

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
October 22, 2021



STEVEN ALKER (-9)

Q. You got the opportunity and you have really taken it well. What's the drive there?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah. Well, it's a new chapter for me coming from Korn Ferry and playing with those young guys; big, strong, hitting it forever. So in places I was competitive out there, but I'm kind of maybe a little more competitive out here. But as I said, my game's just coming around at the right time. You've still got to play golf and shoot the scores. These guys, they're good so you've got to shoot some good scores. It's just a combination of game coming together and just really wanting to play out here.

Q. And does this introduce you to everybody?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, it has. The guys have been great, welcoming. You know, when you play well, they say "congrats." You know, it's been fun, it has been fun, which is great.

Q. How about just the way the round went? You made a lot of birdies, then it kind of cooled. Was there something that --

STEVEN ALKER: Not really. I stayed pretty aggressive. I missed a short putt on 6, probably my worst strike of the day, only had like a six- or seven-footer, but I stayed aggressive. I keep hitting it strong off the tee and I was hitting my fairways, hitting my targets. So nothing really changed, I just didn't get the par 5s at the end. My pitch didn't come in there right on 18, but I'm happy with 63.

Q. Have you exceeded your own expectations in a way?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, a little bit. You know, my game was in good shape. I stayed competitive on the Korn Ferry Tour and I think coming in, I was just kind of prepared, I think. Yeah, I felt good, but it's just getting out here and trying to stay out here and I did that, which has been great. And that's, like I said, all the hard work I've been putting in has just been paying off.

Q. Sounds like when you were telling Billy Ray, like, "I want to go to Hawaii," like you want more, like you're not satisfied?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, sure. Every guy wants to win out here, it's huge. I haven't won for a while, but we've got two days to go. Out here I find with the three days, you've got to get a hot start, otherwise you're kind of on the back foot of it. Only two to go. It's kind of like playing the weekend really now, just keep going at it.

Q. There are a lot of first-timers in the field for winning and a bunch of rookies. Many of them have a similar story to yours, they got an opportunity and they've taken it. What separates you from those guys, if anything separates you?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, I don't think anything really separates me. You know, there's a little bit of luck in there. There's just some good playing at the right time, making a few putts here or there, that's kind of the difference. There's not a lot of difference. Like, I know a couple of guys have been qualifying and trying to get in top-10 and their games are good, they can win.