

**HARRY HIGGS**

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**MARK WILLIAMS:** Harry Higgs, thanks for joining us here at the Safeway Open.

**HARRY HIGGS:** No problem.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Appreciate you coming in. Looks like you just played nine holes out here. Just some thoughts on the golf course. You played here last year, top 25, one of seven in your rookie year. Just thoughts on coming back here to the Napa Valley and enjoying this tournament.

**HARRY HIGGS:** Yeah, it was a great tournament last year and it will be obviously under a few different circumstances this year, but I'm looking forward to a great week this year as well.

The golf course is almost the exact same and I feel like we're going to have the exact same. It's soft, it's a little slow, and then by Friday afternoon, Saturday, Sunday, everything's firm and bouncing. And we're going to still have some heat, still have some wind and that's going to lend to the greens and everything kind of drying out. I quite enjoy that, so looking forward to when it gets a little bit more bounce and roll out there, for sure.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Excellent stuff. Your rookie season, reached the FedExCup Playoffs, great achievement. Almost won, had a chance to win, in contention at Bermuda. How would you assess your rookie season?

**HARRY HIGGS:** So I've been asked this a few times now, somebody brought up a good point, if you had told me I would have finished 55th, would you have taken it at the beginning of the year.

Absolutely, 100 percent.

And then they asked would you take 55th every year from here on out. You know, obviously the world that we live in, if I do that for 10 years, I'm going to live a very comfortable life. I'm probably going to have a couple chances to win here and there, but honestly I do feel that I left more out there in a way, I guess.

I feel that if I continue to keep going on the road that I'm going on, I should improve that year after year after year. You get a little bit more comfortable, you get a little bit more comfortable in the bigger moments, in the bigger tournaments.

And honestly, it was the worst -- out of the last three years, it was the worst year statistically

I had had in three years. So granted, Latin America, the Korn Ferry Tour to here, the shots are harder, maybe some of the holes are harder. Not a ton.

But so that's kind of I guess in a way a positive that I was kind of average or below average in most of the categories where I feel that I usually excel and have excelled the last couple years. So if I can bring those up, I should do better than 55th and I should be able to do that year after year after year.

But saying and doing is one thing. I certainly feel some confidence, I certainly am thrilled with the year that I had, but I certainly think I can do a whole lot better.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** That's a great answer. Before we take some questions here, I'm kind of curious as to how you would rate the performances, I guess the two highlights of the year, one was obviously in contention at Bermuda, finishing second, but reaching the FedExCup Playoffs and advancing through the first couple tournaments. How would you compare those two and how are they different from each other?

**HARRY HIGGS:** Yeah, I would have said like level of golf was very similar. I had a two-shot lead and shot 3 under in Bermuda and lost by 4, so you just kind of laugh. And Brendon Todd did Brendon Todd and that was it.

And then I really felt like I had a great chance to win at Torrey Pines, especially early in the front nine. Had I holed a few more putts, I might have been there a little later in the back nine, but Leishman kind of ran away from what I remember.

And then again much the same in Boston. Dustin Johnson definitely ran away with that and we were all trying to win the B flight. But I had a chance to win the B flight, just kind of had a slow, not really sluggish, I was still sharp on Sunday but just a slower Sunday and didn't really -- didn't finish it off as well as I would have liked.

But also on that back nine it's more about -- well, maybe it shouldn't have been more about staying in the spot you are so you can play next week. Maybe it should have been more let's push further, but it also was difficult because it was push further and finish second because there was no catching Dustin Johnson. We probably could have played another 72 holes and no one would have caught him.

**Q. We haven't really had the offseason, just had the one week off, not being there last week and then straight in. All those things you mentioned about getting better, are you happy you're straight back into it? Would you prefer a little break? What's up?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** For me, playing this week was more like mid season. I had some good weeks, I finally saw my play turn around, so keep playing, play this week. I'm planning on taking three weeks off. Obviously not in the U.S. Open next week and then planning on taking the Dominican Republic and Sanderson off, but I do love to play golf, too, so maybe I will actually play them.

Yeah, this doesn't -- certainly we didn't have an offseason. With the TOUR Championship ending on Monday, we had two days instead of maybe three. But I think that's a positive. I don't think anybody will ever complain about more tournaments because it just gives all of us more opportunities to win and do the things we want to do.

But yeah, it was a push to keep going for this week and then I might -- I might try to make it a week without touching my golf clubs. That's a long time for me, but if I can make it seven days after this, that would be a win.

**Q. And you mentioned the progression. I think most people don't really know, but you did make a jump straight from the Latinoamerica (inaudible) winning on both tours. You might not have won last year, but you certainly showed enough that you could. Do you still feel like you're making that steady climb?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** Yes, for sure. And then with the idea that stats-wise and just kind of performance-wise, I didn't do that is well as often as I had in the previous years, but to still have some chances to win, one really good chance and to still have a bunch of high finishes, I should see that continue and get better.

So I hopefully have a few more top-10s, a few more chances to win, get a win this year and I don't think there's any reason why I can't. But again, saying and doing are one thing versus the other and you've got to deal with all the other stuff out there when you're in contention to win, for sure.

**Q. Hey there, Harry. How did you feel coming into this tournament last year as a rookie and how does it feel different this time around?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** The fall -- the big push in the fall was just try to have as many -- last year, just try to have as many good finishes as you can; try to, you know, get enough points. I think it was around -- I mean, I don't know that I knew it exactly, but I had an idea of where the number for Top-125 was. So you kind of have that in the back of your mind, get as many points as you can, have as many high finishes, surpass that number as quickly as possible so you might be able to take a breath. So that was a lot of the -- just the overall theme of really any event until I got past said number or whatever it might have been last year.

And then this year it's not -- because I didn't win and I don't have -- you know, it's another two years, an exemption, it's not a whole lot different, but you're just a little bit more at ease with it where you know that you can -- you're going to have 25 to 30-some opportunities. It doesn't need to be even the first three events that you play. I felt like I needed to finish as high as possible every single week last year as a rookie to try to have that comfort and that ease and the feeling that it's not -- you know, I'm going to get past that number, I'm going to be able to play here next year.

So I guess in a way it's kind of always in the back of your mind, it would probably be in the

back of anybody's mind out here, but I'm just more at ease, just a little bit more comfortable, every cliché, this, this and this that you could ever imagine. But certainly just a different level of comfort. This is the first golf course I played a practice round on that I played before. It's just a lot nicer.

**Q. Did you come here last year with a feeling of maybe I don't belong or I've got to prove that I belong and do you feel like you proved it in a way last year finishing --**

**HARRY HIGGS:** No. I mean, the Greenbrier being the first event, I think I finished 18th or so and this might have been the third or fourth event that I played, maybe even sooner than that, and I remember leaving Greenbrier thinking that was C-plus, maybe low B-minus in terms of grade for me and I finished 18th.

That kind of gave me -- everybody says -- well, everybody says that they belong, maybe not everybody believes it all the time. I certainly would have said it going into last year and in my mind I believed it almost 100 percent, but after that first event kind of playing average, maybe even below average golf at times and finishing in the top-20, it certainly felt like, okay, what I do is good enough out here, let's sharpen some of those things up and turn that 18th into a top-10 and maybe sharpen things up a little bit more, hole a couple more putts and have a chance to win the tournament.

So yeah, I mean, I would say on a scale of 1 to 10 I would feel like I belong. Maybe I felt 7 last year and now we're closer to 10. Now I know I belong, but still you've got to do it on the golf course. You can say I feel like I belong, but you've got to go out there and prove it to first myself and then others as well.

**Q. Was there some sort of a-ha moment for you that yeah, I'm really on the PGA TOUR, like anything that just felt so different from what you had done previously?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** Yeah, the first tee on Sunday here paired with Adam Scott. You shake his hand and meet him and then I snap-hooked it. Somehow it stayed inbounds, good chip out, hit it in the bunker, thinned it over the green from the bunker and made 6. That was like okay, I basically felt like I got big-timed. Adam didn't big-time me, but because you're playing with somebody that you grew up watching, this, this and this, I kind of just went and played the hole without any really thought and made a 6.

I kind of stopped myself. I birdied the second hole. I remember before I hit the tee shot, I said probably an expletive like this -- like who cares who I'm with, who gives a bleep who I'm with, just go out there and play golf. Like I would rather shoot good scores than enjoy the company of a superstar. We still had fun together and Adam's a great guy, but this was the first big pairing kind of big moment. We didn't really have a chance to win, but had a chance to have a great day and have a high finish. It was right here on Sunday almost hitting it out of bounds.

**Q. How do you get in the mindset that this is a new season?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** I don't think I am. It's just more, more just continuing on with the weeks that I have. But you pull up the app after we finish and see that you don't have hundreds of FedExCup points, you maybe have less or you see where you finish. I don't -- it's just another -- for me, again, it's so cliché, but it's just another golf tournament. I've just kind of -- I still feel like I'm in the middle of a season. I haven't really taken any time off, I haven't gotten away from my golf clubs. I'm not big on writing down any goals or anything like that, but I haven't really stopped to think about okay, this needs to improve, this needs to improve, I want to achieve this in the new season. So to me I'm just going to kind of keep going with what I've been doing over the last couple weeks, it's worked pretty well.

I'm going to try to take three weeks off after this. I love playing golf, so it's hard to do that. Maybe in that time that will be kind of my offseason and then Vegas will feel like a true new season.

**Q. What do you want to do during those weeks off when you're not playing golf?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** I love to try to make it seven days without touching a golf club in a three-week stretch. Normally one or two weeks off, normally I make it maybe Wednesday afternoon or Thursday and then I want to -- I just want to get back into it, I just want to get better at this or get, you know, whatever it may be.

**Q. But are you dying to go to the beach or --**

**HARRY HIGGS:** No. What I need to do, I'm going through pre-approval on trying to get a loan to buy a house. I need to look at some houses and if there's one that I like, I need to put an offer in on it. So I might actually, if there are houses that come up that I like, I might actually -- I'm so bad with all this stuff. My girlfriend has filled out all the approval and everything. I might actually get to about seven, maybe even more days if I start house hunting probably as I should. I'm tired of living -- I live in a condo my dad owns and I pay him rent and I'm tired of it. I want to be in a house that I own.

**Q. I hope he doesn't make you pay full rate?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** He doesn't. He says it's not rent, it's, you know, utilities and your half of the property taxes and this, this and this, but it sure feels like he added a few extra hundreds in there to make it more like rent.

**Q. Going back to what you were saying about your stats, what is it that doesn't look as good as the past? What are you trying to work on?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** My approach play, just iron play really. Before Shotlink and all this has done for me, which is fantastic, I would have -- we just input into a service and I would see that like my approach play was through the roof, like great, and then this year it was well below average. I think I lost maybe tenths of shots, whatever it might have been, but it was

150th or so and I know that I'm a lot better than that.

And then kind of around the greens wasn't a great number, but some of the events that I played weren't Shotlink and they didn't -- I think I chipped in like four times in Bermuda, but I don't get any credit for it because there was no -- so I'm less worried about the short game side of it.

Yeah, no, and not that I'm worried about the approach play, it will come back, but I didn't really feel like I hit many iron shots that felt like me really at any point last year. Just a lot of solving just enough of certain things to hit shots on the greens or in the right spots versus feeling really good and being more exact and giving yourself better looks more often at some birdies. Obviously make more birdies, you're going to have a chance to win a golf tournament.

**Q. Okay. And last one, do you feel like you hit a wall towards the end of the season where you had a few missed cuts and then this super season they're talking about of 50 possible events, how many do you think you'll play?**

**HARRY HIGGS:** Before I started on the PGA TOUR, it kind of felt like, oh, yeah, I'll just play 21, 22, 23. I don't have a family. I love playing golf. We'll see. Hopefully there's a house purchased and hopefully there's some -- but I'm not big into designing anything or putting any fancy stuff in it. I really don't have much of my life that keeps me off the golf course and not wanting to play in tournaments yet.

So I'm guessing that I'll probably get real close to about 30 of them. I don't -- I think I hit a wall, I played seven in a row once we started again. I had a few missed cuts in there, too, so then I could fly to some of the events late Tuesday and it felt like I had a few days off.

I made the rule at the beginning of the year, don't play any more than four in a row, that was always my number, and of course I broke that rule and played seven.

So I would probably say to you I didn't hit a wall, but I think I did hit a wall. Maybe just try to space in a few off weeks, but then with 50 tournaments and then I'm fortunate that I'll be in any PGA TOUR event that they host, I bet I get pretty close to 30. I think I would have gotten over 30 had we not had the break that we had. Maybe a couple more years of 30 and then I'm going to get a little older, get a little more tired, hopefully actually be a real person and have a life back home that I need to get home for. Yeah, we're probably going to play a lot this year.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** I've got one more before we let you go. The PGA TOUR, we're fortunate to visit a lot of wonderful places, cities around the country and around the world. We're here in Napa Valley this week, beautiful place, and you seem like an exuberant guy with a wonderful personality when you're on the golf course. When you get away from the course in those cities, do you enjoy that environment, do you explore and do you do things, and how would Napa compare to some of those places?

**HARRY HIGGS:** Yeah. Well, I think I have almost everybody fooled because when I'm finished, I pretty much just go sit in a hotel room. Obviously now with the way the world is, just basically my brother stays with me, he caddies for me as well, so we pretty much just spend an hour trying to figure out what we're going to order for dinner, then we go pick it up. Fortunately, sports are somewhat back and we'll watch some sports.

Last year when I was here and the world was normal, I didn't do anything, we didn't leave the resort. I always err on that side where I kind of lay low, kind of just rest and regroup and then get back out there and do it again.

But again, I think that's just kind of the -- I'm so golf focused and golf oriented right now, which is a great thing, but I think as I get older and have a few more seasons under my belt, I think I'll stop doing that as much and then I will actually explore maybe a few things.

We went into downtown Napa last year and just had dinner, but I'm not big on wine, I didn't go do any of the wineries or anything like that. But it is a wonderful place. And yes, you've got the ability to do whatever you want, maybe not this year. Last year you could have done anything. I didn't really do a whole lot.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** So it would be fair to say that the transition from pre-COVID to post COVID or current COVID has not been too challenging for you?

**HARRY HIGGS:** No, not at all. It's almost been kind of welcome. I'm the king of ordering dinner on my phone and just having somebody bring it to me and now you almost should do that. But I'm definitely going to look forward to having dinners with friends out in some of these cities when it's appropriate.

Now, the problem is that most of my friends like fancy dinners, and I don't mind them but a fancy dinner turns into a two, two and a half, three-hour ordeal. I'm out on that. If we could keep it 30 to 45 minutes, sit down, order, eat and leave, I would go to dinner more often. But my fancy friends like fancy dinners and then that keeps me there for two hours.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Well, we appreciate you making the time to come in and share some of your insight with us. Have a great week at Silverado.

**HARRY HIGGS:** Yeah, no worries.