

GREAT EXUMA CLASSIC

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW

January 17, 2023

SHAD TUTEN (-14)



Q. All right, another great day out there for you, your best round of the week today. Just kind of walk me through your round and what was going right.

SHAD TUTEN: Yeah, kind of started slow. I hit a really good putt on 2 and it just didn't go in for par, so ended up even par there. Hit a good shot on 4 and ended up making the putt. Then just kind of limped in, honestly. I didn't do anything special at the beginning and just kind of again kept it in play, played my game, didn't really want to try to do anything special, just go out there and just kind of keep my head down and do what I do.

The back nine was a little bit better. I hit it close on 15, and then 16 I actually hit one of the worst shots of the week on 16 and then followed it up with one of the best shots of the week, so that was a nice thing, and then I made about a 30-footer on 17. So it was a good day, we had a good time, great group, good friends of mine so it made it a lot better.

Q. What about conditions, weather, course, anything playing a little bit in your favor today?

SHAD TUTEN: The wind was a little different today, played a lot firmer, which is kind of different for here. Usually we play it when it's pretty wet, but firm conditions is kind of what I prefer, so it definitely played more in my favor I would say just preference-wise. Wind kind of died down late so that was kind of nice coming back in. Again, it was just a fun day.

Q. It's fun going into a final round with a lead --

SHAD TUTEN: Yeah.

Q. -- but three strokes especially --

SHAD TUTEN: I didn't know that, OK.

Q. -- just walk me through how that feels and --

SHAD TUTEN: Yeah, it is what it is. This is kind of what you work for, this is the position you want to be in, but again, I'm just trying to do what I can do and keep the ball in play and just keep working hard.

Q. Is there any key things that you've learned through like the course of your pro

career that's -- I mean, if you could touch on something and enlighten us?

SHAD TUTEN: I could write a dictionary on that, but -- or encyclopedia.

Honestly, it doesn't take as much as I expected. I'm not trying to be cocky when I say that, but I tried to be perfect when I first come out here and other than, you know, other than trying to perfect what I'm good at, that's kind of what I started with and kind of followed up to here and I've just gotten better all around, so it's been fun.

Q. You said that coming into this week you just really wanted to try to have fun. Do you think that you've been able to live up to that?

SHAD TUTEN: Yeah, you know, and honestly I haven't been practicing as much. We've been cooking almost every night at the house, so it almost feels like kind of somewhat of a home game but at the beach. It's kind of nice and we're enjoying ourselves.

Q. And then I guess just feelings going into the final round tomorrow? Anything that you're going to try to change or just keep the same mentality? What's the plan?

SHAD TUTEN: Probably going to go back, we're cooking steaks tonight, which is my favorite, and I'll probably have a bourbon when I get back. Just put my feet up and enjoy myself, just try to get as much sleep as possible and come out and do the same thing again.

Q. Did you picture yourself in this position at the first event of the year?

SHAD TUTEN: Honestly, no. I actually kind of pictured myself not coming to this week just because before I didn't really like the course and it was a mental thing for me.

But I feel like I'm different, I feel like I've kind of changed, I've matured a lot within the past year and just looking forward to it.

Q. How does it go from, I mean, missing those first two cuts to now going into the final round with a three-stroke lead?

SHAD TUTEN: I mean, I kind of said it to myself, like I wanted to get off to a better start this year, so that was kind of my mentality coming into this week and I'm just going to go have fun and enjoy myself.