

# Barracuda Championship

Sunday, August 8, 2021

Truckee, California, USA

Tahoe Mountain Club

## Erik Van Rooyen

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome the 2021 winner of the Barracuda Championship, Erik Van Rooyen. You've won all over the world and now you've won on the PGA TOUR. If we can get your thoughts.

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: A lot of thoughts. Obviously this was, in my mind, kind of the next step for what I wanted to achieve. I've got big dreams and aspirations, and winning on the PGA TOUR was certainly part of that. I'm really, really happy.

**Q. I think there will be a tree on the 18th hole that you will never forget. If you can take us through that hole and the break that you got on the last.**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: A massive break. You know, there's a little move in my swing that I've been working on probably for the last three months. And it just helps me square up the face. And that was my swing thought on that last hole, just get that thing square. And obviously overdid it a little bit and hooked it, uneventfully. But luckily the tree was there and I got the break.

And when it's your week to win, those kind of things go your way. So it obviously was my week. So I'm really happy.

**Q. Talk about this format. You made some progress there with the eagle on 8, birdie on 9. Talk about how much you love the format this week?**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: Yeah, it's really fun. It almost lends itself for slightly more aggressive play. The golf course is such where it's got a couple short par-4s as well and par-5s are all gettable. Making eagles is massive. I think I made two this week. 8 was a massive bonus today.

And if you make a bogey, you only lose one point. And a birdie's worth plus 2. You have almost got pedal down the whole week. And I did a great job of that.

**Q. You came into the week 139 in the FedExCup. You have a huge jump now and then also a two-year**



**exemption on the tour. What does that mean?**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: [Chuckling]. It's massive. It's massive. It's been a difficult sort of 18 months for me golf-wise. I haven't been playing well. There's been glimpses of it the last six months. But I haven't been able to put four good rounds together. So I was well aware of the position I was in going into the playoffs, knowing that I've only got eight rounds left to make that cut.

And to win here this week, I mean, under the conditions, you know, the pressure that I was under, I'm going to take so much confidence from this.

**Q. Six out of seven missed cuts coming in. You talk about it's been a tough go for you. Talk a little bit how this changes that going forward.**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: Well, it just, I think, reiterates that patience is key. And winning means you sort of fall into your lap. I was forcing things there for a long time. And ironically, with this game, when you do that, it kind of tends to go the other way. You have to let things happen and let things come to you.

And, again, I've started seeing glimpses of good golf. However, I wasn't making cuts. I played really well at the 3M for about three days. And just went home last week, rested and came in here with a lot of confidence regardless of what the results showed. And obviously I've pulled together four really good rounds this week.

**Q. 16 points today. What was the biggest key to your final round?**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: Just staying in the present, really. You hear it every time from us golfers, but that's really the key. I hadn't won on the PGA TOUR yet. It's such a massive goal. All those things can go through your mind. Obviously being 139 on the FedExCup list, that's on my mind. All of that.

I just stayed so patient. I saw that Andrew Putnam got off to a really, really quick start. He was 45 points pretty early on. And there's really nothing I could do about that. I've got to put one foot in front of the next. And I did that.

And then the eagle on 8 was just a massive boost. Then



the one on 9 to go in as well. And you've got so much momentum going into the back nine.

And that par on 12 was also massive. Obviously, the lie for my third shot was kind of tricky, and I just didn't quite get it over the lip. To up-and-down for par there was just a massive momentum builder. And I played really well coming in.

**Q. The state of South African professional golf is strong right now. Louis is playing really well and Higgo winning recently. Did their recent success motivate you this week?**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: Yes and no. Garrick has got such a bright future ahead of him. He's played exceptional golf the last two years. And then winning at Congaree.

And Louis obviously is someone I've always looked up to. And I played a lot of golf with him the last year or so. Ever since my wife and I moved back to the U.S. we live nearby each other.

And I think as a whole we are quite motivated in general. Ernie, for me at least, was really the one that set the tone from a South African perspective. Obviously Gary Player and guys before him. But Ernie and Retief were really the eras that I look up to. And they set the tone for us and there's so many great players coming through at the moment because of that.

**Q. Have any of those guys given you any advice over the last couple of months when you've been struggling a little bit?**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: No, not really. However, from the outside it was really cool for me just to pay attention to how Louis goes about his stuff. And even Charl -- Charl really played well the last couple of weeks as well and the last couple of months. To see sort of a rebirth of his game is great.

But Louis, you know, he's so good on the golf course. And the way he handles himself, his calm demeanor, his patience, it's really something I took away from him. We all know he's a fantastic ball striker, but the way he handles himself, that's something I wanted to copy. And it's something I look up to.

**Q. Not only does your life change from winning on the tour but a month ago your life changed as well. What does this win mean to you knowing that Valerie is --**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: She's obviously way too small to have any understanding of what just happened. But my

wife's been my rock. She's been absolutely amazing. And she's been pretty much a single parent for three of the last four weeks, ever since we had her. Her parents were with her when I was playing the British Open, but I've been gone three out of the four weeks. So, as I mentioned earlier, this goes out to my wife, Rose, and little Valerie.

**Q. Talk about how much you enjoyed the week. Lake Tahoe, I believe you stayed there. Just talk about this area.**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: It's beautiful and everybody says that about California in general. But it really is stunning. And where we stayed at Incline Village, it's probably about a 35-minute drive. And what was nice about it, just some time to switch off and listen to some music.

And I stayed with some cool guys in Kris Ventura and Wyndham Clark and my caddie Alex and his brother, Austin (phonetic). And it was a nice group of guys. To get away from the golf course and have a barbecue and stare at the lake, it doesn't really get much better than that.

**Q. Your caddie got a Rolex from the tournament for the win. He said you don't have to buy him one.**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: Well, I'm sponsored by Omega and I've always hinted I wanted to get him one. And he's never been too chucked about the idea. Now he seems like a happy man, so I'm off the hook.

**Q. How will you celebrate tonight?**

ERIK VAN ROOYEN: I don't know. I enjoy a brandy and Coke. So, I'm sure one or two will go down after this. I've got an 11:00 p.m. flight out to the Wyndham. So we'll have to plan it and see what we want to do.

But regardless of what happens tonight, this is going to stay with me for a while.

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