

The Presidents Cup

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Royal Montreal Golf Club

Tony Finau

Press Conference



Q. Could you tell me what was your favorite part of your card ceremony?

TONY FINAU: Oh, my favorite part of the card ceremony? Well, I remember looking at the card and saying, man, I've been working years to get this thing. And just how special that was.

I thought it definitely made me reminisce of the journey, what it took me to get to just have a PGA TOUR card and have the opportunity.

I loved my time on the Korn Ferry Tour. I learned a lot. I learned how to travel. I learned how to win, compete at a high level. And I proved to myself that I have what it takes to play on the PGA TOUR.

Q. Who is someone on your team that you're jealous of?

TONY FINAU: Jealous of their swing? I mean, Scottie. That's got to be the answer. Best ball striker in the world, Scottie.

Yeah, the footwork is wild but it works, more than works. He knows what he's doing. When you watch Scottie, sometimes it's like -- to me it's a thing of beauty. Most people are making fun of his footwork but that's athleticism at its best. The guy is absolutely incredible.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Least likely? Who have we got on there? Probably Keegan. He's the oldest. I don't know if our music style would match. I'm pretty easy to please but I don't think I'm going to be giving it to him.

Q. If something clicks that maybe (indiscernible) unaware of, how does that relationship work, where you go to Captain Furyk (indiscernible) or Xander or whatever? (Indiscernible) final decision or is it already done or was it already done a week ago?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I mean, we're all very comfortable with Furyk. That's for sure. He's great as a captain. He's great to have as a captain. He's very proactive. He's very open. He wants to be open with him.

And anytime that we feel like I think we're vibing with a partner, I think that's information that he definitely wants to know. There's no question.

The vibe has definitely been a lot of fun. We have a nice young group of guys, some new guys. Anytime you have new guys, you're always going to get a fresh perspective on how cool it is to be here. Even for me, this is my third -- my fifth International Cup team event playing for the U.S.

And it never gets old for me. But I'm definitely reminded how cool it is when I see these rookies and their eyes are so wide and I can tell they're loving every part of it.

It didn't feel like it was that long ago, but I'm kind of looked at as a veteran now, which is wild to me.

Q. Your family, are they here with you this week?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, my older three get in tonight with our nanny. My brother's coming down to watch. He'll be watching his first Cup. It's going to be fun to have them out. No doubt.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: The week's been great. A lot of fun being around this team. It's a different type of chemistry than any team I've been a part of. Guys seem to be a lot more loose.

I think we have some rookies that are just excited to be here and play and bring that cool chemistry to the team. I'm having a great time. We've been having a lot of fun.

Q. You've been around the guys a lot (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: No doubt. I like that we've been able to mix it up a little bit. We've pretty much played with everybody on our team throughout the last few days, through practice.



It's fun, the practice rounds are a lot of fun. We have some matches, a little bit of gambling going on out there. But overall we're all just trying to sharpen each other to get ready for tomorrow. And I think we've done that.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: I think it's a great setup for our team. Got some length to it -- depending if the wind blows. But overall, I think it's going to be a proper test. Seems like a ball-striker's type of golf course.

The greens are so pure. I think you'll see putts made for sure. I think those strengths are the strengths of our team. I think we'll bode well.

Q. You've been around this team for quite a few years now. (Indiscernible) International Teams getting stronger and stronger?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, there's no question. We had our hands full the last two, the two that I've been a part of. I know the record says that we're dominant, but I know our last two were tough. We had to play great.

You have to earn them. That's the thing. All of our guys know that our record doesn't mean anything. This is a new Presidents Cup. And we have to approach it in that light. We've got to go out and perform and earn the Cup back or earn the Cup and keep the Cup.

Q. How are you doing (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: I'm at even. I'm at even. We've had some nice matches. We'll just say that. Like I was just saying, St Andrew, we're just kind of sharpening each other. And having matches over the last few days, we've mixed up the groups a little bit and it's been fun. We have all played each other at this point over the last few days. And it's nice to just be sharp and play against each other.

Q. The Internationals have guy who is putting up stakes (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, we're just doing our own. All the captains are gambling on the side for sure. Oh, yeah. All the captains are -- they've got their side bets going.

Xander's wild. Xander is like, he'll bet on everything. So he's kind of like doing his gambling with the squad, with the captains -- 50-foot putt. Xander is so much fun, he's wild.

Q. Snedecker made it sound like he was going to build a second house off (indiscernible). Bet against him?

TONY FINAU: They have a bet going against each other. But it's like the most random thing. Like, this bunker shot, if you don't hit it inside 5 feet you owe me \$200. And Xander is, like, I'll take you two for one. Then all of a sudden it's \$400. That adds up pretty fast. You're going \$500 a shot, that adds up pretty fast.

Q. Do you like that? Has that been part -- is that part of the deal coming up you sometimes you play against guys who gamble?

TONY FINAU: Guys want to have a match. I never shy away from a match, no question. Especially in an event like this. Guys are going to want to have a match.

To me it's the best way to prepare. Simulate some pressure. Again I, think that's what we've been doing as a team. We've been having matches and trying to get ourselves just properly prepared to start tomorrow.

Q. What do you think of the International Team? What are their strengths?

TONY FINAU: I think they have a lot of strengths. They have a lot of great players. I would say one of their strengths is their leadership. They have a couple of guys that have played in quite a few. Adam Scott and Jason Day are going to lead that team, Hideki. They've got some guys that can lead some of the younger guys.

But overall they have a great team on that side. We know we're going to have to play and perform if we're going to win the Cup this week.

Q. (Indiscernible) winning for a long time now (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, fortunately for me, the last two Cups that I played, the last two Presidents Cups, they were hard, hard fought wins for us. And we know how hungry they are to win a Presidents Cup. And especially with this team and having it be Mike Weir in Canada. It's a big deal for them.

We know that going in. Again, it's a new Presidents Cup. It doesn't matter the record. We've been dominant on the U.S. side. But this is a whole different week, a whole different cast, whole different team. We try to put our best foot forward and we've got to earn it.

Q. Weather as well, especially for the week, tomorrow?

TONY FINAU: We hope it holds up. But whatever comes, we'll be ready to rock.



Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I would even start at 13. Par-3. It's a good par-3. Today we're hitting 6-iron. Last couple days we hit 4- and 5-iron depending where the wind is. You can get some momentum changes on that hole because it's a long par-3.

And then you've got 14, 15, 16 and 17 all with water. I think it's a really cool golf course that way where there's no water in play and then the last five holes there's water on every hole. That's where the action's going to be. That's definitely the meat of the course.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Well, I feel like I'm the one that just kind of -- I guess I'm the glue. I guess I'm more like the glue and gel that make everybody stick.

I have a lot of great friends. I have a lot of guys I don't know as well. But I seem to be the one that floats around and gets along with everybody. And just making sure, I think, just to bring my good energy and my good vibes.

I've been part of these teams before. I know that that goes a long way. No matter how you're playing, you want to have the energy of a champion. And I try to bring that no matter what.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: It's funny you bring that up. I don't know that any of us are thinking about next year. I think we're so focused on this week. And he's a player this week. He's not a captain.

So it's funny, I played with him yesterday and I forgot he was even going to be a captain next year.

I think we're all looking at him this week as a player, and he is. He's playing great golf. We need him on our team. He's hopefully going to help us win the Cup this week.

Q. David's already on (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Well, to me it really doesn't matter. Most likely we're probably the favorites because of our record and having the two best players in the world.

But this is match play. This is not stroke play. All of our rankings are off of stroke play. So that's the thing people have to understand is match play is a whole different animal.

Again, we know our record and how good it is. But this is a different Presidents Cup. So we've got to just be focused on this one and we've got to earn our way to the win.

Q. (Question about the World Cup being around the corner)

TONY FINAU: Messi. Messi.

Q. The Ryder Cup and the Presidents Cup, have you been able to put your finger on what the difference is? It's the same format mostly. A lot of times the same guys. (Indiscernible) you played the previous Presidents Cup and Ryder Cup. You've had struggles in that (indiscernible). I know it's not easy.

TONY FINAU: I think it all just boils down to expectation. I think because our U.S. side has been so dominant in the Presidents Cup, we expect to win. I think that's the feel we get from everybody.

I think we have similar feelings when it comes to the Ryder Cup. But because it is so competitive and we have been beat on our side, I think that that's tarnished it slightly.

So I think that's pretty much what I see or feel as far as the difference is competing. And having watched the guys last year, definitely seems like there's that extra pressure.

They are different, though. There's no question that they're two totally different tournaments. Same format. Could be the same guys. But we've had great success in the Presidents Cup, and the Ryder Cup not quite as great.

Q. (Question about the dynamic and the impact, extra day, spreading it out a little bit)

TONY FINAU: I've talked about it before with some of my buddies, but I think having a four-day event is a huge advantage to the better team, I would say. You add one extra match, and I think that's a big deal because we're playing match play. It's not stroke play.

If both tournaments were stroke play events, I think our record would be in the same and the Presidents Cup and probably better in the Ryder Cup. But because of our rankings, our rankings are off stroke play. But this is match. Match play is a whole different vibe, a whole different game.

For that reason, the more matches you play, the better team will end up winning. So I think in the Presidents Cup, one extra day is a big deal. And it's proved that, I think, with the format here.



Q. (Question about match play)

TONY FINAU: I think they should be the same. That's why it's hard to compare the Presidents Cup and the Ryder Cup just because I think the one extra day I think has helped in the Presidents Cup.

Q. People are saying stuff about the rankings. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I mean, I think it should be four days. It should be four double matches a day. I think it should be four days. It should be two matches per day. And I think that all I'm saying is I think that the better team will win the more matches that are played.

Most of the time we have the better team. When it doesn't match up, match play is just a whole different game. So at the end of the day, history is what it is. We've got five matches in both. And it's bit us in the butt a little bit in the Ryder Cup, but it is what it is.

I will say having it be competitive, the Ryder Cup has been extremely beneficial. And the Presidents Cup hasn't been as competitive. That's the only reason why it isn't as big. If it starts to be competitive, I think it's going to be a huge tournament, bigger than it is now.

And I'm not saying -- but we all know that it's not as big as the Ryder Cup.

Q. What would you say about last year (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: I sucked. I sucked a lot. I would say it was one of the tougher points in my career. I was at a place in my career where I thought I was in a place to get a pick. I didn't play well enough to get that. It stung a lot.

I feel like it was kind of a redemption tour this year. Even though I didn't get a win, I was really proud of the way I played the second half of the season to prove that I belong on this team. And so I was happy to be able to do that over the second half of this past season.

Q. Do you look at Keegan as a fellow player this week or do you look at him as (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: No, I look at him as a player. I just played with him yesterday. That's funny, I got asked the same question earlier -- is Keegan looked as a player this week.

I spaced out that he was going to be a captain next year. We need him as a player this year. He's a great player.

He's playing great. Some of the best golf on our team over the last couple of months.

He brings great energy, great leadership and just great game. So we're going to need him.

Q. Were you surprised when he was named like the others were?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I would say I was surprised, but as I thought about it it made a lot of sense. I definitely was surprised. But Keegan's awesome. He's going to do a great job. And he's very passionate about everything he does. There will be no stone left unturned when it comes to him being captain.

Q. What did it feel like emotionally, the tournament (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: At Northern Trust.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Man, I feel like there was -- I felt more joy in winning these team events especially the way we did it in Melbourne. We were down the whole week. And in singles we came back and won right at the end. I was able to flip my match. Couple of other guys won their match when they needed it. That was some type of vibe.

I don't know that -- and Whistling Straits I would say is about as cool as it gets. Like, I lost my match against Ian Poulter. And that was tough, but I just remember being able to hang out with the guys, and I had so much fun. I almost forgot about it.

Q. Let's go to France for a minute. (Indiscernible) regardless of -- I don't know what your record was, it was probably okay -- did you feel like you (indiscernible) individually?

TONY FINAU: Oh, did I feel like I cost them?

Q. Did you feel like you didn't pull your weight, regardless of what your record was, just because you guys lost?

TONY FINAU: No, I mean, I played really nicely. I think I was only one of three guys that had a winning record. I think I played really nicely.

They just played incredible. At the end of the day, we didn't play -- we didn't execute. That's the thing, having been on both sides, losses and wins, playing in these cups, none of them can be taken for granted.



I think that's the experience and any of the messages I have for the guys, having experience is -- the record doesn't matter. All the record in the past doesn't matter.

We have a chance to write our own record this week and we have to earn it. With this team, you have to earn it. It doesn't matter how good our record is in the Presidents Cup. At some point they're going to start winning some Presidents Cups. It's going to happen.

We're not going to play this many and -- I obviously want the Americans to win the next 50. It's not going to happen. They're going to start -- we don't want that team to be against us. That's the message this week. And we'll just continue to do our thing.

Q. Speaking of that trend, is there any part (indiscernible) that feels bad for Adam Scott? He's played in 10 of these and has never experienced the winning side? That's a long stretch.

TONY FINAU: That's a long stretch. That's tough luck at the end of the day. No, I mean, Adam's an incredible guy. As a competitor, I don't feel bad for him. I'm on his side.

Adam has played some great golf. I'm sure he has some Presidents Cups where he had a winning record and the team loses. You can't really solely blame it on Adam. These are team events.

But at the end of the day I'm on the U.S. side and for this week we don't want any of those guys to win. So at the end of the day, as a competitor, it's like we want them to have another loss at the end of this week.

Q. Xander said no one ever feels bad for Adam Scott.

TONY FINAU: Exactly. Well put.

Q. Two, three weeks, looking back at the schedule, are you playing Black Desert?

TONY FINAU: Black Desert. I'm not playing it this year. But I hope the tournament goes great. It's really cool to have a tournament in Utah again. It's been years. And in the future, for sure, I'll play.

Q. Were you under any pressure to play?

TONY FINAU: I was under quite a bit of pressure. My son is actually playing in a national event or else I would have really considered taking the week to play. But I can't miss my son's --

Q. Where does he play? Coach?

TONY FINAU: PGA Junior League in Frisco. Yeah, the National Championships. Yeah, he represents Team Utah 13-under. His pops. But I'm getting to a place where it's, like, I might have to find him a teacher now.

He's not listening as well as he did when he was younger. That's exactly how it works. I know exactly how it was. Yeah, he's right at that age now where old man doesn't know what he's talking about anymore.

Q. I assume you're the only one that's ever really taught him.

TONY FINAU: Yeah, Boyd's given him a couple of lessons, but I've pretty much --

Q. Father/son?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I've pretty much taken the reins on that. I've loved doing it. But with my time constraints and how committed he is now, I'm going to have to find him somebody for sure that can work with him.

Q. What's the most important lesson you've imparted to him (indiscernible) what do you teach him about the game and the stuff that comes with it?

TONY FINAU: Well, I teach him that he needs to learn hard work and preparation. No matter where the state of your game is, what's going to get you out of a funk is being disciplined enough to work hard and being prepared every opportunity you have.

So he's at an age now where he's not like a hard practicer. He doesn't work extremely hard yet. He's very natural when he plays. But I told him, I said, "If you're ever going to be great, like talent takes you to the doorsteps, to ever go through, your work ethic is what's going to get you there." That's really it. I said, "You work your butt off and you can make it happen."

Q. Kind of hard (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: 100 percent.

Q. A lot of players (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: That's right.

Q. (Indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I know it's extremely hard. That's the part that I struggle with because my kids have a different

life than I had.

I feel like I had to do -- I had to work hard and do those things because I was in a different situation. I felt the pressure as a kid. My parents giving up everything they had for me to perform.

My kids aren't -- they don't feel that pressure. So teaching grit, I don't know if there's such a thing, but I try to apply enough pressure as a parent to keep him accountable for what he wants to accomplish. He told me, Dad, I want to be better than you. I want to be a PGA TOUR player, I want to be the best player in the world.

So I try to hold him accountable at the end of the day as a parent as a father. That's what my dad did for me, held me accountable to try to accomplish great things. I told him that's what I wanted to do.

My son has impressed on me that's what he wants as well. So I have to try to be tough on him to hold him accountable to teach him that hard work and grit, it's not easy, though. We're working at the course and we can go eat at a steakhouse later and he sees the glamorous life that we live but he didn't see what I went through 25 years ago, he didn't see the work.

That's the thing about social media, the hard part about social media, with my kids, they're seeing finished products. They get entertainment at their fingertips. They're seeing the finished products of Steph Curry and LeBron James.

It's so hard for me to tell them and have my son understand, like, the hours and thousands and millions of hours that they put in to get to where they are is really what it's all about, that journey there. Everybody knows who they are now.

But that's the tough part, for me, trying to teach my son to not even follow in my footsteps. I want him to be the greatest. I want him to be better than I am, but that grit has to come. I think it's more an innate thing, but I can try and put him in the environment. That's all I'm trying to do, in the mindset to be great.

Q. How close to beating you (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: He hasn't come close yet. But I say yet because I know it's going to happen. He's really good he hits it -- I give him shots, yeah, I give him shots.

Right now we're down to like nine, 10 shots for 18, in a match play. If we're playing stroke play, it would be a lot more because he still has a couple of blow-up holes. But

we're about nine shots on match play right now.

Q. What's your index (indiscernible)?

TONY FINAU: Mine, I don't know, on my home course it would probably be plus six or seven. But he's coming. Like this summer I feel like he's worked harder this summer than he has in the past. Some of the things hopefully that I try to teach him through example and words are starting to get ingrained.

He's still 12. But all the kids, they're so good these days. There's so many good players. So many great players. I keep telling my son, look, at the end of the day, like, your competition is everybody. It's not just the 11, 12-year-olds. If you're not doing it somebody else is. The same thing that my dad told me. If you're not out there working, somebody else is.

So it's starting to click with him. I'm excited for him. He loves golf. He's passionate about it. And I hope some day he gets what he deserves.

Q. Were you always a hard worker? (Indiscernible) focus, had to flip the switch to go to the next level?

TONY FINAU: I feel like I've always been a hard worker, but I wasn't passionate about golf until I was about my son's age. So I didn't work at being a great golfer, I think, until I was about 12 or 13. That's when I truly focused on one sport. Because I was playing flag football and basketball.

But I fell in love with golf then, and so I'm kind of like torn because a lot of people are, like, passion is going to get you there. But my dad had to pretty much kick my ass for the first two or three years while I was learning how to play because he had to keep telling me, if this is what you want to do, like, you better get your butt up start working.

He had to do it for years. Then it clicked in my mind, oh, yeah, I do love this game; I'm winning, let's make this a thing.

At the end of the day, again, my career is a lot different than my son's. He's got a whole different upbringing than I had, but I'm trying to teach him similar lessons I learned along the way. Hopefully it will pay off for him.

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