

**ROUND 4 INTERVIEW**  
**May 5, 2019**

**MAX HOMA (-15)**



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**JACK RYAN:** We'll go ahead and get started here with 2019 Wells Fargo Championship winner, Max Homa. Max collects his first PGA TOUR victory, becomes the fifth first-time winner of this event and moves to No. 35 in the FedExCup standings.

Max, how does it feel to call yourself a PGA TOUR winner and accomplish what you did this week?

**MAX HOMA:** Yeah, it's wild. You picture it a lot, you dream of it, and then you get in the moment and you're not quite sure how you're going to react to that. It's a lot of buildup, but as we got going, I started to feel comfortable. I don't know if I've ever been like higher than like 100 on the FedExCup, so to be 35th is awesome. Have some job security is great. Yeah, I guess my whole world's a little bit different now.

**JACK RYAN:** We'll take some questions out here.

**Q. You talked about having not quite been in this position. What did you learn about yourself today? You made it look like you've done this before, but obviously you haven't.**

**MAX HOMA:** What I learned about myself, I don't know. Reflecting on two years, I'm tough. I don't know all about my golf all the time, but I'm tough. I was really happy with myself today. I told Joe on one of the holes I felt like I was going to throw up but my hands felt unbelievable on the club. It's been like that.

I know I haven't had a ton of success out here, but I've done some pretty cool things, Walker Cup, National Championship and won a couple Web events and that's how it always felt and it was cool to feel that even on this stage. Hands felt solid as a rock and the golf swing and putting stroke were as good as I could have imagined it.

**Q. Touched on this the other day about watching other players, used Justin Thomas as an example. Did you use them as motivation as you watched what he was doing on TV because you were able to compete against him in college, was that at all on your mind?**

**MAX HOMA:** Probably not. It's always motivating to see anybody win if you've played with them, I guess, because it seems a lot more attainable. I assume if you've played basketball and you've never played against Michael Jordan, it's kind of hard to imagine that you could ever do something like that. In this case when Justin plays well, wins a major out here, I could think to myself a little bit, you know, I could probably do this at some stage, got to keep

getting better.

Everything's motivating for me, man. Trying to keep a job, trying to support a family, all of it's motivation. I've always tried to find something to use because I've always worked pretty hard and I think I use little things here and there, little goals or just life stuff to kind of keep me going.

**Q. Max, when you look at the names that were kind of just behind you starting the day, Rory and Rosey and Sergio's back there, Fowler's not too far away, what was last night like for you and maybe even early part of today as you're thinking about that, and how daunting is that task as you're looking at it not just getting out of your own way but trying to handle that pressure?**

**MAX HOMA:** Yeah, last night was all right. Took me a little while to go to sleep, but fortunately the Warriors-Rockets went to overtime so I had something to do.

This morning was awful. Woke up at 7:00 or something, tried to keep sleeping, couldn't. Walked around, went to get some breakfast, but it was bad. I felt my stomach was turning. Sometimes that's a good thing because that means I know I can do it and that's what I'm nervous of. I'm not nervous of failing, I guess. I'm excited at the opportunity and that's I guess what gets me going.

But seeing the names, that actually might have been the most motivation because I've always pictured winning in my head and it's pretty cool when I started to actually live playing, you know, a little bit behind Rory, Rickie, Justin --

**DOUG MILNE:** I'm sorry to interrupt. There's someone who won't stop bothering me. It's a call for you.

**JACK RYAN:** We've got Tommy Lasorda on the phone with Max.

(Phone call.)

**MAX HOMA:** Thank you. That was a shocking one. I didn't know who was going to be on the other end of that phone call.

**Q. How valuable was that chipping lesson on Monday right about now, and can you talk about that putt on 17, the difficulty and also under the circumstances, that is? Thank you.**

**MAX HOMA:** Yeah, the chipping lesson was huge because it freed me up. I know most people that are on the outside looking in wouldn't probably look at the starts I've had, the finishes I've had and think that I was playing great, but I was. I felt a little bit handcuffed by my short game because I felt a lot of pressure on my golf swing. So to get a little bit of relief there and feel some more positivity, I felt like I can kind of do anything I wanted off the tee

and I could figure out a way to make par, so that was huge.

And the putt on 17 was awesome because I actually hit a pretty good chip. I'm obviously pretty nervous. The good news was, Joe was talking about it, it was a perfect kind of putt when you're nervous because you don't need to hammer it, you can just kind of get it going, but it broke a lot. I actually made a putt similarly on Friday, I think, but that was big because the 18th hole is so hard, you don't want to be coming down there with any less of a lead than you already have, so that was cool. To see it go in the middle was a big bonus. Just kind of was the moral of the story today was just kind of making some clutch par putts when I needed to.

**Q. You talked a lot about yourself believing even through your struggles that you had a couple years ago. Just curious if that self belief ever did hit rock bottom and how you might have pulled yourself out of that.**

**MAX HOMA:** Yeah, I used to say when I hit rock bottom I found a shovel and kept digging. I went to some low places and there would be times when I would wallow and honestly just hate my golf game, dislike what I was out there in what's supposed to be my favorite place in the world is a golf course, and all of a sudden I started to hate it, hated going. All I've ever known is working as hard as humanly possible, and I realized in that year, year or two when I started to play bad, that my attitude was going to have to get a lot better because if my golf game was going to be that bad, my brain better be on point. I think that was a big turning point for me. I'm very proud I finally found a ladder and started climbing upwards because it was getting dark down there.

**Q. A lot of people have used the word "resilient" to describe you. Where do you think you get that from?**

**MAX HOMA:** I have great parents. Awesome fiancée. She doesn't let me ever pity myself. But in general, I don't know like if this means anything, but my mom and dad used to tell me that when we had a step in our apartment I guess when I was 1 or 2, couldn't walk and apparently they would see me go over to it, try and get myself up. I would fall and just do it on my own. So I'm not really sure if they're making that up, but sounds cool.

Yeah, that's just been me my whole life. I refuse to give up, I refuse to give in and I believe that hard work will pay off if you keep your attitude in check.

I've obviously been very lucky to have Joe with me because I've had some great caddies in my life, he's the best, but he also does not let me wallow at all and he is the confidence boost I need. He's the rock I've needed and it's been great doing this with him, but it was also pretty good just playing average with him because he kept telling me we're around the corner from some great golf, and to hear it from somebody who's seen some fantastic golf, that was cool for me to hear.

**Q. And as someone who look looked up to Tiger a little bit, how good did it feel after**

**all you've been through to be able to club twirl on 18?**

**MAX HOMA:** Yeah, I don't know where that one came from, but hopefully it made him proud.

**Q. Can you walk us through the wait on 14? And also, what felt longer, that wait or the wait to get here today?**

**MAX HOMA:** That wait was actually pretty bad. I did think my phone at some point was broken this morning because I thought it was 10:52 for about an hour. That was tough, 14 was hard. That's when you've got to grow up, I think, a little bit.

I thought yesterday was brutal having to play with Rory first time being in this position was hard enough, then you get two delays. Today, woke up, talked to my coach. My coach texted me. I can't remember exactly what he said, but he said something like, "There's going to be adversity, there might be a delay, just prepare yourself." So I prepared myself for that delay.

It was a brutal time because I had played so well and all of a sudden I've got a five-, six-footer down the hill to -- I hadn't looked at the leaderboard yet, but I was assuming to keep the lead. Obviously we had about an hour wait. I knew in the back of my mind that I make that putt, I win this golf tournament. I putted awesome this whole week, and I stood up on that putt and we had a great read, and it was great to see it go in because that's kind of when I -- I think I knew my golf game was good enough to do this. There's a lot of doubts because when you haven't been here, if you can withstand the onslaught from all these great golfers. When I made that putt, I knew I was in a good spot both in the tournament but also mentally to be able to do that.

**Q. Not to dumb this down, Max, but I'm just curious about the 11th, what did you have over there? That was a birdie that all of a sudden took you to a four-shot lead.**

**MAX HOMA:** What did I have?

**JOE GREINER:** 163 front, 170 hole.

**MAX HOMA:** 163 front, 170 hole. It was down off the right. We had a little bit of a flyer, was trying to play some kind of a higher draw up to the right. Fortunately, my miss with that shot tends to be just a shade of a pull but it covers whatever the front is. If it's a front left pin, it always seems to cover the front left bunker, so it was kind of set up pretty good.

I pulled it just a touch, but it flew nicely. I had a pretty hard putt, but I had had quite a few of those downhill, left-to-right cross-green putts and it was kind of a comfortable putt at that point in the round for that reason.

**Q. Secondly, you talk about job security, but you're also in the PGA in a couple**

**weeks and the Masters in 11 months but you'll get there eventually. How does that feel, and was there ever a point in these struggles where you felt like you belong in that locker room, if that makes any sense?**

**MAX HOMA:** Oh, yeah, the feeling like I belonged was the worst part. I felt like I was walking, nobody knew who I was, no one cared. They shouldn't have cared. I felt like I shouldn't be playing practice rounds with people. I felt like I was on an island and it was, you know, borderline embarrassing. It was embarrassing at times. But it ain't embarrassing anymore. It's a cool story now.

**Q. Max, I just wonder with all the things that came with today -- as Doug was just saying, PGA, Masters, the job security, the exemption, the \$1.4 million -- what amongst all of those things is most important to you at right this moment?**

**MAX HOMA:** I remember we used to take the SAT and there was the "All of the Above" bubble. Can I press that one? They're all great. I mean, I like money, but I don't care too much about it. Become 35th on the FedExCup's pretty cool. The only goal I had this year was to make it to the Tour Championship, so that's obviously a big boost there.

What's crazy is I was actually thinking about getting in the PGA and what that's going to do for my schedule, but I didn't even think about the Masters. I don't know how, it's my favorite tournament, but I didn't even think about it until my buddy John Mallinger called me and said, "You're going to the Masters." I know Joe's happier than I am because I told him I would take him to a practise round there.

It's all pretty cool, man, but I would say moving up that FedExCup's sweet. The job security's probably a little sweeter. I know it's been tough on my family. We don't know what the heck we're doing with planning for a year, so that's probably going to be the one that resonates the most with me.

**Q. Max --**

**MAX HOMA:** Hey, Kevin. What's up, buddy?

**Q. Nine months ago, you made birdie on your final four holes in Portland; you ultimately needed that money to get into the Web Finals and keep your job out there. Thinking back to that, what are your memories of that day and the pressure down the stretch and how that might compare in any way to today?**

**MAX HOMA:** I harkened back to that one hard yesterday. I was driving to the course, I was nervous as can be. Playing with Rory, who the heck am I? It's his birthday, he's probably going to lap me. I'm freaking out, right?

And I thought back to that exact day and I thought to myself, I don't think that anyone out here, or a handful of them, I know Rory hadn't, has ever had to do what I had to do and then

is in this position right after. So honestly, I told myself, that's not pressure. The worst that can happen is I shoot 80 and move on. Life goes on. I'm still on the PGA TOUR, still have an awesome life.

At that point I was highly considering, you know -- I would have to go to Q-School, don't get through there, you start to spiral on the negatives. So that's pressure. As far as athletics go, that's a little bit more than this. This was, I mean, I could make a quadruple on the last hole and get second, it's still a little better than going back to the second stage of Q-School.

**Q. Does your dad still teach acting?**

**MAX HOMA:** He does.

**Q. Have you ever taken any lessons?**

**MAX HOMA:** He made me take one. He says he didn't, but he made me go to one of his workshops and it was the worst ever. He made me get up there, and I thought I did a good job and my sister just said I was screaming the whole time. So I'm glad I'm good at golf because I would have never made it as an actor.

**Q. When did you first look at the leaderboard?**

**MAX HOMA:** 14. I had a goal today not to look at it until after the 14th hole. So then we get that big delay, didn't look at it, didn't look at it, didn't look at it. And then I asked Joe while we were walking to warm up if I should know where I'm at and he told me. So it was probably good timing. I made it a lot longer than I thought I could.

**Q. Was it hard not going on your phone in the delay?**

**MAX HOMA:** I went on it. For me, this is impressive, did not go on Twitter. Talked to Lacey just about nothing. They were drinking mimosas or something, living the dream. Talked to my coach a little bit, told him I thought I was going to throw up, he said, "Go ahead."

And I talked to the No Laying Up boys. They were just, I don't know, telling me about the stuff I think I already knew about.

But yeah, it was hard, but I thought I did a pretty good job. That was a lot more discipline than I had yesterday even with the two delays, so I think that helped quite a bit because I was locked in what I was doing today. That's what Joe always tells me, just keep doing what I was doing.

**Q. When was the most pressure today?**

**MAX HOMA:** 14. It wasn't even close. I knew what that putt meant. If I had made bogey there and there was no delay, it wasn't that big a deal. I just made two great birdies and two

great pars back to back. No big deal if I make bogey, that's okay, life goes on. It's obviously not the best situation, but it's all right. You go an hour delay, come back and make bogey, all of a sudden you're standing on 15 with some negatives. I knew how important mentally that par would be. It wasn't the hardest putt in the world by any means, but it had a lot of weight to it, so that was easily the most pressure. The rest of the day I felt fine, man. It was crazy. 17's the only disaster hole but you can bail right. And 18, three-shot lead's a lot easier to get over than when you're sitting back on the 14th hole not knowing what's going on.

**Q. Did you throw up?**

**MAX HOMA:** No, I did not. I held it down. This place is too nice to throw up.

**JACK RYAN:** All right, max, we appreciate the time and congratulations.