

# RBC Canadian Open

Tuesday, June 4, 2019

## Mackenzie Hughes

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Like to welcome Mackenzie Hughes into the media center. First of all, just the excitement getting to play where you grew up. Can you talk a little bit about that.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, it's great to be back. A place that is ten minutes from home. Played back here in 2012, and didn't know what to expect back then. It was my first PGA TOUR event. So it was a little more dear in the headlights than it is now, and now I feel quite comfortable, and ready to play golf, rather than just get caught up in all the distractions.

So yeah, I feel good coming into this week, and excited to be in a place close to home.

THE MODERATOR: One of 26 Canadians this week represented. Can you talk about the state of the Canadian game with this many players in the field.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, it's crazy. I want to say, there's eight guys that are mostly exempt on the PGA TOUR. There's been events where we've had six-plus guys out there. That's really cool on a week-to-week basis, and then obviously this week, we get the bigger numbers and it's great to see. There's so many great young players coming up now.

So the next ten years look really great for Canadian golf, and we have Corey winning this year and there's been a bunch of runner-ups and hopefully we'll see that flag flying higher and higher the next few years.

**Q. It's obviously a busy week for you. So are you going to have any energy left come Thursday with how busy it is this week?**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I've been through this now the last few years. Definitely the last two, because when I came here in 2017, I had won the RSM the prior fall. So I had a bit of experience, just in dealing with some extra requests, and it's all part of playing in your home country, and especially when you're playing close to home.

I don't think it really takes too much energy out of you. It's just about managing your time and making sure you get done what you need to get done by Thursday. I'll be ready to go, plenty of energy.

**Q. You don't see that much rough like this on the**

**PGA TOUR. Do you like coming back to a classic parkland style course? Talk about the golf course and whether you'd like to see more of these types of courses on the PGA TOUR?**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Well, to answer your last two questions, yes, I would love to see more courses like this. It's great. The setup is awesome. It's a lot different than what we ordinarily play, just in terms of the style of the golf course. You know, we get rough like this every now and then, but just the way this course requires you to hit some different shots off the tee, not all drivers, lots of greens with some severe slopes to them. So around the greens, need to have some imagination and some touch.

It requires and asks a lot of you, but it's a very cool setup and I was just saying earlier that it's probably one of my favorite courses in the Open rotation that we play, and if it became a permanent home sometime in the future, that wouldn't be -- I wouldn't be too mad about that.

**Q. A lot of Canadians out here this week, I think over 20, and yourself, you're one of the guys that they look up to. How does that make you feel, and your thoughts as you head into this tournament this week to sort of represent Canada?**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I mean, being the low Canadian has been nice the last couple years. But I certainly come here hoping to get a different kind of trophy. I know it's a big ask and we only get one crack at the Canadian Open every year, but I feel like I've been trending in the right direction; especially in this tournament, as well, the last couple years I've been playing well.

So it's just a matter of putting it all together for four rounds, but the young Canadians coming up, I was once in that spot, as well, where I looked up to guys a bit older than I was, like the Nick Taylors and Matt Hills and those guys. It's been neat to maybe take on a bit more of that roll with some of the younger guys, and I'm happy to help whenever I can with whether it's Jared du Toit or Joey Savoie, any of those guys that have questions for me, I'm definitely happy to help.

**Q. You've had some great finishes this year, perhaps you'd want a bit more consistency. Would you talk about your game heading into this week,**

**what you've been working on and how it feels, and especially with the premium on accuracy you're going to need around here?**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, it's been an up-and-down year with lots of good. Like you said, I would like to be more consistent. Just I'm figuring some things out in the last few weeks that have been really great for me. The biggest thing for me is attitude. It's 99 per cent of where my great golf comes from, and at Colonial last week, I was able to kind of flip the switch. My attitude the Monday of that week, I played a sectional qualifier, and I missed by a shot, but I would say I mostly missed because I had a poor attitude the last few holes and I got a little down on myself and my caddie and I had a good chat. We were able to flip that around, and you know, fast forward to Sunday afternoon, I'm in the final group.

You know, Monday afternoon, I was pretty frustrated with my golf game.

You know, it's really mostly about that for me right now, and that's something that I'm focusing on, and more glass-half-full than glass-half-empty approach and try not to be too hard on myself. If I do those things, my golf game feels really good and I'm excited to play in front of some friends and family.

**Q. You've played this course quite a bit. How much of an advantage do you think that is for you? And also, have you noticed any changes to the course, because I think they made a few tweaks.**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I think there is an advantage for sure. I mean, I've got some comfort and familiarity walking around the property, knowing certain holes and how they play in different winds. Now, granted, it's been a long time, but I still have rounds logged here to know this place pretty well.

What was the last part of the question?

**Q. I think they made a few tweaks?**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: So they have taken some trees out; mostly the biggest change. You get on a hole like 11,11 they have taken out two trees on the corner of that dog leg that were really tall. That's a big difference when you look at the hole now because that whole left side looks a bit more attackable and you can take a bit more of that corner off, but at the same time if you miss it a bit left, I mean, the rough both sides of the fairway this week is really penal, so the fairways are going to be a premium. I wouldn't say the changes necessarily are that noticeable. I mean, trees here and there, but the golf course looks relatively the same to me.

**Q. How many ticket requests have you gotten from**

**old friends, and has anyone perhaps that you haven't heard from years and years popped up this week and got in touch?**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Well, I've definitely seen some people out here this week. I actually bumped into my grade six schoolteacher from did you know Dundoss (ph) district which was like, holy, man, I saw him, like what a blast from the past. It was really funny and we had a fun moment together.

Yeah, seeing people like that, and yeah, the ticket requests are pretty frequent and often, but you know, I only get so many. So I have to sort of keep those under control a little bit. But I've been able to get the tickets I need for the people I need, and I'm sure I'll see lots of familiar faces out there this week.

**Q. Do you remember the teacher's name?**

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, his name -- well, I know him by Mr. Whittup (ph). I'm drawing a blank on his first name right now but in grade six you would just call him Mr. Whittup. And I think I was an okay student. I mean, I got into lots of trouble, but that's what 12-year-olds do.