

**ROUND 4 INTERVIEW  
NOVEMBER 7, 2021**



**VIKTOR HOVLAND (- 23)**

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**DOUG MILNE:** We would like to welcome the first 2020 champion and now 2021 champion of the World Wide Technology Championship, Viktor Hovland.

Viktor, congratulations on your third career PGA TOUR title. I've had the honor of being with you on all three of them now and I look forward to being your good luck charm further down the road.

There's so many stats I could run through with you, but what an incredibly impressive week, 72-hole scoring record. A couple opening comments on how it feels to have claimed your third career PGA TOUR title.

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Yeah, it feels awesome. Obviously I felt like my game was in a good spot going into this week and I know this course fits my game really well, but there was some stuff that didn't quite go my way at the start of the week. It was nice to overcome those troubles and --

(Technological issue.)

**DOUG MILNE:** You were saying how the course really suits your game so well. If you wouldn't mind just picking it back up with your original answer.

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Yeah, I felt like my game was in a good spot going into this week and I knew this course fit me really well, so I was -- I was coming in with some high expectations, but obviously for it to end like this and win by four shots, it's been a cool week. Couldn't ask for it to go any different.

**DOUG MILNE:** Were you aware that no one had ever successfully defended their title here before this week.

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** I was told multiple times. Yeah, I was aware. It feels great to be the first one to do it.

**DOUG MILNE:** Okay. With your win, you move to No. 4 in the FedExCup standings and projected inside the top-10 in the official World Golf ranking, some pretty impressive stats there.

With that, we'll open it up and take a few questions.

**Q. Congratulations, Viktor. This wasn't your first win, of course, but it was the first**

**time that you were in the position of having a multiple-shot lead coming into Sunday and really being in control of the tournament from the jump. How different of an experience was that closing the door and what do you make of the way you handled playing with the lead like that?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Yeah, it was a little different. I slept great, but I woke up really early this morning and I was pretty nervous and excited to get going. To be able to kind of sleep on the lead and go out in kind of the conditions early on today, because it was blowing pretty hard on the front nine. Frankly, I did not play well at all the front nine, but I was able to hang in there and make a lot of good putts. I was really happy to be able to just kind of pull off the round that I did today without having my best stuff.

**Q. And I know that you've been working hard with Jeff on your chipping. Can you walk us through exactly what you've been working on? And then hate to be negative, but what was going through your head there on 13?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Yeah, basically been trying to essentially rotate my forearms a little bit in the backswing so I can get that clubface to open up, get it more essentially on plane, so then I can use the bounce coming through on a lot of different shots. Because in the past, I've essentially -- the first move has just been like that (indicating) with my wrists, which is what I do in the full swing, and then you're just exposing the leading edge and it's just going to dig every single time.

On 13 it was a tricky lie, it was kind of sitting down and I wasn't exactly sure how it was going to come off. I tried to kind of slide the lob wedge underneath the ball and try to get it to pop up. I didn't think the club was just going to grab it and go straight underneath the ball. Yeah, you guys all saw what happened. But hit a nice chip from there and was able to scramble a par. Obviously not what I was looking for when I was in the middle of the fairway hitting a 7-iron into a par-5, but I think it would have changed a little bit of the remaining holes if I would have made another bogey there.

**Q. Viktor, this is almost like a classic "it's not how you start, but how you finish." Here you are, you've got the trophy, but the beginning of the week obviously a couple of things maybe didn't quite go your way. Can you just talk about your emotions and how you were able to mentally kind of take whatever happened before the tournament and still kind of stay steady enough to be here on Sunday holding the trophy?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Yeah, obviously being the defending champ for this week, I was coming in to, you know, maybe people had some expectations of me to do well, and I knew the course suited me well so I was coming in pretty confident. Obviously when something like that happens, you just kind of go, oh, man, come on, like really, is that gonna happen?

But then I was able to get over that pretty quickly as soon as I, you know, played a driver that was really good. I didn't feel like I was giving up anything to the rest of the field and I was just kind of able to plot my way around.

**Q. And just one quick follow-up. I know that you didn't actually know the Norwegian crowd who was here, but to see them, to kind of catch their eyes, to see them with the hats and the flags, what did that mean to you this week?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Yeah, that's really cool. The Norwegian people are very patriotic and it's cool to see that I can get so much support even in Mexico, which is pretty far away from Norway.

Yeah, they were great. They were very respectful towards the other players that I played with. They applauded good shots and obviously cheered a little bit extra when I made a putt. It was really nice. I want to thank them a lot.

**Q. Viktor, on the broadcast they highlighted that you don't like to look at the leaderboard. Why is that, and at what point did you have a sense of what your lead was?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Say that again? What did they say?

**Q. That you don't like to look at the leaderboard and know kind of how you're doing.**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** No, I like to -- I like to check and see where I'm at. Frankly, there weren't a whole lot of leaderboards out there, which I kind of -- I didn't really mind because I kind of -- what I told myself from the start was that, okay, the guys behind me are probably going to play well, but if I shoot just a good score, if I can just post a 4- or 5-under, especially in these conditions, I'm going to be tough to beat.

I think the more leaderboard watching that I do and I watch what the other guys do, I get away from just focusing on, okay, I just need to keep making birdies and keep playing good golf. Yeah, I think it helped me out this week.

**Q. They also mentioned that you kind of cracked your caddie that it was going to be 10 percent for your caddie and 10 percent for James Hahn. Is that right? Are you going to take care of him?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** That was a joke, for sure (Laughs.)

No, he was really nice to borrow me his back-up, so I definitely owe him one. We can negotiate something going forward.

**Q. Yeah, dinner or a nice bottle of wine, for sure.**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Thanks.

**Q. About that driver, you hit it so well this week. Are you tempted to just roll with the**

**hot hand and keep it in the bag? What's that decision going to be like?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** I think it's very course dependent. I'm definitely hitting it a little bit lower and a little shorter, so it's great for really fast places where you don't have to cover things.

But I'd say most of the courses we play on the PGA TOUR, there's usually a bunker at 300 or 310 where you really have to send one up in the air and try to cover the bunker. That's where that driver's not going to be as ideal as the one that I had before.

I've had my best year off the tee strokes gained with the one that I had before it broke, so I don't really see a point in changing that driver, but I could see myself using maybe this setup at certain courses, for sure.

**Q. And then all things considered with everything that happened this week, the way you closed the deal, is this the best golf tournament that you feel like you've played?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** I think so. You know, it sort of -- I wouldn't say the third round that I played is my best round ever. I didn't like tell myself that, oh, man, I'm playing the best golf of my life, but it's just kind of putting everything together into four rounds and making very few mistakes. I think just kind of I would say I've definitely had better ball-striking weeks, but to put a good ball-striking week with good short game and good putting is something that I haven't done very often.

**Q. What was the difference in the victory last year and this title?**

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** That's a good question. I would say I probably putted better throughout the whole week this year. I feel like I still hit the ball really, really well last year, but my short game was still not as sharp. I missed a few too many putts on the first two days, but over the weekend I just got really, really hot. I felt like, just as a performance throughout the week, I played just steadily better golf. So I would say that was the only thing. Yeah, no, it's hard to kind of compare it because last year was a special one as well.

**DOUG MILNE:** Well, Viktor, that's all we've got. Just the last thing, I expect by the time you come back here next year to be fluent in Spanish. I trust you will.

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Working on it.

**DOUG MILNE:** Congratulations on your third PGA TOUR title and have a great celebration. We look forward to seeing you down the road soon.

**VIKTOR HOVLAND:** Yes, sir.