

**PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE**  
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**TONY FINAU**

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**MODERATOR:** Morning, everyone. We would like to welcome our Mexico Open at Vidanta defending champ, Tony Finau.

Tony, welcome back to a course and tournament where you've had much success. What is it like to be back defending your title?

**TONY FINAU:** It's awesome. We love this place. I said it last year after we left, our family's really fallen in love with this place.

And to be back defending this year is pretty special. We're really happy to be back, I'm really happy to be back on a golf course that I love. Just everything about this place, the people, the food, Vidanta's a pretty magical spot. Last year, to be able to just win the golf tournament with my family here was extremely special. It's nice to be back and looking to defend this year as well.

**MODERATOR:** You've come with your family. What are some activities your family's up to even off the golf course this week?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah. Well, swimming is always high on the list. They like hitting the pools here at Vidanta. This year they opened the theme park, which is exciting. We love doing rides, so my oldest two are 11 and 12 and they already love rollercoasters. I think we'll be hitting that over the next couple days, something that wasn't open over the last couple years. We're looking forward to that.

Some great restaurants here. We're foodies, the Finaus. We love to eat and they have some great food here.

So those are a few of the things we're looking forward to throughout the week.

**MODERATOR:** And kind of become a tradition with the par-3 course over at Vidanta. Is that something you expect to do this week as well?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, no doubt. I think that was a given. I think we reserved a tee time there about 8:00 every night and we'll be there with my boys playing pretty much every evening. That's definitely at the top of our list of things we enjoy here at Vidanta.

**MODERATOR:** And defending a title and have another one later this season at Houston, what's the mindset? Is it kind of more added pressure when you're defending a title?



**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, there's definitely different feelings coming back to a golf course that you've had success. I would say more obligations than anything else. Once you get on the golf course, you know it's a course that you've had success and you've won before so you definitely have that sense of confidence I think walking around a place that you've won before. Hopefully that's the case this week.

This golf course is high on my list as far as courses that look good to me and that I like, so I'll be looking to definitely get after it again this week and try and defend this title.

**MODERATOR:** The top-20 last week at Riviera and it's kind of been a rainy west coast. What are you looking forward to this week and how's your game feeling entering the week?

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, you said it, I look forward to this weather. It's going to be 85 degrees and no rain in the forecast. Hopefully it stays that way.

Yeah, I look forward to competing. I feel like the game's in a good place. I've had a couple nice finishes on the west coast. Had a chance to win at Torrey, a golf course that I like and had success as well. It's nice to have the juices going already and being at a golf tournament that I really enjoy, hopefully I can have a good week this week.

**Q. Tony, good morning. Last year you were saying that you were having a good time, that you enjoyed it from the very beginning. So now that you're coming back as a defending champion and that most likely people will be on your side cheering for you, are your expectations set higher because now people are going to be on your side and perhaps it could change what they're expecting from you?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I feel like there was a lot of love there last year, really over the last couple years. I felt some of that energy. I played with Abraham Ancer that first year and he was a Mexico favorite, so there was a lot of energy there. I think I have an idea what to expect. I love having the crowd behind you and competing.

As far as extra pressure, I don't really look at it that way, I think it's a very positive thing, it's great. But again, I think a lot of people were cheering for me last year in the final group to win the tournament and I was able to pull it off. The more, the merrier. I love the support and I love whatever being a defending champion comes with is only a good thing.

**Q. And the second question if it's OK with you, if you go ahead and win Vidanta or Mexico Open at Vidanta once again, it would be the first tournament that you conquered twice, so it can become perhaps like your second home, doesn't it?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, no doubt. I wouldn't mind this place being a second home, it's a pretty special spot.

**Q. Tony, first of all, I notice you're a golfer that has a sports (indiscernible) style. At this point in your career, have you considered to make your own brand or**



**merchandising?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, that's a great question. I've been a very proud Nike athlete since I signed with Nike. They do a great job with apparel and footwear. Obviously you see me rocking the AJ1s, which is a shoe I love and I've been wearing for a couple years.

I have my own foundation logo where we do some branding with Nike, which is cool. I wear some off-course TF gear which Nike has allowed me to do. I think that's more than enough for me at this point in my career. Nike has been a great brand for me and a sponsorship that hopefully lasts many years.

**Q. And second question, what MJs will you be rocking this weekend?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I got some special ones as defending champion this week, so you guys have to stay tuned for that.

**Q. There are 16 Latin players in the field this week. What can you tell us about golf in Latin America and in Mexico? What have you seen in your years playing as a professional?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I think there's a lot of great Latin American players, a lot of Mexican players and I love seeing the diversity being shown on the PGA TOUR. I think there's so much potential in Latin American players, Mexican players, players from South America. I think it's really cool to see and I love feeling like I've been taken in as kind of one of your guys' own.

Again, there's going to be a lot of support because I'm the defending champion, but over the last couple years that I've been here even before I won this golf tournament I felt like I was a home crowd favorite, which is kind of a cool feel.

I love being part of the event because of that. They give a lot of these guys the opportunity to play this tournament, which they should as the Mexico Open. I wish them all luck and would love to see them succeed and play well.

**Q. In the last five tournaments last year you made the cut three times in the top-25 and one time in the top-10. Do you feel you are ready this year to win again?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I feel prepared. I've done some good work in the offseason with my body just to be strong. This golf course yields some birdies and I can really swing the driver with some freedom out here as there's a few holes that are pretty lenient as far as hitting areas, so I love that, being able to hit it hard and play this type of golf course. I do feel like I'm prime to go on a run starting this week.

**Q. I have a couple questions from the Mexican media that's arriving. Your foundation (indiscernible) purpose, is there a plan to extend a program abroad here in Mexico?**



**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I just want to be clear, my foundation?

**Q. Yeah.**

**TONY FINAU:** I mean, there haven't been any plans to expand like internationally, but I would love for that to happen. I think some of the reach that I might have in Mexico could be an incredible thing and that's what our foundation supports, underprivileged youth through the game of golf. So if that's something that happens organically throughout the years, then the Tony Finau Foundation will definitely support that.

**Q. And one last question from the national media, you're actually in the top 13 of PGA TOUR players born in the U.S. How did you get along with internal rivalry between Americans and do you have goals for the Olympic games?**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, it's been a big goal of mine to play in the Olympics, there's no question. I'd love to represent the U.S. and play in the Olympics this year. I know it's coming to L.A. in a few years, so that would be great to be able to represent the United States and play in the Olympics.

And can you repeat the first part of your question, please?

**Q. Yeah, internal competition among American players.**

**TONY FINAU:** Yeah, I think we have a great stock of American players, a lot of great American players right now in the game and we're all very competitive. I think we all get along and respect each other, but at the end of the day the PGA TOUR is a competition and we all want to win golf tournaments. So we definitely respect each other, but every time we tee it up everybody's wanting to win.

**MODERATOR:** With that, we will go ahead and wrap it up. Tony, thank you for your time and good luck this week.

**TONY FINAU:** Thank you.

