

# AT&T Byron Nelson

Saturday, May 13, 2023

McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

## Austin Eckroat

### Quick Quotes

**Q. Career-low round, at least on the PGA Tour, 63. What was working for you today?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Really everything. Today was just a solid day. I felt comfortable with the driver. Felt comfortable with the irons, and felt just as good with the putter. A little shaky on some chips, but other than that really every thing was solid today. Some good confidence going into tomorrow for that.

**Q. You've been after three rounds in the top 10 twice in your career. This will be the highest you've been through rounds. How do you manage expectations and nerves heading into tomorrow?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: It's tough. You put yourself in this position and you kind of feel like a win is the only way that it's a successful week.

But just go out tomorrow and try to play the best I can and see what happens. Obviously the No. 2 player in the world will be right there and it's going to be fun. Haven't played against him competitively since college, so it'll be fun.

**Q. Growing up not too far from here, how much familiarity do you have with playing here or either of these pro courses here?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: So this is only the second time I've been on property here. Played a tournament out here when I was 10 or 11 years old. Been a while.

But I came down to Texas, I mean, almost every weekend to play in junior events. I'm only three hours away.

So I have a ton of family here this week and friends, so it's good week to put myself in a good spot for the friends and family.

**Q. How big of a breakthrough would it be to win this?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: It would be awesome. I mean, a lot of job security. I'm outside the top 125 right now in the



FedExCup. A lot of things come with winning a PGA TOUR event, and just hoping to get that done.

**Q. Is qualifying for the PGA on your mind as well?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yes, for sure. I don't know how I can get in there. I don't know if it's only a win, but definitely be fun. Be a quick flight over to New York though. I don't mind.

**Q. You mentioned you went back to your high school putter after not using it a couple years.**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yes.

**Q. What was the reasoning there?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: You know, I've been tinkering with putters for a while now. It's kind of been holding me back, the putter has been a little bit. I just grabbed it from the garage when I stopped home for a day and it looked good, so I thought I would give it a run.

It's working out.

**Q. More specifically on the expectations for tomorrow, pretty good chance playing with Scottie. What will that be like? How do you manage the crowd?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yeah, from what I've seen he has a big following this week. He's from here. We've played a lot of golf together from all ages. He's a little older than I am, but played together when he was at Texas and I was at Oklahoma State.

It will be fun to compete with him again. It's been a while.

**Q. The par save you had on 11, how big was that for you being able to continue your momentum?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yeah, that was, I mean, super terrible drive. Just a mess of a hole. Yeah, getting a putt like that to go you feel like you stole something. Keeps the momentum going.



I was able to birdie the next with another long putt. Yeah, that was judge a round saver as they call them, keep the momentum on your side.

**Q. Tinkering with your putting, you're leading the field in strokes gained this week. What has clicked? You just feel like it's a culmination?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Just reading these greens well. Ball seemed to be starting on my line. Just really feel solid over the putter.

I think just going back to the old putter, having a little bit of comfort level there. I didn't know I was leading putting, but that's a good stat to be doing well in.

**Q. T65 I think after the first round.**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yep.

**Q. Especially in a tournament like this when you know low scores are going to be happening every day, how does your mindset look after a day like this to kind of...**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yeah, I was 2-over through I don't know, maybe 12 holes round one, maybe more than that, 13 holes.

Was able to birdie four of the last five and get things going. You feel like you're behind the eight ball, but on a course where there is some scoring, if you get a little hot you can go rattle off a lot of birdies in a row.

That's kind of what I've done. Been playing catchup, but I'm in a different spot now so it's great.

**Q. How do you keep that double from rattling you?**

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Really didn't bother me like it would. Felt like I was playing really well. You know, I knew I had 8, 9 coming up, two good birdie opportunities.

Hit a great putt. Just I mean, on 7, so it wasn't like I was nervous about starting it online. It was just kind of didn't really faze me like it normally would. Really happy how I handled that.

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