

## MEXICO OPEN AT VIDANTA

**ROUND 4 INTERVIEW**  
**April 30, 2023**



**TONY FINAU (-24)**

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**MARK WILLIAMS:** We would like to welcome Tony Finau to the interview room here at the Mexico Open at Vidanta.

Tony, congratulations on your victory today.

**TONY FINAU:** Thank you.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** It's your sixth PGA TOUR title and your fourth since finishing runner-up here in this event last year. That's an amazing stretch of golf you've played. Just talk about today and the finish and coming down the stretch and when you felt comfortable sort of knowing that you had it in the bag.

**TONY FINAU:** Well, I didn't feel comfortable until I was on the 18th green.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** That's always the way.

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah. It seems no matter how many shots you're ahead, you're just so focused on getting in the clubhouse to win the golf tournament.

When I hit that third shot on 18, I was like all right, I don't think I can screw this up now.

But I played great golf all week. That's something that I wanted to do. Every day I was striking the golf ball really nicely, but the biggest thing is I was able to convert the birdie putts that I really needed to and also some of the par saves that were momentum swingers for me. Very happy just with the four rounds I was able to put together. And I knew today was going to be a tall task going against Rahmbo with the form that he's in. I was really put to the test and came out on top, which feels great.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** You started the week No. 11 in the FedExCup and move to No. 4 with this victory. How confident were you coming into this week having played well here last year and having your family here and the experience that you've had at the Vidanta resort already?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, we love this place. After coming here last year, we knew it was a place that our family really enjoyed and it was a golf course that I really liked. My scores on the weekend especially last year kind of showed that, so I was looking forward to coming back here and getting some more of that good mojo.



This tournament propelled me I think into the season that I had last year. This was the first high finish that I had all season in my season last year. I was playing not very good golf and then I make a run on Sunday and after that I played great golf throughout the rest of the season.

To get this win was huge and hopefully propels me to do more great things as the season unfolds.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Just wanted to mention like your sixth victory, as I said, and four in the last year. Your first two titles were won in playoffs, but it seems like the four that you've won recently have all been like a pretty large margin.

How different has it been for you since that five-year gap of not having a victory and then coming out and doing that?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I just think it just says that I learned a lot in those. On Sunday out here I've learned that you just have to be aggressive, you have to make birdies. Guys are going to make birdies. There's so many great players, especially someone of Rahmbo's stature, Brandon Wu played amazing today. So you've got some of these guys that can go on these birdie runs.

So my mindset on Sundays I think has just changed. You never get comfortable with the lead. That's my nature anyway is to be an aggressive player. I always have been that way and so Sundays are starting to shape up better for me since I've been in contention, but I think I just have learned a lot.

**Q. What do you like the most about this golf course that fits your style so well? As you said, this could be maybe a major in the future, how could this help to go to that place to one day win a major hopefully soon?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, there's a few tough driving holes, but there's also four or five holes that allow you to really swing the driver, it's pretty open on some of those holes. Yeah, I like hitting driver a lot when I play golf, it's the club that gets me the momentum. It kind of goes hand in hand when I'm swinging the driver well, I'm usually putting it well. That's how I was as a kid and this golf course I think just suits my game pretty nicely.

I think Rahmbo and I both hit a little cut, we like hitting the cut with the driver. This golf course I think suits guys that hit a little left-to-right shot with their driver, but mostly I would say just suits guys that hit it very far. This golf course allows me to kind of open up a little bit and hit it with some length.

Yeah, as you mentioned, I went on a nice run after this tournament last year and hopefully it propels me this year to do some great things as well.



**Q. Tony, today's Kids Day in Mexico. What kind of message would you send to the kids that want to be like a pro? Many of them are right here today, so what kind of message would you send to the kids here in Mexico and in general?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I would say to all the kids, keep working hard and keep believing in yourself. There's nothing that you aren't able to achieve with hard work and some faith in what you're doing.

That's coming from someone I would say that's very similar to the upbringing of a lot of kids in Mexico. You don't have to have the resources, but if you have a desire and you work really hard, you never know what you can accomplish and what you can become.

Hopefully I've inspired some of these kids as they've been out here watching me and inspire them to do some great things. I'm not really anybody special. When I was a kid, I was just like them, I didn't come from very much, but I put a lot of sacrifice and hard work into becoming a great golfer. If you do that, then you can do some great things.

**Q. Is there a special reason why you choose the green color to identify your foundation and personal logo, and also your family was wearing it yesterday and today?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, you see all my family, they're all wearing green, too, and I've got my green shoes on. So the color green, as you mentioned my foundation, if you look at my foundation logo, at the very bottom it's a very pointy V and the V is significant because of the name of my mom, her name was Vena. She passed away in 2011, but she's someone that I like to honor every time I play and I tee it up on Sundays honoring her wearing green. That's the reason that green is so important to me. It's just a great way for me to remember the sacrifices from my parents and especially my mom, who was a wonderful person.

**Q. First of all, congratulations.**

**TONY FINAU:** Thank you.

**Q. I think you're a very family oriented guy and I think you're a very good person.**

**Do you think this golf course is different for long hitters or not-so-long hitters? Does it make a difference?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, no question this golf course is different for someone who hits it far compared to someone who hits it short. I would say most golf courses are, but especially this one. There's four par-4s out here that are over 500 yards so that's going to favor someone that hits it far.

I think it's the reason why I came back this year. Again, it's a golf course that suits my style in that it's pretty playable off the tee. A lot of those 500-yard par-4s I'm able to just send my



driver and get a short iron in my hand compared to guys that are hitting longer irons. It's a golf course that definitely favors guys that hit it further.

It will be interesting to see how many guys in the future come here and play in this tournament. I think the field's going to get better and hopefully that's the case starting next year.

**Q. Congratulations. How do you feel about beating one of the best in the world like Jon Rahm, and of course what are your expectations for the future?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, it feels great. Anytime you can battle with a guy like Jon Rahm who's in the form that he was and come out on top, it makes me feel good.

Rahm is a good friend of mine, we practice quite a bit together so having Rahmbo as like a sparring partner for me has only made me better and I hope he can say the same.

As far as my future, you never know what your future holds, but take it a day at a time and this is a nice step in the right direction on my season. We'll just continue to stack up hopefully some wins and some major championships in the future.

**Q. Tony, what does this win mean for you and where do you rank it in all of your wins on the Tour?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, every win is so special in its own way. I felt good coming into this week, but you never know how a week's going to go, take it a day at a time.

But this one's so special. We love Vidanta. When we came here last year, we fell in love with the resort, we fell in love with the people, and then I love the golf course.

This is a very special win for me, very special to have my family here. Again, it's just such a cool resort, and amazing hospitality. We felt nothing but love being here and so it just makes it extremely special that I can win here. And I think I've mentioned this before, hopefully our family, this is a place that our family comes back to for many years.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Just while we're on that subject, you mentioned out there in one of your interviews that remember that this is a national open in Mexico. Can you just elaborate on that and how important that is to you winning a national open title?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I think that's so important. This tournament is called the Mexico Open at Vidanta and to be able to win a national open in any country is very special. So I'm proud to be the champion of a Mexico Open and on a golf course that I think is very worthy of holding a national open. It's just very cool to just have so much support from all the fans and a place that we just -- I have nothing but great things to say about. To be able to win here is extremely special.



**Q. Tony, you are almost Mexican now that you've won the Mexico Open --**

**TONY FINAU:** I like it.

**Q. -- and that you brought your family here. You've won the tournament, you've done everything. Jon Rahm beat the score of the lowest round in the course yesterday and you beat him now.**

**What do you take away from our country, from Mexico, besides golf? You're a great golfer, nothing to talk about golf. What about Mexico and what about you coming back every year and bringing back all your buddies and all your friends with us?**

**TONY FINAU:** The energy is unmatched here from the fans, that's the first thing that jumps out is the energy from the fans. The fans are unbelievable, so supportive. The announcements on the first and 10th tee are just epic, I love it. It's like a soccer announcement, but the energy is just unmatched. We don't experience anything like it on the Tour, so that makes it stand out, it's very different.

The hospitality is the other thing. The people, we fell in love with the people. Even when we're in Cancun, we're here in Puerto Vallarta, the Mexican people are just wonderful people. I would say if you guys accept me as a Mexican, well, here I am.

(Applause.)

**TONY FINAU:** Thank you. I am just very proud to be your champion, so thank you.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Just to wrap up with a couple things. How would you assess this week? Is this one of your better putting tournaments, do you think? How would you compare it to some of the other tournaments that you played from that standpoint?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, they felt very similar to Detroit. I played very clean throughout every day, I didn't make a bogey today, I think I only made one bogey the first three days, one bogey each day. It was just a very -- I just played really clean all week, I played really solid.

As far as ranking it against some of my best performances, it's pretty much right at the top, yeah. I was able to make the putts that I needed to.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** And just the round today, was there a particular hole, a moment that you felt like was something that you did to keep that momentum going and kept you in the right frame of mind?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, no doubt, it was the par putt on No. 8. I hit in the left bunker with my second shot, which is not too crazy of a bunker to get out of, and I just chunked the bunker shot and it barely got out. I had about 20, 22 feet for par off the fringe and it was just huge for my momentum at that time. I was kind of cruising along with a little cushion, three-shot



lead. If I missed that, a two-shot lead just feels a lot different than a three-shot lead because it's one shot away from having a one-shot lead. I was able to keep that lead and then the momentum all the way through the back nine.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Finally, you're one of the most popular athletes in golf and probably sport. To hear that chanting of your name out there during the ceremony, had you heard that before and did it send shivers up your spine?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, it's just so special. These people, the fans here are just unbelievable, that's all I can say. They've been so supportive of me and I feel all the love. I look forward to coming back and playing in front of them next year.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Well, you are the champion, congratulations, and we appreciate your time. We look forward to having you back.

**TONY FINAU:** Thank you.

