

ROUND 2 QUICK QUOTES
February 16, 2024



MACKENZIE HUGHES (-8)

Q. Mackenzie, great Friday round, you've got to be pleased. You opened with that eagle. I thought you had the bookend with the birdie at 18, but all in all you played really good.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, it was a great day. I felt like I was in pretty good control of the golf ball. Made a couple nice saves around the turn and yeah, never mad with a 65 around Riviera.

Q. Six under on the par 5s for two days, you're eating 'em up.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I think that's kind of the key to this place. They're all reachable. The wind on 17's favorable downwind so that's a huge priority is kind of taking care of those par 5s because there's a handful of par 4s out here that are really tough pars.

Q. How do you build momentum at Riviera because it just seems there's a challenge every hole, but yet today you just kept playing a little bit better and better.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, back to like our last question, I think when you play the par 5s well, you can build a round off that. Getting off to a start where you're 2 under through one kind of lets you have nice foundations to build off of. Yeah, guys are kind of taking apart that first hole, that's of huge importance, and the rest of the par 5s also play a huge part.

Q. Does a 65 at Riviera mean more than a 65 somewhere else?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I think so. I think this is probably my favorite golf course on Tour, so yeah, to have a chance to play it twice on the weekend and have a chance to win, can't ask for much more.

MODERATOR: I have to ask you a hockey question. Auston Matthews, the hat trick the other night, Leading the league in goals, you've got to be pumped.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I'm feeling pretty good. Again, the boys are playing great. I keep saying the last five, six years this is the year, so Leafs fans hopefully will get one off this year.

Q. So you're in a good mental state with the hockey and the golf?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, feeling pretty good.



Q. Mack, good round. I'm assuming you get some motivation when a countryman like Nick Taylor goes and does what he does in Phoenix. I'm assuming that fires you up in some way?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, most definitely. I watched a lot of his golf from last week from home, seeing what he did down the stretch there at Riviera [sic] was, yeah, super inspiring for me. He's obviously kind of pushing us right now on the men's side and kind of taking that top spot from Corey. Yeah, super impressive. And obviously watching that, yeah, I come here this week feeling like yeah, he's given me a little boost of inspiration to kind of go chase him down.

Q. People on social media like Graham DeLaet especially said -- Graham actually used the word killer under pressure. Does that make you feel like look, I've got that in me, too, and I want to show it?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah. Again, I feel like when I've had those chances as well, I've been pretty good as well. There's no doubt that Nick has all the way along been one of the best players at every level. I think it took him a while out here to kind of find his stride, but the last couple years it's a bit more what you expect from the No. 1 ranked amateur in the world for a better part of a year. This is the kind of stuff I always think Nick's capable of doing. He's super talented and, like you said, under the gun super clutch. It was really impressive to watch.

Q. Missed three of five cuts at the Genesis in your career, finished 50th last year. What's the biggest difference?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Whose question is that, first off?

Q. Canada.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Canada who?

Q. Adam Stanley.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Oh, Adam. Next question.

No, yeah, this is a hard golf course, you have to bring your best stuff to play well here. Yeah, I love it, feel like I've fared OK here. Even -- I think I finished like 50th last year, something like that, it didn't feel like I was far off from playing pretty good golf and around here it's fine lines.

So to answer your question, Adam, screw you. No, I'm just playing a little better and seeing the lines pretty well on the greens. Like I said, I love this golf course, so that helps as well.

Q. I have just a couple. When a U.S. Open comes here, which I think it's '31 or



something like that, how much do they have to do to get it ready and how much do you think they'll do to get it ready and how much do you think they'll screw it up?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I mean --

Q. That's not a loaded question.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: -- if we play this in June, they don't need to do a whole lot to make this place ready.

My assumption is they bring a few of the fairways in slightly, the rough would be a tiny bit longer. But again, it's going to be June so it's going to be tough for them to get the rough much longer than that. Turn the water off and it's ready to go. This place I thought wouldn't need a whole lot right now in its current state to host the U.S. Open this weekend. Yeah, I love it and I'm excited to come here in '31.

Q. What has surprised you the most over two days plus a practice round, kind of the bounce in the fairway or the speed of the greens?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I'd say the speed of the greens has probably caught a few guys offguard a little bit. Like there's some putts downhill that you just kind of get going and they're getting to the hole really quickly. It's a lot of fun to putt on greens that fast, but it makes it a premium to put the ball in the right position so you can be aggressive.

On 18 I had seven feet, but I could just barely touch it going down the hill. Yeah, I would say the speed of the greens is probably the biggest surprise coming off the west coast where the greens kind of haven't been that fast yet, so it's kind of like our first really fast set of greens.

