

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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LUDVIG ÅBERG



MODERATOR: Like to welcome Ludvig Åberg here to the media center at the Valero Texas Open.

Ludvig, making your third start in this event, if we can just get some opening thoughts entering this week.

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, looking forward to it. It's a lot of fun playing tournaments in Texas where I went to school. It will be a good test, the golf course as always can be pretty challenging. Looks like we're going to have some nice weather, so it will be fun.

MODERATOR: T-14 here last year and you just mentioned the course has some challenges. What about TPC San Antonio makes it so demanding.

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I think obviously need to keep the ball in front of you off the tee. Once you start to miss a little bit it can be a little penalizing. You get some of these greens when they get baked and fast and some wind coming down in the afternoon can make it a little challenging. It's a cool place. I've played a lot of golf here, we played some college events here a couple years ago too, so I really like it.

Q. Ludvig, big win at the Genesis Invitational this year. What's the value of getting a huge win just right off the bat this season?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, obviously it's really nice. It was a really cool week to be able to win a Signature Event. It was my first one, so obviously to do it sort of that early in the season is really nice. Obviously you don't have to stress about those points early on. Obviously you always try to get as many points as you want, but it's always nice to do that early on. Obviously Torrey Pines is a really cool place that I was able to win a golf tournament at.

Q. TPC San Antonio, you got your first start here in 2022 as an amateur when you were still in college. You played here as well last year, third start here. Just what is your level of familiarity with this golf course like relative to other courses you play on Tour?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: It's definitely one of them that I've played the most, the most rounds at, the most tournaments at. Yeah, it's always so much easier coming back to a tournament that you've played before. You sort of know your way around. I knew this morning where the gym was, so like those things makes it a lot easier.

Then practice round gets a lot easier. I didn't really spend any time on the golf course on



Monday. Kind of came in Tuesday and was able to play nine and nine. It was great, makes it a little bit easier.

But come Thursday it doesn't really change anything. We all try to hit to the targets and if you don't, you're going to be punished. That doesn't really come with experience, but it will be cool to tee it up again here, looking forward to it.

Q. Obviously you played here as an amateur and you played your college golf here in the state of Texas. How has playing in Texas conditions shaped you as a golfer and helped you prepare for other courses on the PGA TOUR?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, so I went to school in Lubbock where the wind gets blowing in the spring. Could be the same down here in San Antonio where you can get some windy days. I loved playing college golf. We don't really have anything similar in Europe, in Sweden where I grew up, so for me it was a no-brainer to come over here for college.

Now the PGA TOUR U program is so good that it's just going to make college better. You get to play against the best amateurs in the world on obviously Tour event golf courses, too. So I loved it and I would encourage everyone else to do the same.

Q. You had a very strong showing in the Masters last year after playing in this event. How did playing here at Valero help you prepare for the Masters last year and make it a no-brainer start for you this year?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I think so, I really enjoy this place. I like playing the week before just to sort of -- now that I had two weeks off, I don't want to say rust, I don't like the word rust, but there's getting into tournament mode and the golf course really prepares you for that. It's a challenging golf course and you need to be very specific with your targets just like at Augusta where you have -- obviously need to be on the correct side of things. This is a good way to prepare for that.

But when I'm here and playing, I don't really care about Augusta, I'm trying to be where I am and try to play well in this tournament, and then come Monday next week we'll focus on Augusta.

Q. Ludvig, how would you grade your approach play so far this year and how do you -- where do you stand with that aspect of your game going into this week?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Not amazing, to be honest. I felt like I was swinging it OK early on and a little bit better now, but I still sort of have this where my face gets a little bit open at the bottom and I can't really turn. Like to get the face a little bit more shut and closer so I can turn and not necessarily flip my hands if I want to hit a nice little draw.

Yeah, I think you're always trying to get a little better at those things, but it's definitely something that's going to be important coming up in these next events where obviously



Augusta is almost like a second shot golf course where you need to position yourself on the greens. Even this week as well. So I'd like to get that a little bit sharper and be able to gain a little bit more strokes that way.

Q. Ludvig, I know that you said you're thinking about this golf tournament the entire time, but a year ago at this point you never played at Augusta.

How are you different now? You're almost playing with house money, right? You know what you're going into, you have a great finish behind you last year there as well as here. Is there a different sense of calm as you get into this week as opposed to being anxious and nervous?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I mean, I think there's more a sense of familiarity where I know that I've been in this position before. Obviously last year I hadn't even played a major at this point and before I played one, I didn't really know what to expect before you actually get the chance to experience it. That was probably the biggest change.

I was still very comfortable in my own game, I was still very comfortable in my own skin so that didn't necessarily change. But yeah, having those sort of experiences and knowing -- playing Augusta when it's windy or playing it in different sorts of conditions, experience is always going to help you. I feel like that was the case of last year where I came into the tournament and I didn't really have those experiences, but now I do, which is quite nice. Try to use those to my advantage.

Yeah, once again, I don't think that will separate you too much. I think a lot of guys have played Augusta before obviously and it comes with experience, for sure.

Q. I think you have a hole-out bet with Joe; is that right?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah.

Q. At this point where do you stand with that bet?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I had a strong three-week stretch.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about Joe and just kind of what a decision that was for you in the process and bringing in someone like him to kind of take a youngster?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, it's been great for me. Obviously so we started in January of last year, in '24, and we have just over a year under our belt together. I feel like we've had a really good time together.

Joe has kind of helped me to view golf a little bit differently, to take sort of the misses more into account because obviously you always try to hit the perfect golf shot, but if you don't, then you try to make sure where those misses are.



The comfort that he gives me sort of when everything around you is storming, it's always nice to lean on Joe. He's a very steady, calm person just like I am. I would have a hard time having a caddie that's way up here when I'm not. He definitely helps me with that.

Q. My last one, my girlfriend will be proud of this question, I can't believe I'm asking this: We know you as a fairly simple fashion guy and suddenly there's images of you in crazy pants and all kinds of things going on. What's it like to step into that all of a sudden as someone who's fashionable and being shown off in that way?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I like clothes, but I also like neutral colors I guess. I like fashion. I'm not super into it, but I'm really excited about this line coming out next week and I think it will be cool. Super proud to sort of be able to wear that and to represent Adidas in that way. I'm excited about how it's going to go next week.

Q. Last one from me, state of Texas is obviously where you went to school, it was probably your first prolonged experience away from Sweden and the comforts of home. It's a very different place from Sweden as you can attest. What does that state mean to you personally in your development as just a person?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Oh, for sure. I mean, obviously when I went to college I wanted to be a professional golfer, but you don't really know always how it's going to pan out.

For me coming over here, it was a great experience to get my education as well. I was playing in one of the top programs in the country. It was my home for four years, stayed here for a little bit after even when I got done with school. It was definitely a great experience and I can't talk nicely enough about Lubbock and Texas Tech.

Yeah, I was there last weekend just hanging out with some buddies. Fortunately watched the basketball game. It would have been cool to be here in San Antonio for the Final Four, but it is what it is. I'm still a Texas Tech fan whenever they play on TV and I try to watch as much as I can.

Q. Was there any classic stories of culture shock or something early on in your time where you showed up and you were like, wow, this place is really different?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I mean, there's multiple things that kind of comes to my mind when it comes to differences between Texas and Sweden, especially Lubbock. But I enjoyed it, I thought it was great to see a different side of the world that I hadn't seen before. Obviously growing up in Sweden, that's one kind of culture, then I came over here and I saw this, which was really cool. I loved traveling, I loved seeing that part. Yeah, I'll be back in Lubbock whenever I can next time.

