

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES
April 4, 2024



AKSHAY BHATIA (-9)

Q. What was the key to put together such an incredible round today?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, just played solid. I think also experience out here. I played -- this is my third time here. Not many golf courses on the Tour have been my third time, so I think understanding the golf course a lot more. Yeah, I just played really solid, I got a couple really good breaks. Yeah, it was just a good day.

Q. Were there any particular shots or holes that stood out to you that you were proud of your performance?

AKSHAY BHATIA: You know, I figured after 14, so on 15 I knew that was a tough hole, I knew I had two tough tee shots coming in, 15 and 18. If I could just get out of there with a par, maybe birdie 18, just play it how we planned to, it would all work out. I thankfully birdied 15 and then 18 got a very good break and happened to kind of hit in the right spots at the right time and made birdie there.

Q. What's the emotional part of this for you right now standing here with a three-shot lead after the opening round?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Doesn't matter to me. I'm excited to go and sleep, it's been a long day, it's been very hot. I'm just trying to do the things that my mental coach and I have been talking about and I'm not trying to win the golf tournament today, but it's just nice having a nice day today.

Q. Has that mental component been a new development for you? I know you were just talking about that.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, it's been a change for me. I've worked with a guy for a long time, but I think truly unlocking more things outside the golf course has really helped. Just feeling a lot more calmer, myself happy. This is why I play the game, right? And not to get too down on myself because there's been so much stuff that I've learned over the last six, seven months after winning that has truly become an impact on my golf and I'm starting to kind of finagle my way out of that, so it's just keep learning, persevering through it.

Q. It's interesting looking at your season, there's been either cuts or top-20s it seems like. Is there something that separates the good days from the bad?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Just a lot of mentality stuff really. I'm going to keep saying it. It's been a big thing, it's been a big change for me and I think the last couple weeks is kind of when I



just started working with Ryan, my psychologist, and that's where it's really paid off, just changing those kind of the way I look into the days and my goals for the day.

