

Charles Schwab Challenge

Friday, May 29, 2026

Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Colonial CC

Akshay Bhatia

Quick Quotes

Q. Akshay, 65 today, just one bogey there on the last. But just comments on a very solid round?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, I played nice. I think I did a great job with how I didn't let anything bother me. I missed a good amount of fairways, but just took it as it was. Yeah, all in all it was a really nice day, I just need to drive it a little better, that's the biggest thing for me, or at least what it feels like internally. But again, the more and more I can just see the ball in the fairway, the more chances I'll have, I feel like, with my iron play and how I feel like I am with the putter right now.

Q. How important was yesterday's finish to today's round?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Definitely was nice. I didn't get off to a good start at all yesterday. And to even get it to 1- or 2-under par was a good goal because the leaderboard was really bunched. I knew 6-under was leading, if someone got to 7- and I was at 2- it's still kind of right in there. So to get to 3- yesterday was a huge bonus.

Q. What is it about this golf course that you love so much?

AKSHAY BHATIA: I just think it's a, you have to be creative a little bit. You can hit some good tee balls that you're behind trees, or the pins can get, look very tight in corners. I think just, it's short, it's simple, and yet it always plays hard. It's never 18-, 19-under winning, it's 10-, 11-, 12-under. And that's what makes great golf courses is it doesn't need to be this big property and fancy, it just needs to be good enough where it makes you think a little bit.

Q. You mentioned how good this course is for preparing for the tournaments that are coming up here in the next few weeks, why is that?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, you just have to be disciplined and you have to accept a lot of things out here. There's wind gusts that we can't control, especially in these trees. Yeah, you can hit great shots that can end up in not great



spots. You have to hit it to small targets. Sometimes par's really good, even on the easy holes.

Q. You mentioned a mental block off the tee. How do you feel like you're doing in the battle with that mental block?

AKSHAY BHATIA: I feel like I'm doing all right, it's just interesting, I worked so hard -- this last week I probably hit 300 drivers just trying to get it dialed or what feels like I guess, working towards a better miss. It's interesting, like I think I can go be at home and hit it on the range and hit it very solid, hit it, hit the same shape. Then once I get on the golf course I'm just struggling with, I don't know what it is, because I feel, I don't feel like I'm scared of anything. But subconsciously something is going on, so again, I just got to keep doing my thing and it will happen, it's just going to take a lot of work.

Q. Upcoming tournaments, you could be paired with J.J. tomorrow, how much is the U.S. Open on your mind right now, even though it is still a couple of weeks away?

AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, not really thinking too much about it. I've heard great things about Shinnecock. I'm excited to go to New York, for sure. But, yeah, I think overanalyzing certain tournaments is not good for you. So I just focus on this week and that's all I can do.

Q. You played with Brandt these last two days, how much was the Presidents Cup on your mind and did you find yourself out there trying to impress him?

AKSHAY BHATIA: No, I haven't really thought about it. My first, I think two years ago I was kind of right there on the bubble with the Presidents Cup. I thought too much about it then, didn't play well towards the end of the year, and didn't get picked. So I'm just trying to play good golf and obviously to play with Brandt's really cool, to see that he won a couple weeks ago is great. So, yeah, I think Brandt knows who I am and how my game is and just depends how you play towards the late end of the season.

Q. You mentioned a conversation you had with your caddie yesterday after a few holes. Can you talk a little bit about that a little bit?



AKSHAY BHATIA: Yeah, Joe mentioned maybe he thought I was thinking about it, but he said, Brandt's not looking about how you're playing golf right now, it's more how you're handling certain things. So I took that with me, and even subconsciously maybe I am thinking about it, playing with the Presidents Cup captain, I did it with Keegan and I was pretty nervous. So, yeah, you just keep learning about how you feel and what it means to you and obviously to play in a team event everyone really talks highly about it, and to be a part of those teams, you build bonds and that's what I want to do.

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