

Sony Open in Hawaii

Thursday, January 15, 2026

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Alex Smalley

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Alex, opened with a 6-under 64 today. Can we just get some general comments on your round?

ALEX SMALLEY: Yeah, wasn't too windy the first nine holes and started picking up on 9. Felt like I gave myself a lot of birdie looks which is all I was really trying to do today, just hit as many greens as I could and then see if any putts would fall.

I accomplished that. I think hitting fairways out here is probably the key of the course. It's one of the tougher weeks to hit fairways because the fairways are so firm and the ball rolls out a decent ways.

It helped that it wasn't as windy. Yeah, hit a lot of fairways which allowed me to be relatively aggressive into the greens and was able to take advantage of some of the good approach shots I had.

Q. On that note of the keys to the course, this is your fifth appearance. You missed the cut the first three times and last year finished 16th.

ALEX SMALLEY: Yeah.

Q. Did you figure something out last year that clicked or switched for you?

ALEX SMALLEY: I don't know. I feel like I'm from North Carolina so I play on bermudagrass almost exclusively, so this grass type is very familiar to me. I play at Sedgefield where we play the Wyndham, and this golf course is pretty similar to that one in terms of you can't just hit driver on every single hole. You have to plot your way around.

Not really sure what it was the first three years I came out here. Then, yeah, last year I finally was able to get the monkey off my back with not only make the cut, but having a decent finish.

Just kind of piggybacked off those good rounds I had last year.



Q. What did the offseason look like for you and how did you feel coming into this week?

ALEX SMALLEY: It went by pretty quickly. Bought my first house; closed just before -- the day before Thanksgiving.

Q. Congratulations.

ALEX SMALLEY: Thank you. I had some flooring and some painting I wanted to change so I was pretty busy the first couple weeks of December trying to figure that out, get that scheduled.

So I was getting stuff ready for that, and then after Christmas went down to Sawgrass for three, four days, TPC Sawgrass, to practice with my coach. I woke up the second morning we were there and my neck was locked up and I couldn't turn my head so I couldn't really practice. Probably only had four or five days before I came out here.

Felt like I was cramming for a test a little bit trying to prepare for this week. Went or to Palm Springs a couple days before I came here so felt like I got some decent work in there. I guess I should cram for tests more often.

Q. Yeah, sounds like it. Overall you're pleased with the way today went?

ALEX SMALLEY: Yeah, obviously I could think of a couple shots I would want to have back and try again, but if you would've told me I would shoot 6-under before I hit my first tee ball I would've taken it. Yeah, very, very pleased with how this morning went.

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