

MAX HOMA (-16)

HALEY PETERSON: evening, everyone. I would like to welcome back-to-back Fortinet Championship winner Max Homa to the media center.

Max, first off, congratulations.

MAX HOMA: Thank you.

HALEY PETERSON: And just would like to start off with some opening comments about a dramatic finish here and the weather and a final hole-out to win.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, that was crazy. I still don't really know what happened. Just kind of one of those weekends you just had to hang around I felt like. My coach told me that this morning, he said just hang around as long as you can and got to see what happens.

My putter was super cold yesterday and today, kind of came out cold again and finally made one on 4 and felt like I was at least back to playing good golf or scoring well because yesterday I played fine, hit it great. Today I hit it well, kept it, you know, kept it around the hole where it needed to be, just couldn't get the ball to go to its home.

On 18 it decided to go home quickly, so that was quite a nice bonus.

HALEY PETERSON: Like we said, back-to-back champion here, third win here in California, Cal alum. What makes it so comfortable here?

MAX HOMA: I don't know. The greens definitely are like home. It's a good version of my home golf course, Vista Valencia. Yeah, just something about the grass, something about the people, something about the air, I love California. I always have, always will.

It's wild to think I've had this much success in my home state. This truly makes me very, very proud and happy about that because I've always loved playing golf here. I've loved the support I've gotten, having my friends and family out here is wild. To be able to capitalize on that and get a few wins is crazy.

HALEY PETERSON: Last one from me before we open it up to the media, but wife Lacey is here again this year, she was here last year. Were there any encouraging words she gave last night?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, wife's here. She looks a little different, she's almost eight months pregnant.

No, she only actually gives me three things to focus on, but she did not this morning. She's got a lot more going on. But yeah, that's been cool.

The whole process of the female body is wild. I think playing golf in the rain can be tricky and she's over there putting her legs up in the air last night as she was saying so she didn't get cankles. She was trucking around this golf course, I don't know how she does it.

It's been really cool to have her here the last two times up here in Napa. It's just always more special when she's here when I play well. And it's also cool to have my caddie Joe's fiancée Myle (sp?) here. It was cool to have a very team, family win. And I had a bunch of other friends as well, but that's our little nucleus and it's awesome when it all lines up like this.

Q. Max, congratulations. How did you keep yourself composed and in the game, in the hunt when you were three back on the front nine and then this rain and the wind and making everything play longer and tougher? Then going into 18 you were down one. How did you just keep yourself, you know, and if you can also talk about that pitch that won you the tournament.

MAX HOMA: It was kind of easy to stay patient because it was hard, so it didn't feel like it was a track meet.

I guess my game felt really good all week. Even the weekend I know I didn't score quite as great, but my game felt awesome. I was hitting the ball kind of where I was looking, felt like I hit a lot better putts at the back end of yesterday and then into this morning.

My game felt great, so I just had this calmness about me. I actually didn't feel quite as nervous as I have before. I think experience has helped a bit in some of these wins. Sunday, although it's only 18 holes, it feels like a marathon and you just have to do your best not to be the one to beat yourself. And that's a lot easier said than done.

Yeah, on 18 it was a weird situation. You know, Danny hit a beautiful shot in there and four feet's four feet for the win. You know, it's always going to be a bit trickier, but the way he was playing and the way he was putting, made an unbelievable putt on 17 for par. I kind of had to assume he was going to make it and I kind of went for the hero bunker shot and didn't quite catch it.

Then the pitch fortunately was on the upslope. Lift, clean and place, I got to kind of pick my lie. It just felt like the whole week kind of hadn't really gotten -- gotten any like serious luck, and I clipped the pitch really good but it was dead. I mean, it was as short-sided as you could be, you couldn't really stop it. I spun it and once it hit the pin, it almost like spun straight into the ground. It was just one of those things. Golf's a weird game, some crazy stuff happens on the last hole it seems like and that was very crazy.

Q. Congrats, Max. You've now won three times in the last 12 months basically, a little longer. Fifth in the FedExCup, made your first Presidents Cup team. Does this all sound a little bit like a dream? I mean, it's all starting to really pile up in a good way.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, a little bit like a dream, and then oddly enough a little bit like this is where I'm supposed to be. I work very hard. I work very, very hard. I give pretty much everything I've got into being as good as I can at this game. So I guess at times like this week, you know, I came in here and it was weird to be -- I was like the betting favorite. My buddy DJ sent me that and he said, "What a world."

And oddly, it felt OK. It didn't feel like too much pressure. I try to look at things, there's always two ways to look at something, a negative and a positive. I went in here thinking I think old me maybe would have looked at this as almost a burden and expectation can be difficult to manage. I looked at it as this is really cool to be playing golf where, as far as gambling goes, I should win or I have the best chance to win.

I kind of started to believe that about myself, but I've been playing some really good golf for a couple years and it's just the things I'm learning about closing golf tournaments and being in contention are growing fast and then the golf game is getting solid and staying solid.

I just feel a lot more comfort as I step onto the first tee on a Thursday and it doesn't seem to change too much going into the weekend.

Q. And then did you feel that you were sort of -- you and Justin were sort of losing sight a little bit of Danny until the ninth hole. How important was that in order to sort of stick in his back pocket for the back nine?

MAX HOMA: I really didn't think about it like that. I mean, after I bogeyed 2, I wanted to stay within two at least by -- after 9. One would have been great. I try not to ever put too much pressure on myself to make something happen. I've always played the back nine well here. I just really tried to play my game. It was really tricky with the rain and wind. I felt like the moment you try to make something happen, that's when I was going to kind of kick myself, and I did not. I didn't feel I took anything on. I feel like we played super patient, trusted the game.

You know, it was obviously a gift that he three-putted 9, but it was so difficult, it was bound to happen for any of us. It was so windy and the rain was on and off, and when it would rain, it was quite a bit. Stuff was getting blown onto the greens. It was just very awkward.

I don't know, I never felt like we were too far out of it if we could just keep playing. Fortunately, birdied 9, 10, 11 and at least felt like I got myself in there. I kind of said it last year, last year Leishman posted and Mav and I were playing. I wanted to get past Leish so it could feel it was a two-horse race. Once it did become a two-horse race, I felt more comfortable because sometimes I can do a bad job of looking around and, you know, what's Justin going to do and what's Danny going to do. I could just kind of play my game and know

that we were kind of heads up on 12th hole, I felt much more kind of at ease with what was going on. Like I said, I never really felt like I got ahead of myself.

Q. Max, thanks for shouting out the moms.

The way Danny was playing and just the way he carries himself, he seems so loose and he's shaking the rain and he's laughing. You talked about the calmness that you showed today. How much did playing with him kind of help that for you and just the way he handled going down at the end like that with a smile and a good spirit?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, he is obviously a tremendous golfer. He's won the Masters, he's won I think eight times in Europe. He's just a very talented dude and has a great attitude. You can see why he's had so much success. So it's always fun being around someone like him where you can watch kind of greatness in golf. I think that's always just a fun experience whether you're playing with any of the major champions out here. Those are the guys you want to be in the mix with and see how your game stacks up.

Yeah, he composed himself unbelievable today, never buckled really. And then on the last, obviously that's not the way anybody could foresee it going, but still just a really classy guy.

Q. Max, you're going to head to Quail Hollow and represent this great country in the Presidents Cup and you'll be joined by your team there. How important was it to you to defend this title knowing that you're going to hop on a jet and fly across the country and play in one of the greatest events in the world?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I think in my back pocket I had -- I had the knowledge that win or lose I get to go do something I've dreamt about forever. It kind of kept me loose getting to go hang out with those guys, our captains, the wives, the caddies, just a bunch of people that are amazing fun to be around and fun to compete against and now get to compete with them. I just wanted my game to feel good going into the Presidents Cup so I could represent my country as best I could. Yeah, I think this is definitely going in there with some confidence, so that's nice.

Q. So throughout the tournament you definitely seemed one of the most consistent players throughout every single day. There wasn't a time there was just an ebb and flow, it always seemed you were always right with the pack, and also there wasn't a lot of just those mistakes that just lose tournaments. What are kind of things that you worked on to kind of like keep yourself from having a meltdown with the different conditions especially with today and all the rain changing everything up? How did you manage to keep that composure throughout the tournament?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, my caddie helps with that a lot, Joe. I think he can sense sometimes when I want to make something happen and he'll drop like a little, a subtle nugget, I guess, about hey, we're going to be two steps up for this one, smooth the driver, stick to what we're doing basically. And he does it in a very sly way that always brings me back. At times when

you're trailing you want to make something happen, you want to be the hero. At the end of the day you've still got to hit the golf shots. He does an amazing job with that. You know, I hit the shots, I hit the putts, but he is an enormous part of this team, especially when we're in the mix. He seems to do an amazing job of keeping me kind of in the moment and make sure I'm not doing too much, just trusting my own game.

Q. And last thing from me is on the 14th hole, Danny hits that behind-the-tree shot into his own putt, the putt to kind of take the advantage there. What were you kind of going down that last couple holes knowing that you have to chase him and he has those couple good shots on 18 and, you know, what was the mentality going through right there?

MAX HOMA: Oddly, it wasn't -- I never felt bad about it. He hit an incredible shot on 14 and holed a great putt, but I was just so proud of what I was doing. The chip I hit on 14 I thought should have gone in. So it just felt like at some point that ball -- you know, that ball doesn't lie, like it goes in at some point. It oddly went in on 18 for me, but it was just one of those weird things that I knew I was playing great and I just kept hitting great shots and I just could not seem to get it close enough to the hole. I hit a beautiful wedge on 17 that when it bounced, about hit it to gimme and about 35 feet [sic.] I don't know, I just kept hitting the right shot I felt like and just kept doing what I could and then magic kind of happened on the last.

Q. This is kind of a weird question, but --

MAX HOMA: I love these.

Q. -- what was more miserable, Wells Fargo or this?

MAX HOMA: Oh, man. Wells Fargo was four straight days. Joe kept yelling, will you just give us one of the two, either freezing cold or rainy? Like you didn't need both. This wasn't cold, this was just annoying.

Yeah, that's a good question. It is weird, I don't understand how this works, but I'm from southern California where it never rains and when I get into the rain, I feel quite comfortable. I don't know, sometimes when it's rainy maybe it locks me, maybe it makes me more patient. But Wells Fargo, that Sunday was -- that whole week was brutal, but that Sunday was just, it was nuts.

HALEY PETERSON: Perfect. **That's all the questions we have.**

MAX HOMA: Thank you guys.

HALEY PETERSON: Again, congratulations and we wish you luck next week in Charlotte.

MAX HOMA: Thank you.