

AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Pebble Beach, California, USA

Pebble Beach Golf Links

Akshay Bhatia

Quick Quotes



Q. What a great round. I don't know if you know how difficult this golf course is. You caught it without wind. But to hit 18 greens out here, the smallest greens on TOUR, you got to be feeling mighty proud.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, it was a good day. I hit a good amount of fairways and that's relatively easy to do out here just because it's pretty wide and, yeah, 18 greens gave me a lot of good looks today.

Q. A lot of good looks for you and more than a hundred feet in putts.

AKSHAY BHATIA: That's a pretty good stat. It's probably the first time I've ever putted this well. And I actually just went from a short, to a short putter. I was using an arm lock for a while, so it was pretty nice to see that.

Q. You hit so many good shots, but that 3 that you made at the 8th, that has to be really special. Tell me about the hole.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, honestly, I was peeling an orange and it was so bad that I was just thinking about the orange and my caddie goes, Okay, we got 207. I said, Okay, I got to go. And I don't know, just kind of hit-and-see kind of thing. But, yeah, it was a great birdie to steal there and just pretty happy with that.

Q. You've been doing some Monday qualifying, getting some sponsors exemptions. I know the folks at AT&T are very happy that they were able to include you in the field. It has to make you special that you justify their confidence in you.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, Mr. John for giving me the opportunity, I'm very delighted to be here. Pebble Beach is probably one of the best places I could ever be and, man, I'm very thankful for all the opportunities I've gotten along the way and this one's a little more special just because Pebble's really special to me.

Q. How much did you feel like you had to get Pebble

today when you saw that there was very little wind?

AKSHAY BHATIA: I didn't really think about it like that, I thought it was going to dump down rain all day, so I was just getting ready for that. I thought the scores would be pretty high. But with no wind and pretty nice weather for Pebble Beach it was nice to get off to a good start and get ready for tomorrow and the next few days.

Q. Do you feel like tomorrow though is sort of more telling once you get through tomorrow, because obviously by then everybody will have played each course. Pebble historically without wind is going to play easier than Spy.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, I was asking myself about who got the better draw, playing Spyglass first or playing Pebble first. And honestly, playing Pebble with no wind is probably a little easier just because there's more trees at Spyglass so you can definitely get rewarded more out there.

Q. I heard you talking about how much more comfortable you feel at 19 than you did at 17. In what ways? What about the last two years has allowed you to feel that way?

AKSHAY BHATIA: It's hard to say. Like I said, once the shut down happened, me and my coach, Chase Duncan, we just had a good game plan, we stuck to it, we worked really hard every single day.

I just gained a lot of confidence playing mini-tour events. I won my first one and that was a huge stepping stone for me.

Then I made my first cut, finished top-10, which was great. Just doing that over the course of a year was really big for me and I just know that I'm progressing every single time I'm teeing it up.

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