

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: MACKENZIE HUGHES
November 17, 2016

Q: Mackenzie, well played out there, 9-under par 61. You hit every fairway, 15 of 18 greens, 24 putts. Pretty impressive. What was going right for you?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Well, you just said it right there, I didn't even know I hit every fairway, so that's obviously a big key to playing any golf course well.

I don't know, I found a good thought on the range this morning and it kind of clicked from there. I actually didn't hit it that great yesterday and this morning I woke up and found a little something on the range and went with it.

Q. I saw you there at 17, you missed the green left but you made a good effort and you shook your head. Is that because you were thinking about 59?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I was actually thinking about 59 on 12 tee. So it actually hit me quite a bit early because I was 7 through 11 and I'm thinking to myself if I can get four more, I have a chance at it. You have to kind of temper those thoughts and expectations. But I played really well so I knew thinking about it wasn't really going to hinder me too much, I just wanted to be aggressive and give the putts a chance to go in. They wouldn't go in at the end, but I made a lot of putts.

Q. You were the 2013 Order of Merit winner on the Mackenzie Tour PGA Tour Canada. Last year you win on the Web.com Tour. It looked like you might not get to the PGA Tour. That win took you to the PGA Tour. What's your first season been like so far?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: It's been really nice. This is by far the best tour in the world. To play out here is a privilege. I've been working at it for a long time now and to be out here with these guys, playing alongside some great players is a real honor. I'm just trying to soak it all in, enjoy it.

Q. Just kind of coming in late here, when you're going that low, you've got to consider the magic number out there. Just what's going through your mind out there.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, well, when I got to 12 tee, that's kind of when I first thought about it. Actually I'd be lying, I probably thought about it earlier on the front nine. I got to that point where I was 5 through nine and I thought just do the same thing on the back nine, you're right there. I knew I was playing well. So those thoughts really didn't seem to bother me too much, I just tried to embrace it. It was a fun thing. It wasn't like I was burdened by trying to shoot 59. I looked at it that way and that kind of made things a little easier. I was playing well so I tried to just keep going and trying to be aggressive.

Q. This is your first year on the tour?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: First year on tour.

Q. And I know you played really well on PGA TOUR Canada a couple years back. Is this about the evolution of your golf game that you expected or are you here a little bit later than you expected and you probably had success and think I'm going to jump --

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I don't know what I really expected. I knew I could do it. I didn't have like a timeline for myself really. My first year in Canada was 2013 and I won the Order of Merit the very first year and I went straight to the Web.com with full status in my second year as a pro.

That kind of seemed to overwhelm me a little bit, there was a bigger schedule, more demanding, South America, this and that. It was a big growing year for me, I learned a lot, and then when I got back out there again this year, I kind of had that sense of belonging and knowing what to do and where to go.

Q. So that was huge, but it's almost as big off the golf course, isn't it?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah.

Q. Talk a little bit about that, life on the road.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, you have to find things to do to get yourself away from it, but you also have to find that right routine for you. I think the biggest thing from the Mackenzie Tour to this tour is just maintaining that routine and saying this routine, this is what I do, this works well, I'm not going to try to deviate from that because I'm on a different tour now, I'm playing with bigger players, more money, all that stuff. So staying with the routine I have all along has got me to where I am today.

Q. Have you seen this coming?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Today? No, I didn't. To be honest, yesterday I was on the range hitting it very so-so. Kind of working on some things. And then today hitting balls, for whatever reason sometimes I'll just find that one little thought that I can go with and I found something on the range and I just went with that today. Hit the ball great, drove it really well, put it in the fairway a bunch of times. So that really was the key. I drove it great. I didn't drive it that great last week in Mexico, which kind of hurt me. So that was really the key to my round, I think. I had 14 looks from the fairway, which again, I could attack the golf course.

Q. And you recently got married I'm told?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I did about three and a half weeks ago.

Q. That was in Charlotte?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: It was in Charlotte, yeah.

Q. Thoughts on being married?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: It's been the same, I've noticed no difference. She's been with me now, we've been together for six years so it wasn't like we just got married and we had been together for six months. We know each other really well. It's been good though. We had a great time at the wedding and now that it's done, it's kind of nice where you can focus on the task at hand, your job. Prior to the wedding it was chaotic.

Q. Did you meet her at Kent State, was she like a soccer player?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: No, she was not playing any sports, but I met her at Kent State my freshman year.

Q. What's her name?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Jenna.

Q. What was the honeymoon?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Thailand, in two weeks.

Q. Oh, going in two weeks?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, yeah.

Q. Did you have to postpone it or was it already planned?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: It was funny. We were planning it back around Springfield, Missouri, when I won on the Web.com and we weren't sure we were going to go in November because I hadn't secured my PGA Tour card at that point, let alone the Web.com card. Thinking okay we can go in November, but I was like, well, if I get my tour card in the last few weeks, I don't want to be going on a honeymoon when I'm mid PGA Tour fall series.

Q. Right.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: So we're like all right, we'll wait until after Springfield to book it and then I won in Springfield. So then we knew we've got that for a honeymoon in December. It was kind of funny the way it worked out.

