

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW:

**MICHAEL JOHNSON
MATT GILCHREST
BLAYNE BARBER**



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Q. Blayne, Matt, Mike, we appreciate you guys especially coming together, the three of you obviously a unique story. Just a quick opening comment from each you of about being here at the Barbasol this week. Blayne, we'll start your way.

BLAYNE BARBER: Yeah, I'm excited to be here. I live here full time since I graduated in 2012 so it's always nice to sleep in your own bed and play a tournament, so I'm excited for Barbasol this week.

Q. What's your history with the course here?

BLAYNE BARBER: I play the Barbasol last year, played pretty well. Then we would qualify out here, not as much as they do now as when I was in school, but we'd play out here four or five times a semester.

Q. And Mike?

MICHAEL JOHNSON: This is a great opportunity for me. I'm very happy that I got a sponsor exemption, very happy, pleased, all of the above. Like Blayne said, we qualified here on our home tournament this year, so me and Matt know the course pretty well and it's nice to be comfortable on such a big stage.

Q. How many of your friends, family, so forth, kind of crawl out of the woodwork looking for tickets?

MICHAEL JOHNSON: Yeah, I put down as many tickets as I could. They'll come down from Birmingham, which will be a lot of fun.

MATT GILCHREST: For me it's like a dream come true for me to get to play my first PGA TOUR event, and even better here where we have a college tournament here, play here every so often. It's just down the road from my apartment. I've got a lot of family from Dallas and it'll be a really special week.

Q. Do you have anybody -- any one of y'all can chime in and then I'll toss it over to you guys. Any guys, any Tour players out here that you regularly reach out to for advice, kind of the do's and don't of life on Tour?

MATT GILCHREST: Hope to form some connections here to do just that.

MICHAEL JOHNSON: I see Blayne a lot down in Auburn and I'm always asking him questions and he's great with that, he knows what he's doing. I reach out -- I've lived close to Smylie and we grew up together, so we're good friends, and I'll reach out to Justin every now and then.

Q. Can you talk just a little bit about being involved in the kids' clinic today, especially ties to this area so really exposing some of these kids to your game, some of them for the first time.

MICHAEL JOHNSON: Sure. I went to a clinic when I was little at the Bruno's Classic at Greystone and Chi Chi Rodriguez was doing and I had a blast, he was a great entertainer. So I knew that was important for me to be out here, and it's great just to -- they were having a blast and we weren't even doing a lot of things, just to like see their faces just to hit a golf ball, it's completely worth it.

Q. Are you guys coming out with any expectations, goals, or is it just kind of using this as kind of a breaking ground to kind of test your mettle, see how kind of things kind of shake down?

MATT GILCHREST: I think for me, especially being my first one in a place I know well, I'm used to the course, I think I'm hoping for some great experience, kind of see how my game stacks up against the guys who do this for a living, but I still expect to be really competitive and I hope to have a great week out there.

MICHAEL JOHNSON: I just want to have fun this week. You know, I just started my pro career and I think if I have fun this week I'll play well. You know, it'd be great to win but it's kind of a long shot, but I know my game's good and I just want to look back on this week and see how fun it was.

Q. Blayne, you've obviously been out here for quite a while. Can you remember back to when you were first making your way on to Tour soil?

BLAYNE BARBER: Yeah, my first event was the Nationwide Children's Classic on the Web.com. I got a spot there for being All-American one year and that's where I turned pro. It's a whirlwind. I've been doing it for about four years since then. It is a blast. It's such a cool experience to be inside the ropes and playing with guys that you've looked up to and seen play your whole life. Still just golf. It's just all the exterior stuff that can kind of distract you, be a little bit overwhelming, but these guys are going to do great.

Q. Blayne, you probably had the biggest fan following last year being the hometown guy. Was that a little bit -- you know, now looking back, are you expecting the same crowd again this year? How was that to be like kind of the guy to watch at the tournament being from here?

BLAYNE BARBER: I love it. Somebody asked me that recently and I don't feel any added

pressure from it. It almost just makes it more enjoyable having people there supporting you and rooting you on and clapping for good shots. I mean, I think I'm going to have a decent, you know, just friends and family that are going to be here in the local community. So I'm looking forward to it, I think it's more fun to play when you have people out there who can cheer for you.