

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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TONY FINAU



MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Tony Finau into the interview room here at the 3M open.

Tony, making your sixth consecutive start here at the TPC Twin Cities, been here every year the tournament has, 2022 champion and two other top-10s, so how's it feel to be back up here in Blaine?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, it feels great. I love -- my family loves this place, I love being here. It's a golf course that I really enjoy and seems like I've grown quite a cool fan base here, so I love coming back and playing in front of them. All just good vibes anytime I'm back here in Blaine and I'm looking forward to another hopefully memorable week here.

MODERATOR: Not the week you wanted last week, but three top-10s in your last four starts. How does the game feel coming in and as we've got only two weeks left before the start of the FedExCup Playoffs?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, the game feels pretty good. I didn't have the result I wanted last week, that second round was playing extremely difficult and I didn't feel like I didn't -- I played bad, I just, I hit a couple bad tee shots that cost me lot of shots, which it can do in links golf. Overall, I've had a nice run over the last month and just hope to continue that good form into this week.

Q. Have you gotten used to the travel after six years, flying overnight from overseas to get here?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I have a lot easier time adjusting when I come back to the States. It's a lot harder for me to fly over to Europe and adjust to that time. It seems like my jetlag is pretty severe. It took me a handful of days to feel like I had my mind and my feet underneath me over there in Scotland. I feel a lot better about myself this week. I usually do when I come back to the States.

Q. Do you have the same setup this year with the place on the lake so you can do some fishing?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, no doubt. We're going to do some fishing. We've already been out on the pontoon on our little boat just at the house that we're renting. Yeah, we're definitely going to be on the lake this week and do some fishing, looking forward to that.

Q. What are your memories looking back at last year tied for seventh, nine strokes off



the lead?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I just remember Lee playing incredible golf all week. I was in a position to try and catch him on the weekend and anytime I made a run, it looked like -- I just remember him making birdies right behind me. I just know I had a solid week, but Lee Hodges was a deserved champion for his first win here last year. And I know he's back this year to defend, so we've got a nice field at the 3M this year and I'm looking forward to the competition and competing and trying to win another one of these events.

Q. You play a lot throughout the year, Tony, so maybe you don't notice this, but it really does seem like you've really become kind of a face of this event I think through winning and being more of the accomplished guys who's played every single year here. Do you feel that at all? Do you feel like maybe the support that comes with that, just seeing your face at different places of it?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I definitely feel it. Like I said, I feel the support. The fan base here, I feel like my fan base has really grown. This is a very special tournament to me and to our family. I think our series on Netflix had a lot to do with it as well and maybe the growth of the tournament. Hopefully it continues to grow.

No matter what, it's a golf course that I enjoy, it's an area that I really like and a tournament that I just love playing every year. So I see myself being here many years to come no matter my results and my outcome. It's just a place that I love to come and my family loves to come and we enjoy being here.

Q. You talked about the growth. You've played a role in that and that's not usually an opportunity that a player has because things have been more established. What has it been like being part of a younger tournament and kind of playing a vital role in its growth?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, just as someone being around the Tour now 10 years I go, being a PGA TOUR member for 10 years, I know how important every golf tournament is. To help this tournament kind of grow in just a little way that I have, it's been an incredible thing for me. 3M has been great to me, I think it has a lot to offer to the PGA TOUR and I feel like each year we've gotten a better field. This year maybe is our best and if that trend continues, this is going to be a premier tournament for a lot of years on the PGA TOUR. I hope that's the case. Again, I'll be here to support it no matter what.

Q. What would your family say if you said you weren't coming here this year?

TONY FINAU: Say again?

Q. What would your family say? Do you even have a say in coming here?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I have a say in everywhere I play, but my family plays a huge part of it



as well. I mean, they just expect that we're going to be here. I don't know that we even had a conversation, we know pretty much every year this is probably going to be on the calendar. Just one of those premier tournaments that we enjoy as a family.

Q. Who catches the most fish?

TONY FINAU: My oldest son has caught the most in the past. I haven't had much luck, if I'm being honest. I've had a lot more luck on the golf course catching birdies than fish here in Blaine, but hopefully my luck changes a little bit in the lake. We'll see tonight. Tonight will be our first day fishing. It's the only week of the year that I fish, that's the craziest thing. I'm in Utah and Arizona, you know, I split time between those two, have many opportunities to go to the lake and fish and I just never do. This is the only time that I do, so hopefully I've got some better luck this year.

Q. You're in a great position for the FedExCup, but can you relate to some of the other players here this week, the pressure that they're facing?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, this tournament's in a great place I feel like on the schedule where if guys are really trying to position them self in the FedExCup Playoffs, this is a tournament I think that you want to add to your schedule. I think a lot of guys are here for that reason. And when they play the golf course, I think they're going to be happy. This is a true test, a good test of golf. You've got to hit a lot of quality shots and I think you've got to play really well to compete here and the more top players I think come here to see that, the better this tournament will be. But, you know, I wish all the guys luck. Again, we have a great field, guys vying for a spot in the Playoffs, myself included. If you're trying to win the FedExCup, every week you tee up you're trying to win and that's no different this week.

Q. What do you think having his best finish in a major can do for a guy like Billy Horschel?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, Billy's playing incredible golf. He had a great chance to win The Open Championship last week, it was fun to watch. It was a tough test. I think for someone like Billy, he works so hard at his game that results will always follow and so now we're looking at him maybe playing the best golf of his career and we could be seeing the best of Billy kind of in these next couple months. Billy's always been great to me, I think he's an awesome dude for the Tour and I wish him well this week and for the rest of the season.

Q. How many events throughout the years, Tony, when you say we that you're describing?

TONY FINAU: Sorry, say that again?

Q. How many different events like throughout the Tour season when you talk about we, we've got a great field, we've got this?



TONY FINAU: Yeah, not a lot, not a lot. I think to your point, 3M has been great to me. It's really a staple tournament for me. As you mentioned, I think I've played just a small part in helping this tournament grow, so I do feel like a little bit of a we when I talk about this tournament because I do feel connected in a way to Blaine, to Minnesota and to this golf tournament. I just think I always will. It's a special tournament for me. It is my third victory on the PGA TOUR, but it almost seems like it was my first, you know. I don't know why, but it's just a special place for me to be a part of.

Q. (No microphone.)

TONY FINAU: Yeah, there was a little gap. The breakthrough gap for me was the second win. Anyways, this place is just special for me.

Q. You as much as anyone knows what it takes to learn how to win out here. What do you think of some of young guys, Nick Dunlap winning twice in a season at age 20?

TONY FINAU: Unbelievable. I mean, Nick, he's really -- he was thrown right into the deep end of the PGA TOUR. Once he won the American Express, he was in all the elevated events, he's been playing with all the top players in the world and that experience is invaluable for someone with his caliber of play and at his age. We're going to see him for many years.

But there's so many great talents, Akshay, there's so many of these young guys that have really truly tested their game at a young age and have proved that they're worthy of being a world-class player. It's exciting to see the game moving in that direction. The age of the PGA TOUR has gone down tremendously over the last handful of years, so that trend I'm sure will continue. I'm just trying to get mine while I'm still out here. I'm not considered young anymore, so as a mid 30s player on the PGA TOUR, I've got to put my pedal to the metal before all these young guys take over.

Q. Have you been out on the course? How soft is it? We've had a ton of rain the last couple weeks.

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I'll be seeing the golf course for the first time today. Haven't seen it yet, but I do expect it to be a little softer than maybe it has been in the past. If the weather, if the weather holds, which hopefully it does, not too much rain, it will still be firm enough I think by Saturday and Sunday.

MODERATOR: Tony, those are all the questions we have. Thank you very much for your time and best of luck this week.

TONY FINAU: All right. Thank you.

