

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW**  
**October 10, 2019**



**AUSTIN COOK (-8)**

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**Q. Austin, that's one of those days that's got to be a lot of fun, hit every green. Not a lot of stress out there, was there?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** I didn't realize that. Yeah, I like those days, especially in this wind. It really picked up on the back side and luckily I was able to take advantage of the front nine, less wind and great greens. Just the ball went in the hole.

**Q. Talk about the golf course, the differences of it from April to now here in October.**

**AUSTIN COOK:** I mean, the turf's obviously way different playing from rye to bermuda, kind of plays a lot different. But they still have it mowed into -- I mean, it's still going to be pretty long, especially kind of soft. I was playing with Sebastian Kaplan earlier in the week and he said, "Man, it's going to play a lot shorter." I said, "Well, look at it, it's all into the grain and pretty similar to where the balls were going when I played in '15."

**Q. But let's talk about you being a Texas boy and playing in this kind of grass a lot. Is it a little more familiar than the April grass that's so heavily overseed?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** Yeah, no, bermuda's kind of what I grew up on. I was actually in north Arkansas and we had some bent and some bermuda, but most of the courses were bermuda. Yeah, it's definitely something that I'm comfortable on.

**Q. Well, it was an absolute ball-striking clinic for your round, number one. You hit every green, you only missed two fairways, Austin. What's it like when you get in that type of zone?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** Great. That's what you practice so hard for. The last few weeks it's kind of been a little iffy with the ball-striking. It was nice to earlier in the week send video to my coach. It was literally, you just need to get wider, and that's all I've worked on all week. Kind of got in a groove right now and just going to go work on that and try to dial it in a little bit more.

**Q. Could you tell that that advice clicked for you in warmups, on the course, or at what point did it come together?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** The first shot, whenever we came back out. So I did that Sunday and got a response Sunday afternoon once I already left, and the first ball Monday morning was what I've been looking for the last few weeks. Yeah, no, it was great. The swing feels really good right now.

**Q. With the stretch you've had the past few weeks to have a day like today, can that be a breath of fresh air for your fall portion of the schedule?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** Absolutely. I got off to a good start in the Greenbrier and then missed three cuts in a row, a few of them were one shot. Last week it went to 5 under, I wasn't expecting that. You know, yes, it's definitely nice to get out and get a great round in on the first round.

**Q. Can you take us back to 2015 when you Monday qualified here? Obviously that was a pretty eventful week. Can you just go back to that week and what it was like?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** Yeah. I think so that was in April. This was my first event on the PGA TOUR in 2015. It was kind of the same thing. I Monday qualified, shot 8 under, but I was the first one off, so I had to wait around all day long. Luckily, it wasn't matched. But on Tuesday or Monday, I don't remember, I had another lesson. I was working with Chuck Cook then and he was here and we kind of got another good feeling and went with it for the rest of the week.

But that was another great ball-striking week. The last day the wind kind of picked up, nerves kind of got to me. On 15, 16, 17, I kind of struggled coming in, 3 over.

But it was a great experience, and especially not having a PGA card and that was the second PGA TOUR event I ever played in, whatever. It was awesome. Trying to go out and one shot at a time this week.

**Q. Did you play with Jordan in the final round?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** I did not. I played with Johnson Wagner and he about ripped my arm out whenever he made that putt on 18.

**Q. But you played with Phil on Saturday?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** Yeah.

**Q. You remember wearing your Arkansas stuff, right?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** I was, yeah. Carry bag. That was a lot of fun. I was repping the home state. Saturday I remember being on the first tee and telling my brother, "It's 3-wood, but I cannot tee it up that low right now, I'm so nervous." So we hit driver, pumped it in the bunker and made par on the hole and there we went.

**Q. What was Phil like that day?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** He was great. Bones was still on the bag then. They were very kind,

talkative, didn't ever big dog me or whatever. They always answered a question I had or whatever. We had a good time.

**Q. Do you feel like because of that, because of the way it finished, you were obviously in contention until the back nine, maybe this course owes you a little bit or not?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** No, not necessarily. I mean, it was just playing -- those last three holes into the wind, they're beasts. I hit driver, 3-wood on 17 and 18. It was in on the left on 17 and in off the right on 18.

No, I don't feel it owes me, but I think I kind of want to redeem myself.

**Q. So what was it exactly the good feeling that you got earlier this week?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** This week? I had a really steep attack angle, so kind of the hands were really close to the body, a lot of lag. Just trying to get a little wider, wider on the way back and wider on the way down, let the clubhead catch up to the hands.

**Q. How would you compare your golf now to back then in 2015? It's night and day or is it pretty close?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** No, to be honest, I think in '15 I was a little more consistent as kind of this year shows. I mean, I played seven events; five of the seven, made cuts. My first year, rookie year out here, I think I was like 21 of 26 cuts, and then last year I go and miss like 20 cuts.

Just kind of been working hard on the swing and I just want to get back to that real consistent ball flight like I'm used to playing. Right now I compare it with anything, kind of has a similar feel of what I did at the RSM. I was hitting the ball really well. It's kind of got only a one-way miss right now, so I can be a little more aggressive on some shots.

**Q. This is your first start here since 2015, right?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** It is, yes.

**Q. Did you have some good vibes coming into this week?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** Yeah, always good thoughts whenever you remember good shots. I had a couple years on the Web and I think one of the years I had an opportunity to get in, but it was the same time as there was a Web event and the ultimate goal was to get here and not play one week. So I skipped on it and it worked out for me.

**Q. What's the difference in mindset being here as a Monday qualifier and then being here as a Tour pro needing to get something going?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** There's a few different things. One, and I mean I always said that you can be a little more aggressive on some shots being a card-holding member because you're going to play next week, who cares. I mean, kind of. But as a Monday qualifier, it's like all right, inside the Top-10, I've got to not be stupid here, get a par and play next week.

**Q. Which you made that finish outside the Top-10?**

**AUSTIN COOK:** I did. T-11, yeah. Somebody two-putted the last hole. I was hoping they three-putted. But no, I think also being a Monday qualifier, you don't have anything to prove. You're just out here and you can just go and have fun.

The other side of it is you're a card-holding member. If you're not having a good season so far, you need something for keep your card by the end of the year. For me, I was able to play comfortably and just be on my own, you know, when I was in the Monday qualifiers because I really had no status anywhere. I was just out here just to try to prove that I could play with these guys.