

**ROUND 2 INTERVIEW
NOVEMBER 12, 2021**



KRAMER HICKOK (-6)

Q. Continued your first round this morning and finished up second round with back-to-back rounds of 67. What's your game feeling like heading into the weekend?

KRAMER HICKOK: Yeah, it's the first tournament in a long time where I feel like I've actually been able to score. Been hitting it well the last two to three months and finally just starting to get some low numbers, finally started to get the ball in the hole and feel like I'm walking away, not giving away a bunch of shots. Did a lot of work on my putting with my coach, Cameron McCormick, this week and it's starting to pay off. Just got to give myself some more opportunities and just keep doing what I'm doing.

Q. What specific things were you looking to improve with your putting?

KRAMER HICKOK: Start line and alignment. I was getting lined up a little bit right and was hitting good putts down my right alignment and just kind of burning a lot of edges the last few weeks. Really, right now I just have to feel like I'm left of the target. It's a weird feeling, but it's nice when you kind of look up, you see the ball tracing down your line. It's something I've got to get used to and got to be able to trust under pressure and it's going to be one of my cues going into the weekend for sure.

Q. You played this course last year. What about this course suits your game?

KRAMER HICKOK: I'm not sure, honestly. A lot of people would say that it's a bomber's golf course, but you have to have good short game around here. This is one of those courses where if your short game's not spot on, you can lose a lot of shots going through the round. There's so much undulation around the greens. You've got to put yourself in the right spot around the greens just to give yourself a decent shot of making par because if not, you'll get penalized. My short game's always been pretty good, it's been a good strength of mine, and right now I'm just doing a good job of not getting myself in trouble.

Q. You talked about your putting, you know, and everything that you're working on. I think you made a pretty big bomb on No. 17, like about 55 feet?

KRAMER HICKOK: Yeah.

Q. Talk about that one.

KRAMER HICKOK: That was nice. That was one of the longest putts I feel like I made in a long time. It's funny, I've been so close to making putts for the longest time, I feel like I've been burning lips, lipping out, and my caddie and I, William, just said they're going to fall

eventually. So we just kept putting the pedal down, we kept practicing as much as we could. I think I did about two hours of practice every day the last few days with my coach, Cameron. Just got to the point where now the hole's starting to look big, so it's a good feeling. Golf, as we know, is really difficult and it will beat you up at times, but it's also extremely rewarding and I was able to get some reward out of it today.

Q. Was there much break on that putt?

KRAMER HICKOK: No, it was only about a foot out right, which some might say would make it a little bit more difficult being a 55-, 60-footer, but it's just one of those, I wouldn't say you're necessarily trying to make it, you're just trying to get the speed right, get up there close and two putt, and you got a bonus and it went in.

Q. A good day to score with the conditions today?

KRAMER HICKOK: Yeah, yeah. This morning it was tough, though. It was wet and the course played really long. Thankfully we played -- we were first off, so we only finished I think three holes this morning. Some of the guys had to finish 12 or 13 holes.

As of right now, the wind, there's not much up there at all. It's just swirling a lot. This course would really show its teeth if the wind was blowing, but it's really calm so it's optimal scoring conditions, for sure.

Q. You mentioned this, how thin are the margins between last week in Mexico where you missed the cut? You talk about the difference between scoring and playing. How thin are the margins?

KRAMER HICKOK: The margin, I was talking about this with my caddie, it's almost so small you don't even see it, to be honest. I'm that much better this week, I'm half a percent better and it turns the week from burning edges on three or four putts a round to lipping in, and we're talking three shots a round, that's 12 shots over the course of a tournament. That's the difference between having a chance to win and missing the cut either on Friday or finishing 45th place. I don't feel like I'm playing that much better. I'm getting the ball in the hole, which is what we know this game's all about.

Q. Does the confidence come from the scores or does the confidence come from knowing you're that much closer?

KRAMER HICKOK: It comes from the progress for me, just knowing that I'm that much closer, I'm doing the right stuff, the work is actually paying off because when work starts paying off -- it's tough when you start working and you're grinding and you're not get results, that's when it's really tough. When you start to get dividends out of your work, it's motivating. It makes you want to work a little bit harder and a little bit harder. So we obviously did a lot of really good stuff this week and then once the ball starts going in, the hole starts looking bigger. It's just the confidence thing you start building off of that.

Q. Just a quick one, did you have a history at this course before last year playing here?

KRAMER HICKOK: No, not at all. First time playing was last year.

Q. Interesting. Does it feel like other Texas courses? Feel at home for you?

KRAMER HICKOK: What I love is Bermuda. We're not on Bermuda very often except for occasional Colonial and Florida Swing. I grew up on this stuff so I'm very comfortable. A lot of guys I would say aren't very comfortable chipping off this stuff. Luckily we are playing the ball lift, clean and place. It's really sparse, like the ball could sit down in really sandy areas, it's really grainy. A lot of guys are using hybrids around the greens, but I just feel really comfortable, I know how the ball's going to come out certain lies and stuff, so it certainly feels like home to me.

Q. You said the golf gods kind of snapped you back. Was that what No. 9 was? Basically that's just kind of -- you feel like everything's going perfect, we've got to tweak it a little bit on you, right?

KRAMER HICKOK: I don't know what that was. It was just a bad putt. Honestly, the second putt, I hit it right where I wanted to. We had it inside the right lip, hit it right there and it broke a little bit right. These greens are really subtle. There's putts that are just breaking half an inch left to right and if you're wrong, you're going to mis the putt and we were wrong on that one.