

The American Express

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La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

Nick Dunlap

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good evening. We would like to welcome American Express champion and PGA TOUR winner Nick Dunlap to the media center.

Nick, congratulations. You've become the first amateur to win since 1991. It's been an exciting week. Just want to start off with some opening comments about what it's like to be a PGA TOUR winner.

NICK DUNLAP: It's definitely got a good ring to it. I will say that. It's everything that I dreamed of and just to have a chance on the last hole to win a PGA TOUR event is really special.

THE MODERATOR: You have family and friends that flew in across all over. What was it like to see familiar faces throughout the day?

NICK DUNLAP: Honestly, just to see people that flew in today and, you know, I had seen a couple of 'em kind of reach out and give me five and the amount of people that came out and supported me, you know, not only them, just the support I got from everybody here was really cool.

THE MODERATOR: Perfect. With that, we'll open it up with questions for the media.

Q. When did you get the sponsor exemption?

NICK DUNLAP: Two weeks ago, two and a half. That's a Kevin question. Probably two, two and a half weeks ago.

Q. But when you got it, did you have an expectation to come here, play in the desert, have some wonderful weather or did you think, let's go win this thing?

NICK DUNLAP: The wonderful weather part was anticipated and I got lucky with that. It's brutal back home.

Just try to come here and learn. I hadn't been on this stage much and I got paired with Wilson the first day, so it was a really comfortable pairing. It was a past Alabama player. And then to play with those two guys today, the



amount of success they have had out here, it was cool just to watch.

Q. I suppose a lot of people would have had one of two ideas about what's going to happen today, either you're going to shoot 61 again and run away with it or the moment would be pretty big and you would struggle with it. Did you have either of those expectations or is it something else?

NICK DUNLAP: Of course. Everybody's got doubts. I probably had a thousand different scenarios in my head of how today was going to go, and it went nothing like I expected. I think that was the cool part about it. That's golf.

I hit a lot of shots that I didn't think I was going to hit and then I hit some shots that went way better than I expected, and the same thing with putting. Like I said, I just think that's the cool part of golf.

Q. How nervous were you coming down the stretch and were there things that you did to kind of handle it?

NICK DUNLAP: No (laughing). I was so nervous that I don't know if I could have done anything. Most nervous I've ever been, by far. Just tried to breathe, but also look up and enjoy it a little bit. I've said it numerous times today and yesterday and the past couple days, it's a really cool spot to be in as an amateur, and just to be here and be given the opportunity to play, and I don't ever want to forget today.

Q. You just used the word "dreams" a minute ago. What did you dream of as a young kid in terms of what your golf life would look like as adult?

NICK DUNLAP: I mean that, literally, a chance to win a PGA TOUR event. As a kid, you kind of whack it around all over the putting green and every putt's for a chance to win, whether that's a PGA TOUR event, the Masters, the U.S. Open. And to have that putt, I took a little bit longer than I normally might, and just take in the moment and nothing's for granted. I may not ever have that chance again, and I just want to embrace it. You know, like I said, it may not ever happen again.



Q. What did you feel on that tee shot on 7? Obviously you have a lead at that point and it hit in the water. Was it just kind of nerves at that point or what did you think?

NICK DUNLAP: Nerves on every shot. I just think it was a bad swing. I made a lot of really good swings all week, and especially yesterday, I made shots and putts that I did not think I was going to make. I ran a 5-iron up the green, hooked it around, and made the putt for eagle and didn't think that was ever going to happen. It's a pretty straightforward 3-iron if you're just kind of out playing for fun, but when you have a three-shot lead, it's a little bit harder.

Q. How much did growing up at Greystone, being around other pros, being around someone like Gordon Sargent, being around the professional situation you were in help you in these moments, prepare you for these moments?

NICK DUNLAP: A ton. It's also shown me how hard it is, and opportunities aren't -- there's not a ton of 'em. I've seen guys that are really, really, really good that should be out here that -- whether they haven't gotten the chance or a bad break or whatever that is, and to learn from the guys that have been out here and have succeeded doing that, I like to kind of pick their brain a little bit and how they go about week-to-week, and I'm still trying to learn that and I get lost around here. So just learn as much as I can from them.

Q. Have you made a decision on -- you have PGA TOUR membership if you want it now or is that something you need to take more time to think about?

NICK DUNLAP: Oh, boy. (Smiling.) I did. I have no idea. I really don't. It's really cool to have that opportunity in the first place, and starting the week, if you would have said, hey, in five days you're going to have a PGA TOUR card or an opportunity for two years, I would have looked at you sideways.

But, no, that's something that it doesn't just affect me, it affects a lot of people, coach back there and my teammates, and it's a conversation I need to have with a lot of people before I make that decision.

Q. You don't show a ton of outward emotion when you play. What were your emotions underneath and when you finally made that winning putt and were able to sort of really celebrate, what was that feeling like?

NICK DUNLAP: I wish I had some kind of heart monitor on and you wouldn't have seen that, but, yeah, most nervous

I've ever been, by far. Just try to breathe as much as I can, walk slow, try to do everything slow. In that moment, everything speeds up.

I would say I have had a little bit of experience leading golf tournaments, but nothing to this extent. Obviously, the PGA TOUR's extremely different. So that whole process was different for me, and whether it had turned out the way I was looking or not, I was just going to try to learn from it.

Q. When you were finally able to hug your family, high-five everybody, what was that moment kind of like for you?

NICK DUNLAP: I lost it. I really did, just for all them to show up and fly all the way out here. I think I gave a couple of 'em an excuse to get out of the bad weather. But, yeah, just to walk off the green and see everybody that showed up for me was really special. I'll never forget it.

Q. Did any pros say anything funny to you, give you a side eye or anything, given how well you were playing and just coming in and doing so well right away?

NICK DUNLAP: If they did, they didn't say it to me. I had a lot of like, great playing, keep it up, like, rooting for you. A lot of really cool comments from guys that are doing really well out here, Justin included, and Sam was kind of, you know, rooting me on all day. Yeah, just, honestly, all good things from everybody out here.

Q. When Sam puts his shot in the water on the 17th and you go from neck-and-neck to a two-shot lead, how does that affect you when he makes a mistake like that?

NICK DUNLAP: I mean, you never want somebody to do that. I didn't want to win by him hitting in the water. I wanted to win by making four birdies the last four holes. But, unfortunately, that's golf. I've done it numerous times. Everything speeds up and, like I said, my heart rate went through the roof and just standing on that 17th green and then leaving with a two-shot lead, I think I said some things to Hunter that I probably can't say on this microphone. But, yeah, just try to breathe as much as I can.

Q. You've talked about your relationship with Jeff and him as your caddie and Hunter on the bag this week. Did he say anything at any point to calm you down, reassure you, kind of keep you in it throughout the day today, Hunter?

NICK DUNLAP: I've told him this. It's the most unbelievable thing I've ever seen in my life, but his attitude

never changes. Like, it doesn't matter what moment I'm in, it doesn't matter if I've got a putt for 60 yesterday, or I've got a one- or two-shot lead on the last hole, like, he never changes, he never does anything out of the ordinary. And it calms me down, it really does. He's really good for me to have somebody like that on the bag. On the last putt, he just kind of said, over and over, like, Man, this is inside left, like it's right there. And just to kind of have that, the way he said it, it was said with a lot of positivity, and I trusted him and put it right there.

Q. You got any homework to do tonight?

NICK DUNLAP: Yes. Probably won't do it though (laughing).

Q. I would imagine you got a lot of responses or a lot of comments on your phone when you just made the cut. Have you had a chance to look at your phone and see what the numbers are looking like?

NICK DUNLAP: I haven't. I don't know if I want to. I haven't even looked at my phone. A lot of the people that are really close to me are here, and that means a lot. I've got them, we're going to probably grab a good dinner tonight and celebrate and focus on how I'm going to get to Torrey Pines next week, or for this coming week.

Q. You're of the right age where maybe you would have watched a lot of YouTube videos of swings as a kid. Wondering if you did and who you gravitated to.

NICK DUNLAP: I think you would be dumb not to say Tiger, right? I think I have a, maybe a little bit of a Dustin Johnson move through the ball. But, no, I think everybody wanted to swing like Tiger. I mean, he's won however many times, however many majors, and, you know, if not the most success, he's one 1 or 2. But, no, I always wanted to swing it like Tiger, I just couldn't, and every time I tried, I would probably mess it up.

Q. How about your incredibly mature bearing for someone who is 20 years old, where do you think that comes from?

NICK DUNLAP: I think, honestly, playing with people older than me, and playing with professionals and seeing how they carry themselves. I was a little brat when I was younger and, you know, they kind of punked me into shape. I still have my moments, but I think they did a really good job of pointing me in the right direction and to where I am today.

THE MODERATOR: After round 2 you were discussing that you were in the back of the Sprinter van with your

Alabama team. As a PGA TOUR winner does that move your spot in the van at all?

NICK DUNLAP: Maybe a seat forward. (Laughing). No, normally it goes based off of youngest to oldest, and I'm normally back in the back, and Seawell will hit a speed bump and your head will hit the top of the ceiling, and then -- hopefully, we'll see.

THE MODERATOR: All right, with that we will conclude it. Nick, again, congratulations and enjoy this win.

NICK DUNLAP: Thank you. Thank you guys so much.

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