesis. Just comment about the season you've had up to this point.

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah it's been great. I started amazing to start the year. Historically I've not been that good on the west coast, and that was kind of my point of emphasis in the offseason, was to get a faster start and did that. And then played consistently throughout the year and had a nice finish at the end of the playoff.

So, yeah, very successful year. Got a couple more events that I got my eyes on to play well at, specifically the Presidents Cup.

So, yeah, just hopefully the last three tournaments I play of the year can be as strong as the first 22 or so.



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Q. How often did you come up here, whether it's growing up or your college years when you about 90 minutes away?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, so a teammate of mine, his dad is a pro at a course up in Asheville, and we came and played a couple times and just always enjoyed the area. It's not that far, but it's far enough to where it wasn't super frequent.

But yeah, it's just a -- feels like it's ten degrees agrees cooler up here than my hometown, so it's always nice in the summer. And then bunch of good golf up here, especially this course.

Q. Obviously focused on this week, but next week, Presidents Cup, big week for you. Talk a little bit about what you're trying to do this week to prepare for next week.

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, I think just trying to get that competitive feel back. I shouldn't be out of the competitiveness but just a couple weeks off after East Lake, you know really try hard during the playoffs, really hot week so it's kind of exhausting, and that week after I just wanted to rest a little bit.

So I think just get the competitive spirit back and try and get everything feeling like I want it to, like it was in the playoffs. I think it should be easy to get back before next week.

Q. When you heard this tournament might happen, you know, why was it important to you to want to be part of it?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, it feels to me sort of like a hometown event. It's only an hour and 20 minutes from my house and even closer to where I grew up. Felt kind of like a hometown. I have a lot of people coming up to support, and I left like I owed it to them, people around wanted to watch me being so close.

I'm also a member of this community. There is like seven courses. So, yeah, felt like a very comfortable one for me and I was excited to play when I heard about it.



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Q. When you think about everything that this community has been through with the hurricane, being able to help the economic way, bringing fans in, what does that mean to you?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, it's been tragic up here. We have had some family and friends that experienced some hard times up here especially. They've recovered very well, the city itself, just specifically in the downtown area. We came up, me and my wife, right after the storm and stayed at the Grove Park Inn and it was a disaster.

So really sad and all that, tragic. But they have recovered very well and it's -- I think they fixed everything for the most part business-wise, and I'm excited everyone gets to witness the coolness of the town.

Q. When you think about life after Clemson, how would you describe it and what did Clemson teach you to bring into your life now?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, I liked it so much I stayed another year after I graduated. I just stayed there to live because I felt like it was such a family atmosphere that I felt welcomed.

You know, even after I was out of school I just stayed around and hung out with all my friends, and that was a fun part of my life.

And then when I moved to Greenville, I'm still only 45 minutes away and I go back constantly. I go practice, hang all with the team, see the coaches.

I like the feeling like I'm still involved even though I'm four, five years out of school. I think I'll remain that way my whole career. I really loved Clemson and I had an amazing time there, and I think I'll always be a part of it.

Q. The season you've had, did the reality of what you were achieving this year set in at some point or after a while since you got the win so early in the year and then rolling into the playoffs? Did it all feel normal or were you pinching yourself thinking, man, I've taken it to this level?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, I think my biggest goal for the year was to win. That was my biggest goal the previous year and the previous, so that was like the big thing to me, was to get the win.

I don't think I expected it to be as big as it was at Tiger's event in LA. That kind of turned out to be a surprise to me. Yeah, it was amazing. Amazing start. I think I made

thought I would winning is else on maybe a smaller scale.

So that was pretty cool for me to see. That was maybe the pinch-me moment. Then once I did that, I had this confidence rolling and I was able to play consistently well throughout the whole season.

And then I guess maybe had to wake up a little bit at the end to see I had to push a little bit to make the Presidents Cup team. So very proud of how I played at the end of the year as well.

Q. The thrill of making that team to top off everything else, what was it like getting the word from Snedeker on that?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, coolest thing ever. I've never had that much anticipation in my life in this sport. I've always been in control. If I play good, I earn my success. If I don't, I've earned the defeat. So being in that was pretty antsy at times. Hearing that I was on the team and picked by them was amazing and super proud moment.

Q. How much as you -- you had a chance to win a championship at the end. What was the mindset in that last weekend of the playoff season? What was the mindset? And again, were you thinking, you know what, I won on big levels before?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, it's what Brian Harman talked about. He said there is so many tournaments going on within the same tournament. For me specifically I was trying to win the TOUR Championship and also trying to play the best I can to make the Presidents Cup team.

Then I'm also trying to have my highest FedExCup finish ever. So a lot of things going on at the same time. I think I would be lying if I didn't say I was mainly focused on the Presidents Cup more so than the TOUR championship just because it's so important to me.

I want to be on the teams. I want to play for the United States. That was my main focus during the week. I knew if I played well this week it would kind of take care of itself, and ended up with a pretty good finish at East Lake.

Q. The short game has always been the signature. The putting has been something. What's been the key or TOUR to be so excellent at it and get it to the level you have?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: I think I've always been kind of a student of the game in putting. Always been curious what other guys do, wanting to learn how they go about their



processes, how I can alter mine a little bit to get better.

The jump from amateur golf, college golf, to pro golf and playing on TOUR, we have the best surfaces every week. So that in itself is fun, getting to play on the super fast greens and really smooth ones. Feels like I'm in total control. There is not really that many variables that can go wrong.

I've always just a fan of that, enjoying the art of putting, and I think it's translated to me being pretty good at it.

Q. What would it mean to be able to win here this weekend with the proximity to Inman, Clemson, where you live now?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, like I said, it would be kind of a hometown event, so I will have a lot of people up here watching, and hopefully I can put on a pretty good show for them because I think I'll have a lot of supporters that will be pretty excited.

Yeah, any win is a dream come true, but winning here would you be definitely special having a lot of people around that I care about.

Q. Anything that you're looking to fine tune throughout this week?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: I think a few things for next week specifically. I won't share what they are because I think we have some plans that captains want us to do.

Yeah, got my eye set on a few things. Overall, just getting that competitive mode back and getting locked in before next week.

Q. You talked about the focus next week. How would you describe your approach to this week?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, same as any other tournament. I'm trying to win the tournament. Like we talked about, it's important for me because it feels like a hometown event. I will have a lot of people around.

But same as any other week, I am going to go do my prep to try to win this tournament. If that translates it good scores, great. Also going put in a little bit more effort for next week.

Q. Have you gotten the chance to go out there and practice yet?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Not today. I drove up this morning. Played a couple times in the past couple months, so...

Q. Do you have much experience playing in the mountains? Anything you're looking forward to? The views?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, the views are great here. Tend to have a pretty good climate. Seems foggy this morning. Played a good bit in college. We would go up to Cashiers North Carolina and play a few times during school every year. That was always a fun trip.

A little bit different playing mountain golf. A lot of elevation. For me, the distance, the way the balls go is not really that much different. Just kind of the cool views and the ups and downs of the hills.

Q. You talk about having a lot of the people come up and support you. When you think about that, obviously everyone can't make it to everything. What does it mean to have more support watching up close?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, that's the main thing, is it's within close driving distance. People can make day trips, and that makes it accessible for my family and friends. That in itself will turn out some more numbers.

It's just cool feeling like I'm not stressing people to the max to get them to come watch me. They are able to do it and make it pretty easy. Feels like a thing I can feel pretty good about. A lot of tournaments are far away. They're hard travel. You got to get a hotel and all that stuff.

This makes it a little easier on them, and I'm glad for that.

Q. What do you think makes golf special in the mountains and how has it impacted your game?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: I think one, golf for us is a very competitive game. For the general public it's a relaxing game. It's a time to have fun with your friends and fun with family. So when you getting to play in the mountains you've got these beautiful views, relaxing golf, good weather. All those things help the general public.

For us, we're experiencing the same thing. We get to look around and see the mountains, playing in a little bit cooler weather than we have in the past, in the playoffs in the hot summer. So got all those things.

And then the challenges with competition is you have a lot of iron shots and tee shots that go up and down the hills pretty significantly that we don't get in other courses, so I think in the playoffs we played in Memphis and Bellerive and Atlanta and a lot of those are very flat tracks. You don't really have that variable.



So throwing in the variable of seven, eight, ten yards uphill or even more on some of the par-3s is a different challenge that's kind of fun.

Q. Within being a Nicklaus course in the mountains, what's your opinion of that and what are you looking forward to?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: I don't know that much about course design. You're telling me a Nicklaus design. This is honestly the first time hearing that. I don't pay attention to much of that.

I've played a few times. I know I like the course. It's friendly off the tee. I think they said they were growing the rough up a little bit.

Same things with the greens, pretty friendly.

So I assume it would be, with the weather we've got, pretty close scoring, so maybe a bunch of birdies. So, yeah, it's always a fun track to play. Always enjoyed it.

Q. Expect lots of doglegs.

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Thank you.

Q. Said you played a couple times. Is that when you were in college?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: I played a couple times this year, yeah. I'm a member at the Cliffs Community, so I came up and played a couple times.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about what it's like here playing this close to home and what that means to have a competition in this region.

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Yeah, it's great. I have a bunch of people coming up to support, a lot of family, a lot of friends. It's close, driving distance; people can make day trips, so it's super easy.

I think I'll you have a pretty good crew out there and hopefully I'll put on a good show.

Q. Have you played in Asheville before?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Bunch of times, yeah. Played at Biltmore Forest and then I played this course a few times and we stayed at Grove Park Inn and played there, too.

Q. Going to the range, green, or course?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: Probably play after lunch. Got to do a couple things.

Q. Going to do any putting right now or anything?

JACOB BRIDGEMAN: No.

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