

FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW
January 29, 2018

ALEX NOREN (-10, lost playoff)

ALEX NOREN: (in progress) out of that first cut and just short so I had a perfect yardage. And the greens are not super firm in the morning like this so I thought it was the perfect play in the middle of the green and have a putt at eagle and a few yards short, so it's tough.

Q. Big picture, how would you describe what that playoff was like, six holes, two days, you guys matching shot for shot?

ALEX NOREN: Yeah, I mean it was a lot of fun, we played good and he was inside of me a few times and I had a chance, my chances but then he stepped up. So it was, yeah, it was a lot of fun but I would love to have won it.

Q. As you start your journey on the PGA TOUR, what does this week do to set you up for the rest of 2018?

ALEX NOREN: It's great. I wanted to learn how to play these courses, these U.S. Open-style courses and it's always been tough for me to adjust with firm greens and stuff like that. But that was great coming off a good week, I learned a lot and played probably best tee to green ever for me, so it's big, it's big for me.

Q. Alex, you hit a 3-metal off the tee and I thought you hit a terrific second shot, it came up just about two paces short?

ALEX NOREN: Yeah, it was from the first cut and I knew it was going to be a little bit spinny, but I thought the yardage was perfect and the middle of the green would have been -- I didn't want to lay up although it's a quiet easy wedge shot from layups but even easier putting.

Yeah, I just wanted to have a goal and try to finish it off and just a few paces short, like you said.

Q. When you hit it, did you feel like you hit it good enough?

ALEX NOREN: I hit it all right. I thought it was going to reach, but yeah, I mean it's tough in that first cut because it gets a little more spin than off the fairway, but tough luck.

Q. I know you're disappointed, but what a great week for you and people are getting to know you now. I know what a good player you are. As you establish yourself on the PGA TOUR, this has to do a lot for your confidence?

ALEX NOREN: Yeah, I mean I came over here to try to play these golf courses and try to get used to playing against these guys. I played a lot of majors and WGCs, but try to have a few more starts over here, which this was a great start and obviously I would have liked to have won it, but it doesn't always go the way you want it.

Q. You have to be positive about this, though?

ALEX NOREN: Yeah.

Q. There's nothing negative about this week at all?

ALEX NOREN: No, no, I'm positive, it was a good week. Like I said to another guy, I played probably the best I've played tee to green for a long time and it helps on these conditions and yesterday was a good test and I'm proud of myself for stepping up at the right times. But it's tough to lose it like this, but that's the way it goes.

Q. What was the yardage?

ALEX NOREN: 235 meters, 230 meters to the pin, just try to hit a normal 3-wood, a little draw in there. It was a perfect yardage, but it's the way it goes.

Q. What was the decision to go for it in two instead of laying up?

ALEX NOREN: Yeah, well, I mean I had what I thought was a perfect yardage. I couldn't hit it long. Well, the worst it's going to get to the back of the green, a little bit softer greens, you know. And I had a good lie, so I just thought it would be the easier shot and I did it two times in the playoff. You know, the ball stops if it lands in the middle. If it goes to the back of the green, it's not -- it's not the end of the world. If it goes really far back, it's tougher, but if it goes back here, it's quite an easy chip down the hill.

Q. Alex, these are always tough interviews to do. Take us through your second shot at 18 and what you feel happened.

ALEX NOREN: Well, I had the perfect yardage for a 3-wood, it was 230 meters to the pin and I hit it probably 240 with a good draw and so it was going to be a perfect like the two other hybrids I hit. The ball stops on the green, especially in the morning when it's a little bit softer. And I thought he was going to lay up, have a good wedge shot in, but I had the advantage I thought and if I hit it -- if I hit a good one it will be the back of the green. If I come up a little bit short, it was going to be perfect probably. But then the first cut is difficult here because it spins a bit more, and even with the woods it spins a little bit more. But I thought if I hit a draw it's going to be the back of the green, and putting from here, I would rather take this than a wedge. So I'm not regretting my decision, it's just --

Q. Golf can be tough at times, it was only a foot from perfect.

ALEX NOREN: Yeah.

Q. And let's talk about the big picture. I know it's hard to look at that right now, but you've put yourself in contention before on the American Tour, this time is your best result by far, so what did you learn this week to help you contend better over here?

ALEX NOREN: Well, I think trying to hit the ball both ways, draw it and fade it off the tee because it's tough to hold these fairways, and especially a day like yesterday when it was windy, worked a lot on that with my coach and I love playing golf over here. I like these U.S. Open-style courses, I always have since college and I know what to expect now a little bit more after playing a few of these tough events and tough courses. That's my goal, to try to win on these kind of conditions, and so I learned a lot yesterday and I'm proud of myself for stepping up when it was -- when it got tough. Obviously not what I wanted, but yeah, it's a good day anyway.

Q. If you keep up your progress you'll find the winner's circle pretty soon. Congratulations on your finish.

ALEX NOREN: Thank you.

Q. Are you going to think back, because that is about a half million dollar decision. Did you think about that at all with going for it or you just said that's how I play?

ALEX NOREN: No, I don't regret the 3-wood. It was a perfect lie, perfect yardage, and I would never have laid up in those circumstances, especially when I've got the upper hand. He's going to hit it somewhat close, either he's going to leave it a few yards long or by the hole, but I really thought I was going to get it to the middle of the green or in the back of the green. So I don't regret it, but I just, you know, I learned a lot this week and it's been a great week.

Q. Playing on this style of course, you talked about the U.S. Open-style course, so different than playing on the European Tour, what did you learn about you and playing this type of golf course?

ALEX NOREN: Yeah, you've got to play aggressive at times and defensive at times. That's the whole deal. You've got to learn how to hit all the shots, you've got to bump it up some greens, you've got to hit high shots and you've got to hit everything. It's almost like the British Open that we play over there, you've got to have all the shots. Then you've got the tall rough and the fast greens. I love this kind of golf and I just want to get better at it.