

Cognizant Classic

Sunday, March 3, 2024

Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA

PGA National Champion Course

Austin Eckroat

Quick Quotes



Q. Austin, put yourself in a good spot headed into a Monday. Take us through the emotions of the day. You were just getting started up when they called it. How did that affect you as you went throughout the day?

AUSTIN ECKROAT: It was just a weird day. Mother Nature, there's nothing you can do about it. It was kind of nice, I still had a full warm-up session, it's not like I had to rush after the rain delay and go straight out to playing. I was able to still get a full warm-up session, which was nice.

Q. Does it increase the nerves when you have to sit for three, three and a half hours on a lead?

AUSTIN ECKROAT: It definitely makes it different. I almost didn't think we were going to play at all today, so I kind of shut off for a little bit and then I had to get back into competitive mode.

I didn't feel any more nervous, but I definitely had more time to think for sure.

Q. How happy are you with the start? You came out and played steady golf and now you have the lead.

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yeah, really happy with how I started. I felt like I was a little shaky at the beginning but was able to knock in some pars. To get the birdie on 4 and 5 was great, and really put myself in a good position for tomorrow.

Q. Not your first 54-hole lead. You led at the Nelson and shot 65 bogey-free until the 62 from Jason Day stopped you. What did you learn from that experience?

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Just really that I can handle the situation. Obviously I didn't come out on top, but I played really well. Then also there's a lot of guys still in it tomorrow. Kind of how Jason Day was. It's not like I'm just trying to beat the guys in the group behind me, and you can see that from guys playing so well today already.

Q. Is it weird having to come back? What experience do you have like this from your college or young pro days?

AUSTIN ECKROAT: I don't really know if I've had a situation like this where I've had the lead over however many holes we've played, 63 holes. I don't think I've ever been in this situation.

Q. Why was it important for you to hit that tee shot on the par-3 and get that hole in the books?

AUSTIN ECKROAT: I thought they were going to blow the horn before we got to 7, but then I got up there -- it's 237 yards, and for me, I'm flying a 4-iron about 225, so it's a perfect number at this temperature, the weather we were in right now, and coming back tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m. it would be a really uncomfortable yardage for me, an off-speed 3-iron or hit a 4-iron to the front of the green, so I was happy I could hit that shot this morning.

Q. You attended one of the great college programs in the nation, an incredible legacy, players who have been successful at Stillwater. In what ways did that steel you and prepare you for life on the PGA TOUR?

AUSTIN ECKROAT: Yeah, we just grew up -- when we were at school, we were around professional golfers all the time, guys always coming back. My teammates ended up being PGA TOUR players, Viktor and Matt Wolff and guys like that. I've just been around it. I think that's something that really helps the guys in college and then making this step. We know so many people that have done it.

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