

EXPLORE NB OPEN

ROUND 4 QUOTES

July 12, 2026

THOMAS PONDER (-28)



Q. How's it feel to be the Explore NB Open champion?

THOMAS PONDER: It feels really good. A lot of the hard work I put in is starting to pay off. It's really exciting.

Q. You led all week, had a one-shot lead to start the day and it was a battle all day. Was there any nervous moments today?

THOMAS PONDER: Oh, yeah, for sure. I just kept telling myself my process is good enough, I've gotten this far and there's no need to doubt myself or my skills or my mentality, just keep pushing forward.

Q. I think on 12 you had to scramble for a par, but on 13 you made a big birdie to get that back up to (inaudible.) Talk us through that birdie putt.

THOMAS PONDER: Yeah. Honestly, I think the best shot I hit today was the punch-out on No. 12, hitting a good iron shot in there, setting myself up for a birdie look. Ended up making par.

Then kind of I wouldn't say it settled me down, but it was just kind of one of those moments where I just have to trust myself and keep doing that. Something I like to do is try to play a little bit faster, I try to, when I'm a little bit nervous. It helps me get in a better rhythm and just pull the trigger a little bit better.

Q. And what was the club that you hit on 13?

THOMAS PONDER: 6-iron.

Q. About a 15-footer?

THOMAS PONDER: Yeah, 15 feet, yeah.

Q. Do you remember your last victory?

THOMAS PONDER: I've actually won a couple times this year already, just mini tour stuff back home. I think it really prepared me to come up here and just be ready to compete because the guys out here are really good as you can see from the scores today. I think that



really prepared me like just kind of a slow building process to get where I am now.

Q. How have you remained patient these last few years because I think a lot of guys may get impatient.

THOMAS PONDER: I don't know. I think I lean on the Lord a lot. I think everything has a timing to it. Yeah, I just, I trust in Him. Like there's really nothing I could do other than be myself, play as good as I can and see how it stacks up. I'm never going to be unhappy about that.

Q. What were the mini tour (inaudible.)

THOMAS PONDER: Heritage Golf Tour and the Emerald Coast Golf Tour.

Q. Can you put into words what the skill of winning is?

THOMAS PONDER: Not really. I mean, it's just more of a feeling. Oftentimes it doesn't feel as good as you think it does, but I think it's something that you can find in yourself to like boost your own confidence and kind of like you've been there, you've done it before. I think you can see that on the PGA TOUR with a lot of guys.

Q. Who have you leaned on these first few years as a pro as a mentor?

THOMAS PONDER: There's a lot of people. My parents for one. A couple of people who work at my agency, just kind of pick their brain a little bit, see if I'm on the right track. My physio guy, Jason out of DC; been doing some great work with him. My coach, Bradley Hughes back in South Carolina. Yeah, I mean, I'm sure I'm leaving somebody out. For now, that will have to do.

Q. The ultimate goal is to make it to the Korn Ferry Tour.

THOMAS PONDER: Right.

Q. You're No. 1 on the points list. What's the outlook for the rest of the season?

THOMAS PONDER: You know, we have -- how many tournaments do we have left, seven? So there's seven more opportunities. I'm going to soak this week in as long as I can and then just go about my business as usual come Tuesday.

Q. What's tonight's celebration dinner?

THOMAS PONDER: Yeah, going to go to dinner, going to have a couple drinks, just hang out with some good friends.

Q. Some guys win on this tour, you don't hear from them all season. Let's talk about



your consistency, (inaudible) eight starts now, six inside the top-10, three inside the top-5, two inside the top-3 including this win. What does that say about your game and how proud are you of yourself with how consistently you've been there?

THOMAS PONDER: Yeah, I think it goes back to some of the mental prep I did earlier in the year with some of those mini tours just trying to have a better outlook on the season than I did last year, because it's a long season, 15 events. I think you have to mentally prep good for each week and then you also have to remind yourself that it's a long season and take time off when you need to do your work when you can and just be ready every week.

Q. Are you more along the lines of like, gosh, I'm getting so close and I can't get that win or are you more like if I keep playing this well, it's going to come soon?

THOMAS PONDER: Yeah, I think the biggest thing for me was just to keep playing well, just keep playing my type of golf and I was confident enough that sooner or later that I would be lifting a trophy, and here we are.

Q. Who are you thinking of most in this moment?

THOMAS PONDER: Nobody really. I mean, I'm just kind of living in the present right now. I'm just happy to be here and ready to go celebrate it with a nice dinner with some friends.

Q. Is it just put on the gas for Ottawa or do you take time to enjoy this?

THOMAS PONDER: Yeah, I'm going to take some time, but I've got to be ready for next week, too. Whenever I feel like it's time to get ready for next week, I'll get ready for next week. It could be Tuesday, it could be Wednesday, you never know.

Q. You'll definitely be ready for Thursday?

THOMAS PONDER: 100 percent.

