

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES
January 29, 2026



BROOKS KOEPKA (+1)

Q. Brooks, back with a 1-over 73 on the South Course to start the event. How would you assess that round both from the way you played but also the way you feel?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I felt like it was pretty good. I struck it really well. Like I said, the driver wasn't -- I didn't hit enough fairways. If I was able to get to the back of the ball I felt like I hit a good quality shot. Didn't really make any putts besides 18 right there.

Yeah, it felt good. It's been a while since I played competitive golf, so I like the way I'm playing, I just need to kind of play my way into it.

Q. Was there much nervousness when you went to the first tee?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, yeah, there definitely was.

Q. Did you cope with it OK?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I hit the fairway. I guess I should have been more nervous the rest of the round.

Q. Why nervous, Brooks? You've been doing this a long time. You've played majors, won them, won tournaments. Why would today be nervous?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Just because I care. I think I've fallen back in love with the game. And honestly, watching my son play a little bit and wanting to be able to see him watch me, or I guess want him to watch me play well and realize how much this game's given me, how fun it is and how cool it is to just be out here.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the atmosphere and the reception and how it felt overall?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, it was great. Yeah, the fans were awesome today. I think it was very cool to hear "welcome back."

It was pretty much every hole, which is great. I loved to hear it and I'm excited for the next few days.

Q. (No microphone.)

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't know.



Q. Did you prepare for anything?

BROOKS KOEPKA: No, I didn't --

Q. I'm sorry.

BROOKS KOEPKA: C'mon, buddy. Go ahead, go ahead, ask your question. You have to now.

Q. What were you expecting or did you prepare for anything gallery wise? And then I had a followup.

BROOKS KOEPKA: No, I didn't -- I didn't -- I don't like thinking ahead at all or trying to anticipate what was going to happen, but I wasn't sure, which is kind of weird being uneasy, or you don't really know.

From the first tee on, it was great. It actually made me settle down a little bit. Like I said, it made me feel good just to be out here. It was a good group with Max and Ludvig, I enjoyed that. The whole day was great.

Q. It made me wonder, if you can recall from Portland, the first LIV event, did you get any of that out there? Was that much of a problem? Was there any chirping from the gallery? I wasn't there.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Honestly, I don't recall. I don't remember. I don't recall any.

Q. Have you ever been heckled?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Oh, yeah. Are you kidding?

Q. (No microphone.)

BROOKS KOEPKA: I've definitely been heckled. I don't know, I enjoy it, it's fun. It's sports, right? That's what makes it cool. Sometimes it makes you lock in and play a little better, which is always fun.

I'm not saying I want it all the time, so nobody think that.

Yeah, I just cared about my perception, what people thought or what the fans thought. It's easy when you're around the players and they come and talk to you or you talk to them, or caddies or people around here, but everybody else, I wasn't sure.

Q. Nothing but positive out there? You didn't hear anything except for the guys whose ball you didn't sign?



BROOKS KOEPKA: What was the last one?

Q. Except for the guy whose --

BROOKS KOEPKA: And Rickie, I heard Rickie all day.

Q. Brooks, you said that you fell in love with the game again. How long had you not been in love with it before that?

BROOKS KOEPKA: It wasn't that you fall out of it, but I think you can fall deeper in love with it.

I mean, I haven't played competitively for I think Rickie said 14 weeks, so it's a lot of time off, a lot of time to think, a lot of time to reflect. If you do that for a while sitting on the couch, you can go pretty deep on what you feel. I'm just excited.

Q. What are you appreciating right now?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Everything. Just the opportunity to be out here. I think that's the main thing. Just being out here and seeing how quickly this has all kind of come together. It's kind of blown my mind and I'm just grateful to be out here and have a chance to compete with these guys.

Q. When was the last time you were nervous playing?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't know.

Q. Did it feel good to be nervous?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, anytime you're in contention I think you get really nervous. I don't want to say it fizzles out, but you become more accustomed to it. I think obviously the longer layoff played a little part in that. I think there's a mixture of both in being completely fair.

Q. Brooks, I have a memory lane question for you. In 2022 you played the final round of the Phoenix Open with Scottie Scheffler where he got his first win. Can you think back to that day, please, and is there anything that stands out? Any recollections or anecdotes or memories from that?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I had blonde hair, I think. I think I had blonde hair.

I don't know, it's always impressive anytime you play with Scottie. Just being around him, the way he goes about it. Him and Ted, they come up with a good game plan. They obviously -- Scottie's execution is really good. It's impressive how well he's -- how long he's



been this consistent and played this well.

It's cool to see, right? Obviously I've watched a lot of golf and watched a lot of him. I think that also plays a part in kind of driving this falling in love with the game again as well.

Q. Going back to the news of the day yesterday, what was your reaction to Patrick Reed coming back to the PGA TOUR?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, saw it on -- I was with Jeff Pierce on 2 and he just kind of stopped in the fairway and asked me if I saw it.

I'm like no, I'm out here on the golf course, my phone's in the bag, so I didn't see anything.

Yeah, it's wild. Whatever Patrick wants to do and to be the best golfer he can be, best for his family, I'm in full support of that. I think everybody's different, got to make decisions for what's best for their family.

If he's doing that, then I'm 100 percent behind him, whatever he needs to do.

Q. When you made the decision to leave LIV whenever that was in the fall, was there any kind of period of doubt that this day would be here even this soon or even when it would be at all and was that at all making that decision more difficult?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I wasn't fast forwarding four years from when I went there.

Q. No, no, I'm sorry. When you made the decision to leave LIV, whenever it was in the fall, a couple weeks ago, a month ago, whatever, to now --

BROOKS KOEPKA: Oh, OK.

Q. -- was there any doubt about it coming together this fast? Did you have any concerns it might be a while?

BROOKS KOEPKA: No. I understood what -- when I contacted them, I knew there's a possibility I could be out for a while. But it's just like anything, if there's a penalty to be paid to get out here and get back, I was going to do whatever the Tour needed me to do. It was very simple. Whatever they wanted, I was willing to do.

Obviously got a call Thursday night and went up there to see Brian on Friday and he told me everything. Yeah, I was very obviously happy with it. I just didn't know what all it was going to entail. Even flying up there, I had no clue.

Q. You mentioned there were going to be some nerves heading into the Tuesday press conference and then the Thursday first round today. How good is it just to get all of this behind you and then move on to what you want the PGA TOUR to look like



from now on?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I think I was more nervous for the press stuff on Tuesday. Being bullied by Doug helped. But no, it was good to get that out of the way I think just because, like I said, I just care. I care about what everybody's thinking out here, what everybody's doing, and just trying to be as good of a person and good of a player as I can be.

Just wanted a warm reception. Just like everybody else, you walk into a room nobody wants to feel exiled, they just want to be loved. I mean, that's human nature I think.

Q. This isn't to sound as bad as it might, but when's the last time you cared about stuff like that, about what people thought of you, because you always had a kind of swagger about you that you just did your thing and didn't matter what anyone said.

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't know, that's tough. I'm the only one in the entire world that's going through this situation so it's very difficult to explain. But I'm enjoying it, I really am.

