

## MEXICO OPEN AT VIDANTA

### ROUND 1 INTERVIEW

April 27, 2023



### AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN ( -8)

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**Q. Austin, in with an 8-under 63 in the opening round. If you look at the scorecard, a lot of action early with three birdies to start and then four to close, but sort of "eh" in the middle. How would you describe that round?**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** Just super steady. Then I made a few of those 10-, 12-footers middle part of the round, or that early part of the round. Middle part of the round it's not like I didn't have any good looks, some putts just didn't drop and some tougher holes in there as well which you're fine making 3s. The one I kind of felt let slip away was hitting that tee ball left on 18, having to lay up and then leaving myself 15 feet instead of being able to go for that green in two, that would have been that one in the middle just to kind of keep me on pace. Yeah, stole that one on 3 today and yeah, nice little finish.

**Q. So when you say you stole the one on 3 and the 18th, was that just the driver specifically or was it --**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** The second shot, I hit it to a foot out of that left waste area on 3. A little bit of a bowl left pin over there so it wasn't too difficult of a shot, but still some fluffy waste bunker area. I grabbed a good lie and then because it was left, shortened the hole probably by 15, 20 yards and just had like a little full pitching wedge knocked down a little bit, and kick-in birdie there was nice.

**Q. It's one stroke off your career low on Tour. Did you kind of sense that this was coming? Did you feel it in any way?**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** Yeah, I mean Harry and I played really good golf last week at the Zurich, we ended up missing the cut by two, but I mean we were feeding off each other, hitting good shots. And then being back home in Dallas for two days, Saturday, Sunday got some work in with Cameron. Played a fun pro-am event on Monday at Preston Trail and came down here Monday night.

I mean, yeah, just feeling good. I feel like my game's in a good spot, just keep playing golf in this middle part of the year is kind of a hot stretch of tournaments I like.

**Q. You're coming to a tournament that you've won before, not at this venue, but when I talked to you the other day you said it was great to have your name on the trophy.**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** Absolutely.



**Q. Can you just describe what your favorite memory was from winning this tournament in 2018?**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** I mean, still get a little bit of some goosebumps thinking about it, for sure. Just the reception, winning an event like that, the Mexico Open, which has such a deep history. There are names on that trophy that are in the Hall of Fame and what it kind of means down here, a national open anywhere is very special. Yeah, to have my name on a trophy like that, I mean the trophy's not small by any size either, so I think just having to kneel down, take some photos with all the people after the round is one of the memories I remember because lifting that thing's not easy.

**Q. Do you feel like you're getting the recognition from the Mexico fans as well having been a past winner?**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** I think a little bit. My pro-am guys yesterday were definitely talking to me about it and they realized and remembered that I had won in the past. Yeah, it's pretty special.

**Q. There are four Mexico Open winners in the field. If there will be a champions dinner for the champions, what will you serve?**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** Oh, gosh. It's probably not the narrative you're looking for, but I love Italian food. I eat probably chicken parm at least once a week no matter where I'm at. Some sort of Italian dinner with maybe some good wine or something like that.

**Q. And Jon's the last winner, what would you like him to serve?**

**AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN:** Jon? Gosh, I don't know. He could probably do some fajitas or something like that, probably a big family-style dinner would be pretty cool.

