

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES
January 30, 2025



VIKTOR HOVLAND (-7)

Q. Viktor, you told us yesterday that, although it's relative that you suck.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah.

Q. So what happened 24 hours later?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: You know, I can still play and today was good conditions And I hit a few really nice wedges and started making some putts.

You know, I'm trying to obviously get my mind out of the technical aspects of it and just trying to play golf. Obviously I can't complain about the -- whatever the stats for today I gained probably off the tee and into the greens. Looks great on paper. It's just how my mind works is naturally trying to extrapolate what I did today and how would I play over the course of a season.

I'm still not happy with my game, how it looks, but that doesn't mean that I can have great individual days or great individual tournaments. So I'm still really pumped to shoot 65, but I know that I'm not going to just let that overlook the problems or the issues that I have in my game. They're still there, but I was able to overcome it today.

Q. I was going to say, does it almost become like a mental challenge to get yourself in the right frame of mind where you're not too hard on yourself, you can accept days like this and sort of build off them?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, well, your expectations just start, you know, lowering drastically because I know what I'm capable of. 2023 I had the best season of my career and I know I can play at that level again. And I want to play at that level every single time.

But I know that as I'm hitting worse and worse shots, eventually you kind of have to be a little bit kinder to yourself and just go, OK, I might hit some terrible shots but let's try to hit the terrible shots in an OK position instead of in the water or short-siding myself. Let's try to plot my way around and shoot OK scores and then we can work on things after the round and just keep getting a little bit better.

Q. What do you do day to day then to be able to get yourself, to Ryan's point, to get yourself to a mental state to play your best that day whatever state your game is in?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I guess I'm still trying to figure that out. To be quite honest with you, I try to care a little bit less. I care a lot about trying to play well and when you don't quite

have the level to match that expectation, it hurts. Constantly trying to come out here and pump yourself up to play well and then you're disappointed because you can't play at that level, you know, it takes a toll psychologically. So just trying to have a little bit more fun, not care as much about the result and just go from there.

Q. On the scale of suckiness, what's the difference between when you feel like you're playing so poorly that you don't even want to go to a big event, which you've done before --

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah.

Q. -- versus this week, feeling like you suck but still coming here?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: What was the question, like where I'm at?

Q. What's the difference in, yeah, how you felt. How close were you to not coming this week?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I'm pretty close, to be honest with you. It's just this tournament is -- I know that this golf course is easier for me to kind of plot myself around.

I think I would have a tougher time if we were playing Memorial or another kind of -- I know, yeah, but not with this game. I'm just saying like at a different golf course or different conditions, my ball-striking would be a little bit more exposed and it would be tougher for me to play well.

But I know that this week, if we have OK weather, I can plot -- if I can just get it out in the fairway off the tee, wedge it close, make a few putts, I can still compete, but it's tougher at different events. And for me it's like I would rather work on things outside of a tournament and feel ready and then be super excited to compete.

Q. What were you most happy with today?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: It's a combination. I hit it really straight off the tee. Even though it didn't feel all that great, it was really straight. Wedged it really nicely and my wedge game has not been very good, so wedged it really nice, and got a lot of confidence on the greens. It's hard to kind of pick out one thing. It was a lot of good today.

Q. Just out of curiosity, you're probably the most well versed player out here in terms of swing theory and instruction technically. How about on the mental side, do you seek sports psychologists or do you just kind of figure it out as you go?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I don't. You know, I'm sure there's a lot of smart people and I could learn from a lot of different people. The thing is I'm very technical driven and I know that if my fundamentals are in a good spot and you see good shots and you're hitting the ball

where you're looking, it's easier to think better as well.

But when the ball is going all over the place and you're paying a guy to sit there and say "just be positive," that kind of grinds my gears a little bit. I don't want to hear that.

There are definitely mental techniques, breathing techniques. Or you don't have to be delusional, but you can definitely change the story you're telling yourself to make you feel better.

So there are valuable things to mental training that you can do, but at the end of the day if you can't hit the shots that you're wanting to hit, it doesn't matter.

Q. Will you hit balls today, or are you pretty --

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I'll probably hit a few. Just depends. Maybe I'll get inspired and find a new idea or something.