

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
December 1, 2020



CARLOS ORTIZ

SHARON SHIN: I would like to welcome in Carlos Ortiz to the virtual interview room here at the Mayakoba Golf Classic presented by UNIFIN.

Carlos, you're making your seventh appearance at this event. How does it feel to be back in your home country of Mexico playing the Mayakoba Golf Classic?

CARLOS ORTIZ: It feels great. It's always nice playing in my country in front of my people, friends. Less people each time, but still some people. It feels awesome being home.

SHARON SHIN: And you recently became just the third Mexican native to win on the PGA TOUR. How has your life changed since your win at the Houston Open?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Honestly, nothing. Still the same. I still have to do chores at the house, look after my girls. Still the same.

SHARON SHIN: Sounds good. We'll open it up to media that's joining us.

Q. I wanted to ask kind of those couple days after the win, just kind of reflect on what that experience was like with going through Texas and how you kind of spent those two days just after Houston and the emotion of that.

CARLOS ORTIZ: It was great. It still -- first two days it was kind of almost scary waking up thinking like it was all a dream, just wanted to make sure it was real. It was great. It was awesome seeing all the people that reached out to me and congratulate. I try to respond to everyone. It took me like four or five days to respond to everyone, but it was awesome. It's a nice problem to have.

Q. Were there any other kind of notable athletes from Mexico that reached out to you?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Yeah, I saw message from Carnello, the boxer; Checo Perez, the Formula 1 driver; Lorena Ochoa, soccer players. It was great. It was awesome seeing all these guys cheering for me. And I saw when I was playing and they were cheering for me then and it's awesome, you can play for yourself and for a whole country.

Q. Kind of you and Abraham Ancer, he's having success as well, kind of moving up pretty high in the world and contending at the Masters. Can you kind of speak to your relationship with him and how long you've known him for and what your kind of relationship is like?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Abe is great. I've known him for a long time obviously through golf. He's been a great influence on me. We're good friends, but the way he's been playing, it's been pushing me to play better. He showed that he can compete at the highest level. He's pretty much top-20 in the world and that definitely has pushed me to work harder and to prove -- he's proven that we can all do it and that's definitely a huge help. I hope that with this win, I do the same thing for all the other Mexicans that are trying to do the same thing we're doing.

Q. Carlos, do you remember the first time you and Abraham met?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Honestly, he was just a little bit older than I was and he played in a different area, but I definitely remember his name, him being a really good player. I think we met when he was in college and that's when we became friends. He was a roommate with my actual -- with my current caddie right now, they both played at OU. That's when I actually met him and we started getting along. He's an awesome guy, great guy to hang out with, he's funny and we hit it off right away. We've stayed in kind of the same college golf and Korn Ferry and the PGA TOUR, so we've stayed kind of in the same tours together. We try and play practice rounds, go out to dinner, so we're close. I think he's been a great influence for the whole Mexican golf. Somebody I actually look up to. Even though we're competing, I look up to him because he's doing great things.

Q. What do you think your victory and then followed the next week by Abe playing in the final group in the Masters and the exposure of that does for golf in Mexico and what's the pipeline looking like these days?

CARLOS ORTIZ: I think it's kind of what Lorena Ochoa did for us, definitely at least for me. She was so good. She was on TV all the time and it definitely -- in my case, she definitely inspired me and helped me believe that working hard and doing things the right way, we're able to achieve our goals, you know. Especially we're really close, we grew up in the same country, same city. I think, I hope at least by me winning on the PGA TOUR, being on TV, being out there, it inspires more kids and more people to go do that. Working hard, you can achieve your goals. And I think it's the same thing with Abe. We're just trying to inspire as many kids and as many Tour guys that are trying to make it so they can -- they know and they can believe that it's possible.

Q. You got the first win, but what would a win be like to do it in your home country?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Oh, it's a dream. Obviously winning on the PGA TOUR has always been a dream, but obviously that would be like, you know, it couldn't get any better than that. Winning on your home soil would be a dream come true for us, for the media and everyone here. I was close last year and Abe has been close a couple times, so I think it's coming. We're definitely seeing the difference in how much golf has grown in Mexico in the last years. I don't know how many Mexicans were playing the first few years they had the tournament, but right now we consistently have like six, seven Mexicans and we've had

Mexicans competing on the weekend here and that definitely says a lot about how golf is growing.

Q. One last one if you don't mind. What's the latest with your brother and his development of his game?

CARLOS ORTIZ: I think he's working like many others. Obviously they've had a really tough situation this year, there's not really any tours where they can play on. They have the development tour that the PGA TOUR put together with the Latinoamerica and Canada, but it's just been tough. I know he's frustrated he hasn't had the chance to really play much. He's trying to hang in there and keep patient and keep working hard.

Q. Carlos, I was wondering if you can kind of reflect on last year with being so close and coming up just one short, what you took away from that week being so close but giving yourself such a great chance?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Honestly, that was a great week. That's one of those weeks that they beat me. Brendon Todd played unbelievable. I did everything I could and then he won. It's nothing I could have done any different. I was really pleased the way I played and really happy how it turned out.

Q. Kind of with the -- you know, you had success on the Korn Ferry Tour right away and then after a couple years were back on the Korn Ferry Tour. What do you think you learned kind of from your second stint on the Korn Ferry Tour that might have been different kind of from your first stint right out of college?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Honestly, I learned, I mean the most important part is being mentally there, you know, positive, believing in yourself. That's what happened to me, obviously that's why I got back to the Korn Ferry, I lost confidence, I stopped believing in myself. The Korn Ferry definitely helped me to find that again. To believe in yourself is the most important thing. Doesn't matter if your team believes in you or your parents or anyone, but if you don't really believe in yourself, you have no chance and that definitely helped me. I found myself, I found my card that I got to the PGA TOUR the first time, I found it back on the Korn Ferry and honestly it's the best thing that could have happened to me. Definitely going back from the PGA TOUR to the can have, it definitely humbles you, makes you appreciate all the things you had, you realize what worked for you to get to the PGA TOUR, you shouldn't lose your essence. I feel a lot of times we lose the essence when we go back -- when we go to the PGA TOUR because you're impressed by all your idols, all the people you look up to and you start doing things differently where honestly, whatever made you get there is what you should work on and you build on top of that.

SHARON SHIN: Do we have any more questions in English for Carlos? All right. Then we'll move to the Spanish portion of this press conference.