

**STEVEN ALKER (-7)**

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**Q. Steven, 65 today, looks like you got off to a really good start. Can you talk us through it?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, really hot start. Just kind of went flag hunting, hitting it really close and gave myself good opportunities. Been working hard on the putting the last week or so, so it felt really good out there today.

**Q. OK. And close with birdie, that had to feel nice?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, especially on 9. I was coming into the wind and it's hard to pick it in the trees there on the second shot. Yeah, going to make dinner taste a lot better tonight with that birdie on 9, for sure.

**Q. When you say you've been working on your putting, what specifically?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Just getting the ball online. Just wasn't starting the ball online, so pretty simple stuff. Just chalk line and putting it through the tees. Once I got that and started hitting it straight a little more, I was off to the races.

**Q. Is this week your first time playing TPC Sugarloaf?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** It is. The course is in great shape. Good solid par 4s out there. You've got to have your wits about you on a lot of holes. Yeah, it was good. Just kind of, you've got to ball-strike it a little bit around here and hit your spots. Greens are good. Get the putter going, you're good.

**Q. First visit, did you feel after you saw the course the first time, feel pretty good?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, pretty good. As I said, you've got to ball-strike it a little bit, you've got to drive it good and then some of the par 4s you've just got to hit good shots into the greens to give yourself chances. Otherwise, you're just working hard all day if you're missing greens here. Yeah, I felt pretty good.

**Q. I was just telling him, No. 9, nobody birdies No. 9, especially in wind like today, so that had to feel --**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, it was a bonus. It was a nice finish to the day.

**Q. What kind of shot did you have coming in?**



**STEVEN ALKER:** A good drive. I had like 170 yards and I hit 8-iron. It felt like it was into the wind and it was kind of cross. We just thought if it's on the front somewhere, it will be pretty good, but it worked out nice.

**Q. And the par at No. 18, sounds like that kind of kept things going?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, it kind of did. It felt like a good yardage. I hit it with the wind and just seemed to go like 19 yards better than I wanted it to. It was a tough bunker shot. I contemplated actually putting it out of the bunker, to be honest, but I didn't want something stupid to happen. Yeah, it was a tough shot from there, but good to get it.

**Q. On a day like today, the wind picking up, (inaudible)?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, definitely. Middle of the green was good on a lot of holes. I was feeling my yardages, which was great. That was huge just to give myself some good chances. So took advantage of most of the par 5s, I think I birdied three of the five, so it was good.

**Q. We were asking Doug, who you're tied with, he's an Elvis fan, he's from Memphis. I don't know if you're an Elvis fan?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** A little bit. Yeah, I like Elvis. My father-in-law's a huge fan. Yeah, when we get together, something to talk about.

**Q. I don't know if you had a musician, like a New Zealand musician?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Oh, I've got a couple groups from New Zealand that are really good that I follow. Not as good as Elvis obviously.

**Q. You've been in this position many, many times. Looking forward to the weekend and what it brings?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, for sure. I think I like a little bit of wind, too, just to keep us honest out there. Some holes, par's a good score. Yeah, it's always nice to get a good solid start out here. You're not playing catch-up during the weekend. Yeah, it felt good.

