

ROCKET MORTGAGE CLASSIC

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
June 28, 2023



MAX HOMA

ALLIE LeCLAIR: We would like to welcome Max Homa into the interview room at the 2023 Rocket Mortgage Classic. Max enters this week as the highest-ranked player in the field and is making his fourth start at the Rocket Mortgage Classic.

Max, if you can just give an opening statement about your return to Detroit Golf Club.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it's great to be here. I love this golf course. It was a shame to see, I don't know, the quasi tornado that came through here, but it's a pretty amazing to watch all of the grounds crew.

And I heard that they had to bring in 120 other people, extra people to help. So that was pretty amazing. I'm very, very impressed and very thankful that they did what they did.

When we were here Tuesday, it was a little, or Monday I mean, it was a little scary, trees had fallen down, and then by yesterday it looked normal again. So I'm amazed by all of them. I'm happy that it's gotten cleared out so we can have a great golf tournament in a city that shows out and really supports this event.

ALLIE LeCLAIR: You're heading into the week with two wins and eight top-10s so far this season. What are your goals this week and the rest of the season?

MAX HOMA: Just keep playing good golf. I've been swinging the club really well, been putting it well, all the things feel really good so just kind of keep doing that. I'm coming off two missed cuts and I guess typically maybe a year or so prior I would try to reinvent the wheel. But everything feels great, just golf is a mean, a mean game.

So my goals are just to go keep playing golf the way I play, kind of make it feel like I'm at home and just enjoy my time and wait for golf to love me again a little bit.

Q. Max, you've played in four of these five events and you mentioned a little bit about the course and everything, but what was it initially that drew you to playing here? And since you've been here a few years now, how have you seen this tournament grow and do you feel it gaining in popularity not just with fans but with players as well?

MAX HOMA: The reason I played the first year was kind of just simply it really fit the schedule well. That's typically how a new event would go. Once we left I think the first year, you know, I really enjoyed the golf course, the layout's really fun. Obviously scores get a bit



low for my preference, I'm a 10- to 15-under guy, so it's always going to be tough for me to get that hot at an event like this, but the layout's really fun.

Like I said, the city comes and supports, so it makes it really enjoyable. They obviously do a great job in that corner of 14, 15, 16, 17. I don't know, it's just a fun event. I've enjoyed my time here and yeah, I guess it just kind of checks a lot of boxes. Plus, I'm buddies with Jared Goff. He's a Lion now, so I feel like I've got to come to Detroit at least once a year, so it's a cool event for me.

Q. Max, kind of speaking to what you just said, you played some really tough grind-it-out courses over the last six weeks. How does your game plan and your mindset change on these easier scoring courses such as the Travelers last week, and even Tony Finau predicting a 30-under winning score this week?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it's always tricky. I mean, I'm probably not the guy to ask, I don't think I've ever won an event that was in the 20s, or 30s definitely not.

There's like I think the temptation to play really aggressive. In my opinion, I just think it's you just have to get hot, I don't think you can change your strategy. You're obviously going to have to putt the ball really well. Anybody who's ever shot that many under par has rolled it great, so you're going to have to hole a lot of putts.

But I don't think I would change anything. Oddly enough, I would imagine a goal would be to actually stay somewhat patient because you're going to see somebody the first day tomorrow shoot -- I guess I'm in the morning so I won't have to deal with this much, so somebody's going to be 9, 10 under if I had to guess, so not chasing that and letting that come to you.

There's obviously, if the golf course is going to have scores that low, there's going to be a lot of scoring holes and you just kind of wait for your moments.

And again, a PGA TOUR golf course. I just played a pro-am so it's like not easy, so there's still going to be some tough spots. I think the game plan when the courses are very low scores is just to not make mental mistakes, not make unforced errors and you know you're going to make a lot of birdies.

Q. Max, with that in mind, you shared a great story on Pardon My Take about you and your caddie taking that 3-wood and you hit it off the metal bar, went in the water. You said you wanted to stay maybe a little more patient on this course, but with that in mind, is there a time when you might need to bring out a shot like that again or any special shots during a course like this week coming up?

MAX HOMA: We don't have as many of those backstops I guess that could bank it on. Yeah, I would say that the two coolest kind of holes for risk-reward coming down the stretch is 17's a good one. If the wind's playing into, all the par 5s play into the wind, so if it plays a



little longer and that's one you're going to want to get it up around the green in two.

But the most exciting is 14. I don't think a ton of guys can get there in two if it's into the wind. But if it's not into the wind, a lot of guys can get there but it's still a tough shot over water and long isn't really great.

Like I said, it's one of those things you've got to pick your spots, and I find that hole will be kind of a pivotal hole. No. 17 there's not much trouble around the green, but you still need to leave it in a good spot because the green's pretty intricate.

I don't know, that's one of those things you kind of feel out when you get out there. I'm hoping I'll at least be in the fairway to have decision to make, that's step one.

Like I said, there there's a lot of birdie opportunities out here, so you just kind of have to wait for those moments and then make those decisions.

Q. With that in mind, Area 313 is a big thing here for local charities and even digital divides, what they're aiming for. Does that put any pressure on yourself to be able to hit low and even possibly get that hole-in-one on one of these days?

MAX HOMA: Not really. That's the most absurd challenge that's ever been bestowed upon golfers.

It is fun, though. That 15th hole gets rocking, it's really enjoyable so I really enjoy playing that hole. Obviously the Waste Management has started the kind of enclosed type golf arena for a hole, and some other tournaments have done a good job doing that. This is obviously one of them, so I really enjoy playing that hole. It's not super hard so you can kind of get some roars out, make a birdie hopefully, make a 1. I know Szabo I think made one last year.

But yeah, I will not probably be going 3-1-3 this week, and if I do, I might just walk off before I get to 17 tee.

Q. Max, you mentioned the low scores and how you're more of a 15-under kind of guy. Last week the numbers were low at the Travelers. Rory made some comments about how technology has kind of passed that course by. I guess what are your thoughts on that? Do you think it's OK that there's a few tournaments out here that the scores just get really low?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I think variety's fine. Weather plays a big part. Like this week, I played here when it's firm, it still gets to be pretty low scores because it plays shorter. But you can't really do much about this week, it's rained a ton and I don't really know how you would fix that.

But yeah, variety is good. We have events like the Charles Schwab, I think 9 under won. That played very firm and it's in an area at that time of year where it didn't rain and you could



really bake it out.

Then you have events like Riviera that plays tough typically. Hilton Head and then, yeah, we're going to have events like this where you're going to have to show that you can go low.

I think that the ultimate greatest golfer or golfers should be able to do all of those things and I find that Justin can do all those things. Justin Thomas, everybody. He can do all of those things. So I think it's important to have that variety, especially like in these designated events, you have some that are ridiculously hard and maybe have some that can shoot 10 under, I think that's a skill in itself.

Q. Max, considering you went through a true slump, what you're going through right now, would you call it a mini slump?

MAX HOMA: No. I missed the cut by one and two. I played quite well. It's not a mini slump. I have eight top-10s this year and I had a Top-10 like three events ago, I think. I think I'm good.

Q. What would you call it?

MAX HOMA: What would I call it? Frustrating. But no, I would not quite call this one a slump. My last round I played was a bogey-free round, so in my actual slump I had a lot more birdie-free rounds, so I think I'm sitting just fine.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Hey, man, Justin. I'm playing in the tournament this week. Of your pairing last week, who was your favorite that wasn't Wyndham Clark and why?

MAX HOMA: Oh, man, I think I have to go with Justin Thomas. He makes me feel tall and funny.

JUSTIN THOMAS: All right, that's the end of the question.

ALLIE LeCLAIR: Thanks so much, Max.

