

Senior PGA Championship

The Concession Golf Club

Bradenton, Florida, USA

Thursday, April 16, 2026

Justin Hicks

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Justin Hicks is with us at the 2026 Senior PGA Championship. Justin, a real strong start today. How would you summarize your opening round?

JUSTIN HICKS: Well, for starters, we had a pretty good draw with that weather today, so nice and calm. You know, the course pretty much played like it has the last few days. It's starting to dry out a little bit. Greens are, you know, decent speed. Nothing too crazy. Every once in a while there will be a little bit of fast one, a little bit of a slow one.

But my hope was to kind of stay pretty steady out there and kind of do what I do, which is hit fairways and greens and add them up at the end of the day. It was a lot of fun. Teamed up with a friend of mine who played for a long time, Tom Gillis, and he kind of kept me loose out there. We told a lot of jokes. I said, Hey, we got to keep telling jokes, I hope you don't run out of material. Yeah, we're having fun with it, though.

Q. I wonder if those jokes started on the sixth hole, and what happened to you? What changed for you?

JUSTIN HICKS: Yeah, we probably need to start telling jokes on the way to the first tee. We'll have to remember that tomorrow. I appreciate that.

Yeah, you know, it's a demanding golf course out there. It's hard to hit it close. You do get some wedges. There's some decisions to be made on the par-5s. You know, the greens are in fantastic shape.

So we definitely were able to convert some putts that were, you know, fairly makeable. Nothing too crazy, I don't think. Hopefully we just kind of keep that going, maybe adding a few more long ones throughout the week and see what happens.

Q. Justin, I know there's a long, long way to go, but Jason was able to parlay a really good finish in this tournament to open up some avenues to him. Is that something in the far deep recesses of your mind that

you think about?

JUSTIN HICKS: Well, certainly there's a lot of guys that have kind of parlayed, you know, one week into the great weeks out here, and he's certainly a guy, being a club pro, that did it.

I mean, I have to remind my caddie at times this week. You know, usually kind of working five, sometimes six days a week. So if I mess something up, you know, don't be too hard on me, because I think, you know, whether it's the viewers at home or the announcers out there, us club pros, we're not doing this full-time.

We're doing our best with it. Some of us can put it together. I had a lot of fun today, and hopefully I can keep putting it together the next three days.

Yeah, it would be a fun thing to try to ride into that same way that he played his way out here, but there's stories about that that go on every single year. Kind of reminds me back in the days of when I was playing out there on the Korn Ferry TOUR. There were guys that would Monday qualify, like Tommy Gainey did last year. Won that event, and he's been playing out here ever since.

So certainly there's a lot of stories like that, and it would be a fun thing to -- it would be a good problem to have is to call my boss at work and say, I have some conflicts coming up. You know, for right now I'm just having fun with whatever happens.

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