

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
March 2, 2023



AKSHAY BHATIA (-6)

Q. Akshay, great round today, bogey-free 6 under 66. Just a few kind of highlights and keys to the round?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, I feel very comfortable playing in the wind. This golf course, I've looked at the scores the last few years and when I showed up and played nine holes, I don't know how 20 under's won like every year. But you can get it going if you hit it in the fairway.

I think the biggest thing for me is making putts and I did a lot of that today. I saved a lot of really good pars and made a few really good longer putts kind of throughout the round.

Q. You mentioned outside that you really like kind of the tropical island style. What is it about these types of courses that seem to suit your game well?

AKSHAY BHATIA: I don't know. I mean, it's like I just think it's pretty simple hitting different shots, I love being creative. I don't know. I think just the vibe of everything. Everyone's very relaxed, the area's very relaxed and it's just fun. It's almost like a vacation when we come to events like these. You explore different parts of the world and this place is obviously, it's pretty nice for January or February being 85 degrees.

Q. Do you just kind of keep going with what's been working for you? Are you kind of tweaking, change anything or are you the type whose mentality is it's got me this far, let's stick with what's working?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, I mean, I think the biggest thing for me, I hit a lot of really good tee shots that like ended up perfect but wasn't the play off the tee. I felt pretty confident later in the round with driver. I didn't feel confident at all kind of in the morning, I was kind of hitting it left and right and I made two really bad pars on the par 5s.

I mean, my goal is to win the golf tournament and doesn't matter how it's done, it's just got to be done. I'm not going to change anything. I mean, I'm just going to get more and more comfortable on this golf course and I look forward to keep competing and be out on the PGA TOUR and that's the dream.