

# The American Express

Saturday, January 20, 2024

La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

## Nick Dunlap

### Quick Quotes

**Q. Stacking up a couple good rounds so far. Kind of assess the day for us how it went.**

NICK DUNLAP: Got the putter got hot early. It was a little similar to yesterday, but, and, you know, Hunter kept reminding me, it doesn't really matter where the birdies come, whether that's early or late or wherever, just try to stay in the present, and if you're making birdies, just kind of roll with it.

Drove it a lot better today. I think I hit the majority of the fairways. Obviously, it's a lot easier playing from there than the rough, and hoping for a tree bounces like I was yesterday sometimes. Obviously, played really nicely, and the putter was rolling pretty good all day.

**Q. You've had other TOUR starts prior to this one, certainly hasn't gone like this. What would you say is a big key to this week going the way it did, and kind of not missing a cut, and playing really well?**

NICK DUNLAP: Just trusting myself, as cliché as that sounds. I think it's a really good opportunity for me, but you throw an 18 year old in the U.S. Open, it's different. I've played in front of people before that, but, I mean, you stand on the tee and there's 5,000 people surrounding you, it was different. Obviously, the atmosphere's different, the course is way harder, and to kind of get that experience -- and to play out here, with Hunter on the bag, I trust him, he knows my game really well. I've been playing some good golf recently and just tried to stay in that same mindset. Obviously, it's going to be a kind of a shoot-out, it seems like, so pedal to the metal and try to make some putts.

**Q. As far as tournament prep goes, you got to prep for three different courses and never played this tournament before. How did you go about prepping early week to make sure you were ready for all three?**

NICK DUNLAP: I normally don't like practice rounds, but it was nice just to be out here. I went from riding in the back of a Sprinter van at Alabama to, I'm driving an X5 around the whole week. It's freezing cold, and I'm out here playing

THE  
AMERICAN  
EXPRESS™

in perfect conditions and great golf courses, so I've enjoyed it.

**Q. Did you see all three though before?**

NICK DUNLAP: I did. I played the pro-am at La Quinta on Monday and played the Nicklaus Tuesday and the pro-am on Wednesday at the Stadium.

**Q. I heard you talking about the nerves.**

NICK DUNLAP: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

**Q. How does that manifest for you on the course?**

NICK DUNLAP: I've always said, pressure's a privilege. I got a great opportunity to be here, and to feel what I felt on 16, 17, 18, I'm sure it's -- hopefully, if I keep playing well, it's only going to magnify. Kind of, to know, on 16, that that bunker is not great and to be there, your heart's pumping. But, yeah, just try to embrace it. It's a cool spot to be in.

**Q. Traditionally, for amateurs, this week's about feeling it, seeing it, testing yourself on the biggest stage. You managed to put yourself in contention, does that change your outlook as you head in with a chance to win a golf tournament, not just gain experience?**

NICK DUNLAP: No, I'm still trying to gain as much experience as I can. Obviously, like you said, I've played four, I guess, PGA TOUR-sanctioned events, counting the two U.S. Open, which I think those are different, they're kind of their own animal. But, no, I'm still trying to learn as much as I can, and how some of these golf courses are different from college, but they're still similar. Playing in front of the crowds, and, no, I've enjoyed it. I'm going to stick to what I've been doing, and that's just give myself as many birdie chances as possible.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

**ASAP** sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®