

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTE
July 27, 2023

JOE HIGHSMITH (-8)



Q. Great round. Sort of what were some of the highlights today with the low round?

JOE HIGHSMITH: I don't know if I had really any crazy highlights, it was just super solid. And I putted really well, which was great, saved me a bunch of shots. I hit it pretty nice as well. So it was just, yeah, overall a pretty solid day.

Q. And you played great early in the year and had to miss some time. What's the -- what was the decision like to have to rest, sit out, and what's the recovery been like?

JOE HIGHSMITH: Yeah, it's tough. Yeah, missing kind of a big bulk of the season, so I've been sitting at home. Watching everyone play was tough and fighting the injury. But I'm starting to feel pretty good. Actually, have my trainer in town this week so he's been helping out a bunch. Yeah, I'm starting to come around.

It was honestly a relatively speedy recovery, only had to miss maybe five or six events. We've still got plenty of tournaments left. Yeah, no, it sucked, but I'm feeling pretty good now.

Q. What's been the toughest part sort of working back into form and just coming back in general?

JOE HIGHSMITH: It's been tough with the swing. We've kind of made some adjustments in like how I set up to the ball to take some stress off my back. That's kind of been tough just trying to somewhat not relearn how to swing, but it's definitely different. So that's been a little tricky.

But I kind of found something yesterday and hit it pretty nicely today. And also, yeah, I had the putter working. It's been good. As long as I'm playing out there without pain, so it's great.

Q. Is this is the first time you've had to kind of come back from an injury before?

JOE HIGHSMITH: Yeah, I've never had to actually miss a tournament because of my back. I've kind of like fought some back pain for a while now. It got pretty bad. I think it was in Knoxville I had to start missing tournaments. Yeah, this was the first time that it had gotten that bad.



Yeah, I'm honestly feeling like pretty good now. Yeah, no, it's been a good recovery.

Q. What was the actual injury?

JOE HIGHSMITH: Honestly, like they don't really know. I've gotten a lot of different opinions on what's going on, but it's kind of a low back L5-S1 area is where I have the pain. Yeah, nothing like fractured or anything like that. We got an MRI and it didn't show too much, just like a little disc bulge, but yeah, it's nothing too serious.

Q. So kind of rest was the main thing?

JOE HIGHSMITH: Yeah, definitely changing the way I swing a little bit has helped a bunch and then just kind of doing some PT, rehab stuff. Obviously some rest as well.

Q. Any procedures or anything?

JOE HIGHSMITH: No, yeah, I try to stay away from surgery. Yeah, I don't think I really need it, either. It's not too bad of an injury.

Q. Kind of a year into your pro career, what's kind of the vibe been like so far compared to college? Anything that's either surprised you or you've found yourself more prepared about now than you did when you came out?

JOE HIGHSMITH: Yeah, honestly, I think it's fairly similar. Obviously it's like it means a lot more than it ever did in college. In terms of like the competition and stuff, I mean, it's -- I was on a great team at Pepperdine, so like always competing with like good guys.

And the top guys in college are so good now that it's like it hasn't been too crazy of an adjustment. We've definitely seen that with like how well all the PGA TOUR U guys have done so early.

Yeah, so it's been a nice transition, for sure. But it's kind of the same stuff. You're playing good, it translates pretty well and stuff.

Q. Have you had any like kind of learning curve type of things where like you -- a way you prepare now or anything you think about is different than it was when you first came up?

JOE HIGHSMITH: I wouldn't say anything is too different in terms of like preparation or anything that -- I guess the biggest thing I've learned is just like every shot is so important. You kind of like, you don't really learn that until you're like playing for a living. And basically everyone's trying to get on Tour and move on from wherever they're playing at and stuff. It's just like just really treating every shot really seriously I think is the biggest thing I've learned. Yeah, just like valuing every shot as much as any other one.



Q. Is it -- do you describe it as like fun or taxing or intense? Like the vibe of being a pro golfer, what is that vibe like?

JOE HIGHSMITH: I mean, it's fun when you're playing good obviously, but it definitely can get pretty difficult. Like obviously -- sorry, I got sunscreen in my eye.

But it's definitely stressful. I mean, I would say for me it hasn't been -- it's been like relatively smooth sailing. Like I'm not -- I mean, it's obviously just getting started so I haven't had any like -- I'm not trying to like feed a family or anything like that. I've had like a pretty good start to my pro career, so it hasn't been anything too crazy stressful or anything.

But it's a ton of fun. Just like the competition is so good out here, being on this tour is great. It's pretty cool the opportunity we all have this year, and yeah.

