

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
JULY 27, 2022**



MAX HOMA

JACK RYAN: We would like to welcome Max Homa into the interview room at the 2022 Rocket Mortgage Classic. Max enters the week No. 11 in the FedExCup standings and is making his third start at the Rocket Mortgage Classic.

Max, if we can just get an opening comment on your return to Detroit Golf Club?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, happy to be back. I really like this golf course. It's the old-school, old-school track, got to drive it straight. Get a bunch of funky putts. It's poa annua greens, which is home to me, so I enjoy coming here. And we got very lucky with the weather looks like for seven days, so it's lining up to be a great week.

JACK RYAN: I guess there's the jinx we needed on the weather for this week.

MAX HOMA: I'm the one that has to deal with it, it's all good. You guys have this.

JACK RYAN: So, like I said, you're No. 11 in the FedExCup standings, only two weeks remaining in the regular season here. How important is it to you to make one final push into that Comcast Business Tour Top-10 and position yourself for a run to the TOUR Championship?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, actually hadn't planned on playing these last three events after The Open, and then seeing where I was standing on the list, decided to add it to make a little push to hopefully sneak inside that Top-10 for the Comcast to get a bit of a boost going into the Playoffs to kind of chase down Scotty and Cam. So felt like a really good fit to come back to a course I know and like to maybe grab a little momentum before a week off before Memphis.

I felt like three weeks off at home, it's a billion degrees in Arizona, it would be better to practice on a great golf course and get ready to try to peak at the right time at the end of the season.

Q. Max, just was wondering what your experience was like at the ballgame last night, and as you've won more and been on TV more, you must get recognized more. Do you like that, being out on the town and having people know who you are?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, the game was cool. We went last year, it's an awesome ballpark, has really good food, the energy's good. They haven't been very great for a bit, but they got Miguel Cabrera and it was cool hearing everybody go nuts when he got up to bat. Yeah, it's fun and I got to go root against the Padres, so it's always a joy to have a dog in the fight.

Yeah, getting recognized is weird. Do I like it? It kind of depends. It's one of those things that you like why it's happening and sometimes you don't like that it's happening. A lot of time I'm with my wife and it's just awkward. It's really cool to see the support I've gotten just from playing golf and talking with people on social media. So I really appreciate everybody, so it is cool.

It's just one of those things that just still I don't think it will ever not feel bizarre because I don't feel like people should be taking pictures with me. I don't know, you know, it just feels -- it's not something you picture when you're putting on your home putting green when you're a kid to win the Masters, you don't think you're going to be taking pictures at a Detroit Tigers game with a bunch of strangers, but it is what it is.

Q. If I can ask you one more unrelated question, closing out a tournament is very difficult and Whoop collects all that data and what it does to your heart rate and whatnot, and Bobby Jones said he actually lost weight during the course of a week of competition. What does it do to you to try and deal with that as you're trying to close out a tournament?

MAX HOMA: It's very interesting. I feel like when I'm on the golf course, I feel the most calm in relation to the entirety of the day. The morning is the toughest, I feel like that's when -- maybe that you're just more aware of your heart rate or your nerves. When I start playing, it tends to -- you can tend to kind of slow it down a bit whereas in the morning you kind of want to speed things up so time goes a bit faster.

When I'm playing, I guess it's corny and like old school, but breathing is important. I walk very fast as it is and I try to slow down on Thursday to Saturday but especially on Sunday I have to like tell myself to slow down. I think that goes to just self awareness, knowing yourself, knowing your tics and know what's going to maybe speed up that heart rate and try to avoid those things.

It's impossible to say it's just like Thursday, I guess you could tell yourself that, but you know it's more important. Doing your best when you get to each shot, kind of feel like you're going through that process, pre-shot routine is the same. Feels like you're talking to yourself a lot more on Sundays reminding yourself of all the basics.

But I think that's the most fun part about golf is that fight and that kind of inner, internal battle with your brain and trying to like slow down your heart rate and trying to make sure that you feel as calm as possible. You can't replicate that feeling so you just kind of get as much experience as you can and almost mentally note them or note them down to remember for the next time.

Q. You spoke to adding this to your list. Other players have too, apparently. Can you speak to the strong field here, particularly top-20?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it was exciting to see the field list whenever it came out last week. You know, I was adding it for myself, it's not -- I think these last three events are in a weird spot and I feel bad because I love the 3M. I've played there a couple times and I love that city and I love that course and they do an amazing job with the tournament. I love this course, I love this tournament, I feel like they do a really good job.

I haven't played Wyndham in a bit, but that's a pristine golf course, but it's just in a funky spot for the top players because you're trying to figure out if you want to get your kind of last rest for a while because you finish the TOUR Championship and you go straight into the next season and then Presidents Cup or Ryder Cup. So it's a very odd spot.

I was just playing this because I thought it would be best for my schedule, I thought it would be best to prepare for the FedExCup and then hopefully the Presidents Cup the next season and stay as sharp as possible. So when I saw the field list, it was exciting to see Will and Cameron and Tony and all those guys playing just because I think they'll bring a bunch of juice to the event and I think that an event like this deserves some juice from the guys. It will be a good test with the field and a good test with the golf course.

Q. Max, two wins this season and eight other top-20 finishes put you nicely 11th on the FedEx point list currently. Looking back, how big was your win at Fortinet, the season-opening event, in terms of mindset and scheduling?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it was great. I've never played well in the fall and if you look at the statistics for the entire season in making the FedExCup, the fall seems to be a barometer for things to come. So it was really nice to kind of get off to that I guess like a perfect start winning the first event.

It didn't change much to my schedule, but it definitely eased my mind as to not feeling like I was chasing Top 30 all season. I haven't made the TOUR Championship yet, it's obviously been a very big goal of mine, and to feel like I was kind of in this spot where I felt like I had a leg up, that was a big deal because then I felt like it's made the rest of the season, it's been my best season obviously, but it's made it seem a lot easier because I don't feel like I'm pressing. I don't feel like I need to do X, Y and Z. I feel like I've felt that comfort all year and that's kind of shown me like for coming seasons like that's just how I have to play because when I'm calm and comfortable and confident in where I'm standing, I just can go play some golf and play some good golf.

Q. Max, have you had some time, has it sunk in yet getting to play with Tiger at The Open?

MAX HOMA: Yeah.

Q. What was the big highlight?

MAX HOMA: What's the -- I mean, 18 was like the ultimate highlight, but for me it's as like a

dorky golf kid getting to chat with him that first day. He got off to a poor start and wasn't sure if he was going to want to chat and he came up to me on 3 and started talking. That was cool. We had about a six and a half hour round, so we had a lot of time to talk. It was just cool. We were talking about stuff in the ninth fairway. I don't know, the thing I'll remember the most probably was the 18th walk just because an historic moment. One of those things I feel like people say like I'll never forget where I was when and like, I was there. So I thought that was neat. And it was cool to see the fans just show him the utmost respect that he has earned, so that was cool.

But I think the stuff that I'll take away was just getting to chat with him and feel like it was just another round of golf with a dude that most of us have looked up to and try to shape our games around and try to be like, talking about closing out rounds, the way he closed out rounds, the way he prepared. I thought that was just neat. That's why I've always wanted to play with him just to see what it was like and then hopefully make it feel normal because I feel if you can do that, you can kind of do whatever.

But yeah he was really, really cool to us. I think, what I took away from it is I think he realizes now how much respect we all have for him and how much he's like meant to us and the game of golf. I feel like he was just like couldn't have been like a better playing partner. Like I'm not going to bother him while we're playing, I'm going to ask him questions, but it would have still been cool to talk to him and that effort, I felt it was really nice of him.

Q. From Tiger to your buddy Joel, it's pretty much the same thing, right?

MAX HOMA: It's like so the opposite. It's -- what a contrast. They say you have to be humbled in this game, so I've been humbled, went from Tiger to Joel. What a world this golf is. We talk a lot more, I know that.

Q. What was -- going off of Cam's question, what's the strangest place someone's asked you to take a photo or sign an autograph so far?

MAX HOMA: I was at my friend Stephen's wedding. Steve and Sara, two of my closest friends' wedding. I went to the restroom they had set up. It was one of those nice outdoor restrooms so it was very small and I went in there and a guy was asked me. We were washing our hands. He looked over, and he's like, Oh, do you mind if we get a picture? I mean, okay. I mean, there's a stall in the background, but I'll do it. So that was definitely the weirdest place.

Q. How would you rate the swings of your amateurs this morning?

MAX HOMA: They were great, and I had really good group. They were awesome. The guys were really good players so it was a joy to be with them. It was very early so I needed that spark and they were four great players and great guys.

Q. I'm just curious, obviously crazy times in golf right now, I was wondering what's

the camaraderie like among the players right now on the PGA Tour given everything that's going on and you guys are the ones who decided to stay?

MAX HOMA: I don't think it's too different. We always have something to talk about, so it's not awkward anymore, trying to say -- normally the first question is how have you been, how's your family, how's your kids, now it's can you believe so-and-so is not on tour anymore?

It's the same. I've been pleasantly surprised how friendly and cool so many people are with each other out here. It is competitive obviously, but it is nice. Like I've made a lot of good friends on this tour and I don't have any like bad anything with anybody. I feel like everyone's been cordial.

Some things get, through the media and through like actions you see on a golf course, some people can say, Oh, so-and-so might not be the best guy or whatever, but I haven't seen much of anything bad, at least like personally within the players' relationships, which is cool.

It's like a comforting feeling knowing that you're going to come out here and have a walk with two guys and even if you don't know them well, it's going to be usually a joy to be around. I don't think it's changed any because of the current state of the game of golf.

Q. You mentioned obviously going to the Tiger's game, but what other things do you enjoy doing in Detroit around the time of coming here?

MAX HOMA: Like I say, I went to the baseball game last year and again this year so I really enjoy doing that. Unless my wife is here, I don't really do a lot during the week. I kind of sit and do normal boring stuff. I know like a sushi place I've been in Birmingham, so I'm going to try to go there tomorrow night. I can't remember what it's called.

I usually stay downtown. This year I'm down by the course. Downtown, we'll walk around, go to all the cool food spots. Yeah, I'm an incredibly boring person during the week of a golf tournament. I fortunately have my coach, caddie, Joe Skovron, and my agent, Matt, staying with me so we can solve all the world's problems overnight over dinner. Other than that, I sit on the couch a lot.

Q. When is the statute of limitations up on the thing you Tweeted about with your wife taking a water bottle from wherever. Was that a local establishment? Can you kind of expand on that?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, locals at the Henry, we go there all the time. I think her picture will be up here as a potential -- they might need a warning label for her.

It's so funny, my wife is a rock star and is also one of the most lovely, fun people I've ever met and when she gets scatterbrained, it is hilarious because she would make you laugh without doing all that stuff, but her laugh will make you laugh. And when she does -- I mean,

she always says she wants to not tell me what she did because it's embarrassing, but she tells me the moment it happens. So when she left her phone in the fridge, we called me after it probably warmed up a little bit.

She walked out of this restaurant. I guess she didn't quite get outside, but she comes out laughing and I said, What could possibly happen in the last 25 seconds that you haven't been sitting here? She goes, I wanted to get a water cup and just walked straight into their refrig and grabbed a water bottle and left. I was like, All right, I guess I might need to apologize to somebody, but we can figure it out. Yeah, it's been fun.

Yesterday was a bummer, it was the first baby appointment I've missed, but the rest has been really cool seeing that part of life. It's a reminder golf's not everything, there's a lot of things that will make you a lot happier and have a lot more fun with.

JACK RYAN: Thank you, Max, for your time.