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BROOKS KOEPKA

MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Brooks Koepka here to the interview room here at the 2026 RSM Classic.

Brooks, this is a debut for you. What went into making the decision to tee it up this week?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, just thought -- I've made a few changes kind of in the offseason, started working with Darren May and then working with Faxon a little bit in putting. So I just want to test it out, see where I'm at, kind of have a good game plan going into the next two months to start the season and just really test it out.

MODERATOR: Following Wyndham you said that there were going to be some changes you were going to make and you just mentioned it now. What were the changes or what were the primary focuses for you?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I felt like ball-striking was consistent on the year and kind of got a little sloppy at the end of the year, but obviously putting was a huge thing for the entirety of the year. Just kind of just working with Fax and decluttering some things that had gotten in there. Really just trying to clean it up and make it more athletic, more reactional and make the putter feel like the putter is flowing a little bit better.

I feel like we've made progress. It's not all the way where I'd love to see it, but progress is progress and that's why I'm here.

MODERATOR: You just mentioned it, your first time playing this event. You just got off the course, Seaside, played 18 holes. How would you assess this course?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Today was brutal. It was very windy, a little bit of rain. The greens are very firm, but I know they redid the golf course from the last time I guess the guys played it. It's probably only been open, what, a couple months I'm assuming? Maybe total redo? Yeah, it's in great shape. They did a good job with it so I'm very impressed.

Q. Brooks, you mentioned some swing changes. What specifically are you guys working on and then what specifically on the greens are you looking to change?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I'll start with the greens, just easier. Just more speed control, be more athletic, be reactionary, kind of use my feel. I lost feel kind of all throughout the year. Just making sure that I'm not as static over the ball and not as much time where I can think. Just make it more reactionary, that's been the big thing.

Then swing, it's nothing really with my hands or anything, just the way my body moves. Just trying to be a little more efficient with the way my body moves and try to prolong my career and make sure that I can swing the club effectively and consistently.

I'm starting to see it. It's obviously difficult today to really get a feel on it with the wind and everything, but I like the way the shots are coming out in the right window, the right flight, right spin. Seeing a lot of good things so far.

Q. Do you ever look back at past Brooks Koepkas and try to emulate some stuff you've done in the past?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I did that a lot last year just trying to find my way, but right now I think it looks pretty good, pretty similar. I think it's -- the thought process from nine years ago to now, like the swing I guess mechanics really haven't changed, it's just the way my body -- a couple surgeries and getting older, just trying to make sure it moves correctly.

Q. And obviously Brooks Koepkas in the past have played in a lot of Ryder Cups. Is that something you're looking forward to in '27? Is that a goal you have in mind trying to get back to Adare Manor?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I think Adare Manor is a big goal of mine. But this year, I guess you can call it this year has just been a little bit of a disappointment, so I know I need to pick it up a little bit. It's something I don't enjoy, sitting back watching the Presidents Cup. I know I've only played in one, a lot of those are injuries, but those team events are a lot of fun, I really enjoy those. Getting to be around the guys and representing your country's pretty cool. So anytime you can do that or you have the opportunity to and you're not able to go play, it kind of infuriates me sitting on the sidelines.

Q. Hey, Brooks, kind of switching gears a little bit, obviously Jay Monahan's going to be stepping down at the end of this year. Just was wondering just the effect that he's had on you and the PGA Tour in his time serving as commissioner?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I've had a great relationship with Jay. He was at my wedding. He called me maybe about a month, yeah, about a month ago, maybe month and a half ago and we just talked a little bit.

He's done a phenomenal job. I've always respected Jay and the way he's gone about everything in business, and even personally getting to know him and his family. I thought he did a phenomenal job. You know, it will be -- I'm sure he'll enjoy getting some time off.

Q. And obviously the wedding is pretty special, but just on the course, is there any memory that stands out, anything that he said to you at any tournament from his time?

BROOKS KOEPKA: You know what, I would say maybe not so much on the course just

because a lot of times we're walking off the green and he'll say things, but I think even some of the PGA dinners we've had over the years. I think I sat next to Jay maybe three, four years ago. But we've always kept a good relationship when I was here, when I wasn't, and I just think -- I have a lot of respect for Jay.

Q. Brooks, you were just out there, the wind looks like it's going to keep up for the rest of the week. What's your biggest concern preparation-wise coming into a test like this where, I mean, that wind is going to be really difficult to deal with?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, it will be. What I found odd today, there were no holes that were into the wind or downwind, a lot of them were crosswinds. I felt like it was very tough to judge sometimes when it's so across, whether it's just slightly into or just slightly down. With gusts it's very difficult to control and I think especially with the firm greens, you really just have to pay attention. The greens are big enough but if you're just a little bit out, I mean, the run-off areas, you can be 40 yards from the hole pretty quickly.

Q. Are you the type of person that would change clubs to deal with the wind or would you mess with trajectory, a combination of both?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, a bit of everything. It all kind of depends which shot shape you see, what the wind direction is, where the pin is, being on the right side of the fairway, left side, bunkering, water. There's a million things that go into it, but you kind of got to be I guess a little bit more patient in the wind and just really understand where you can miss it and where you can't. Make sure it's on the correct side of the hole because there's always one side to miss.

Q. You said you weren't happy with your play this year or your results maybe more than exactly your play. Were you happy with the reception you received from the players all season? Did you feel at home again?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I felt very at peace with coming back. The reception was fantastic from all the players, caddies, just everybody on Tour.

I think I kept a good relationship with everybody even when I left. I think that played probably a huge part in that.

Yeah, everybody was really receptive. I loved the conversations that I've had just throughout the year, just guys just kind of just asking what was going on, thought process and how things went and the decisions made to get back here. Yeah, everything was great. I'm beyond happy with my decision.

Q. And when you first started out, you were in Europe. I remember watching you play the European Tour and going, Who the heck is that, because you had such a powerful swing and you seemed to be bigger than some of the European players. Not all of them of course, but some of them. Do you enjoy still going back there to play in those

events when you can?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I love it. I think there's a bit of me that feels like going back sometimes and playing on the European Tour as kind of a little bit of familiar territory, home. You know, we've got a place in Europe and I love going over there.

I think the way my career started, I had to earn everything and I enjoy going back and seeing a lot of familiar faces because I think sometimes it's a traveling circus is what it is. You can see times when you get on Tour, it's very repetitive, it's the same guys almost week in, week out. There's a lot of friendships that I still have over there on the European Tour. Going back to go see them is quite cool and fun and we can laugh on the old days.

Q. Just wondering, new changes coming to the Tour in '28, got to be top 90 next year to play in that. Just wondering your thoughts on the new structure that's coming and kind of how you expect it to play out.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I don't know too much about it, I haven't really paid too much attention. I just know good golf takes care of itself.

I like what I've heard just through discussions of playing with guys and how things were going to go. I think sometimes we have a little bit of an idea of what's about to happen, might come in the future. I think it's all good things. I think it's set up for the Tour's in a very strong spot going forward.

Q. You're talking about your kind of feel with putting. Is that what you felt like when you were putting your best when you were winning more often than not, you were feeling a little bit more reactionary, a little bit more athletic?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah. Take Scottie, best player in the world right now, he's playing the best. Right now I don't think he's thinking about one thing when he's over the golf ball.

When I've played my best or was at the top of my game, I felt like it was very free flowing, reactionary and just kind of step up and hit it.

You look at anybody that's been at the top of this sport or their sport or whatever they're doing, they're not thinking about their decision making, they're not thinking about the process, how to get the ball in the hole, they just do it. That's why they're usually at the top of the game.

Q. I would imagine though you have to be playing well to maybe not be thinking about it? Your game has to be in a good spot if you're trying not to think about it while still figuring out the game? Like how is that balance where you're trying to get to not thinking but you are working through things?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I think sometimes -- I can only speak for myself but I know

sometimes I'll go down a rabbit hole of just trying to get better. Sometimes you start going down the right path and then it just kind of slowly starts veering you off because you're trying to be too perfect, and sometimes trying to be too perfect, at least for me, I get a little bit mechanical and I'm not a mechanical guy. When that happens, there's a lot of thoughts that go through.

You know, I set the putter off the toe a little bit, right? Now I'm setting it off the center, so then that changes the strike point, and then the stroke changes because I usually have a little bit of a loop, so then -- do you see where I'm going in this whole thing?

There's six, seven different things that it just never quite feels right and when you're thinking about it, it's tough, it just never quite feels right.

And then going back to that free flow state or whatever you want to call it, I set off the toe, I looped it back every time, but I knew where it was starting and I knew my speed control was pretty good and I didn't care what it looked like. I've never cared what my golf swing looks like. I'd love for it to look like Adam Scott's but I just don't care. It came from a good place, but you go down a rabbit hole every once in a while.

MODERATOR: Brooks, thanks for the time. Best of luck this week.