

U.S. Open Championship 2025

Friday, June 13, 2025

Oakmont, Pennsylvania, USA

Oakmont Country Club

Viktor Hovland

Flash Interview



Q. You've been obviously talking about your swing changes and the progress over the past year. How did you feel coming into this week and then how has it felt?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I've definitely felt better about it. But still haven't been overly confident in my ball-striking up until recently. But last week we saw some really good progress, and earlier this week was very happy with some of the shots that I was hitting out there in the practice rounds. Super excited that I was able to take that out with me in the tournament.

Q. It seemed like you got a couple bad breaks on the second hole. How do you reset and make sure you're not compounding errors?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, that was frustrating. Obviously played really well up until that point and didn't want to miss it left off the tee, so I kind of oversliced it a foot in the rough, and I was expecting a lie that I could just chase up the green there, but couldn't even cover the bunker, and then it's up against the lip.

Did a good job just to get it out in the fairway, and then hit my wedge shot too short and actually made a nice two-putt for a double bogey. And I just told Shea, Yeah, I just got U.S. Opened right there. There's not much you can do about it. At least I was playing really well up until that point, so you've just got to go back to what you were doing before.

Q. In the moment do you have to remind yourself to reset or something?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, for some reason I've just been in a really nice mental state this week. It's like, both my rounds have been very up and down. I feel like a couple times if it would have happened at another tournament, for example, I could have potentially lost my mind there a little bit.

But I felt like I kept things together very well.

Q. So many players talk about this week and patience being important. I'm curious, is there anything differently you do for majors and U.S. Opens in terms of preparation that doesn't involve a golf club in your hands?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Not really. I do treat it as a regular tournament. Every week I'm just trying to prime my game so I can play my best, and that's what I do every week. I'm going to do the same for a major.

Q. How do you toughen yourself mentally? Is there a way to quantifiably get mentally tougher?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I'm sure there is, but that's not something that you really do the week before or during the U.S. Open. It's like, preparation is what you do leading up to the event. It's what you do on a regular basis, like just discipline, I guess, is a good way to prepare yourself. But on top of that, if you're playing well, it's a lot easier to think well, as well. If the ball is going all over the place, it doesn't really matter how tough you are.

Q. What's the closest you came to losing your mind today?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I didn't really come close. I was pretty happy with that. Even after the double on 2. Yeah, I kept it together really nicely.

Q. In a weird way was the pace of play helpful to help you not lose your mind because you have time to collect yourself after a bad hole? As frustrating as it might be in a round that takes five and a half hours?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: That's probably a fair point. I'd say just personally, when I've had a couple bad holes back-to-back, I tend to rush. I tend to really get quick. Out here when the rounds are so long, you can't really do that. As you said, you have to reset, and yeah, you might have had a bad hole on the last hole and then you're sitting on the tee box for 10, 20 minutes. At least it gives you a good opportunity to get that out of your system and reset and think about the next shot.



Q. What was different with your putting today? Did you put yourself in better positions? What led to the better results?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I think the positions were about the same. Some of those three-putts that I had yesterday, they weren't even that difficult putts. They were kind of up hill, they were just slow, and I just hit them through the break and left myself a tricky kind of come backer down the hill.

Today I felt a bit more comfortable, for no real reason. It's nice when you see a 55-footer go in on the first hole, that usually helps, and just felt comfortable.

I think it's just more feeling comfortable and trusting the reads and just, when I'm over the ball, solely focusing on the pace. I'm not standing over the line or standing over the ball and thinking, Hmm, I'm not so sure about the line. Maybe I should do a little bit more here and there. You're just trusting the line and trying to execute better.

Q. What's been the turning point on the golf swing for feeling comfortable and having a really good ball-striking day like you did yesterday?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Really hasn't been a turning point because that's been the fascinating thing about it. I'm not really consciously trying to do anything that differently. I've been trying to really work on just getting off the ball a little bit better because I've been getting into some bad habits off the ball.

As soon as kind of the last couple weeks I started really working on getting off the ball similarly to what I used to, a lot of the rest of the swing kind of has fallen in place from there, which has been very helpful, because then I don't have to overthink when I'm out there, because you can't play at your best at a U.S. Open at this golf course if you're having to think mechanically too much.

Yeah, just kind of gotten off the ball nicely and just seeing the shots and somehow the balls are, for the most part, behaving itself.

Q. You're likely going to have a late tee time tomorrow. How are you going to spend the next 24 hours?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Just relax. We'll see. I've got my family in town, so we'll hang out and just relax.

Q. When you come off a course as difficult as this on a day like this, what are your reactions, fatigue,

pleasure? Tell us what they are.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's a combination of a lot of different things. Definitely tired, exhausted because you're just focusing so much on every single shot. I'm very pleased with 2-under par, but also I know that I was 4-under at some point, and missed a short putt on 6 and three-putted No. 8, even though I did make really nice two-putts on 7 and 9. So it's like very pleased, but also, man, that could have been a little bit lower, as well.

But we're in a really nice spot after two days, so I'm just kind of happy.

Q. When you see so many guys get U.S. Opened, as you used the word, how much do you marvel when someone goes 5-under on a day like today, given how much everyone is struggling?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, super impressive. I was 4-under at one point myself, and it does feel like, man, if you're just executing and you're getting some nice bounces and you're making some putts, you can definitely shoot a low score. But you're just not very far off before you're making a bogey or a double bogey, and that can happen multiple holes in a row.

It just feels like you have to play absolutely perfect and have some good breaks going your way, as well. But it's definitely doable.

Q. How different are these greens from what y'all play week to week?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I mean, we don't play a whole lot of poa annua greens, and I mean, it's just amazing how many holes -- how many greens you can have that are sloped front to back. Usually that's a pet peeve of mine. I almost automatically think it's a bad hole if it's sloped front to back. Somehow they make it work here. I think it's a fun challenge. It's a fun test.

It's just super dicey because you obviously want to be below the hole, but on holes like No. 1 it's kind of hard to do, especially with today's pin. There's just a lot of strategy. You have to be super precise on your distance control, and obviously speed -- just your lag putting, the importance of lag putting goes up significantly compared to other weeks.

Q. Along the same lines, how do you find the driving test this week? It seems like if it's not in the fairway you're grabbing a 60. Do you like it, not like it?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, that's a U.S. Open, I guess.



It's the same for everyone largely. Another credit to Oakmont is I don't think I've ever seen more consistent rough throughout the property. The rough is the same everywhere it seems like.

Now, some places it's a bit more trampled down, you can have some downgrain and sometimes you can advance it on the green. Usually when the rough is like that, the bunkers are kind of an escape. But man, those lips out of almost every single bunker, they're so high that you're just pitching out almost every time.

Just puts a big emphasis on the driver, but as well, when the fairways are getting firmer and there's some slopes in the fairways, it's almost a little bit too much. Especially I do like to cut it, and I think it's like three of those fairways you've got -- No. 9, No. 12 and then No. 15, they're getting a little bit dicey. You almost have to be all the way up in the left corner to maybe have it stop on the fairway.

It's going to get tougher and tougher.

Q. In the past you've had really low rounds and then you'll come in and tell us that your swing sucks, in your words --

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I don't know about really low rounds I've said that after.

Q. Or one tournament or whatever it might be. Comparatively now, you're saying you're having a really good ball-striking day or round, how different does it feel to those other times where you were surprised by yourself?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, definitely feel a lot better about my game. Some of the shots I've been hitting the last couple days, it's been just fun. Even if I make a double on No. 2, it's way easier to handle those moments because I feel like, okay, I can just go back to hitting good shots and I can make a few birdies coming in, versus before it didn't feel good, so I had to get max out of my game. So then when I get a bad break, it frustrates me even more.

Yeah, I'm super happy with where we're going. We're still not quite there, just day in, day out. I'm seeing a couple of just drives -- for example, just on No. 7, I aimed on the left side of the fairway there, and it started pretty far out right and sliced all the way on the right side where the crowd is staying there, and that's one of those old misses that I've had, but they're happening less and less frequently. I've just got to take that with me and keep progressing and have fun.

Q. Did you have any expectations coming into this

week?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I mean, they weren't overly high, to be honest with you, but I know that I can do something like this if I find a feel and make a few putts and stuff. I can go around here and play some good golf.

But it wasn't like I was feeling overly confident. But that's kind of how this year has been.

Q. Do you ever go into tournaments with expectations?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I'd say so, yeah. 2023 was certainly a year where I felt like entering every week I've maybe got a little bit of a taste of what Scottie Scheffler feels like when he steps on the first tee. I'd certainly like to be in that place. But yeah, it's just a different perspective.

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