

# Arnold Palmer Invitational

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Bay Hill, Florida, USA

Bay Hill Club and Lodge

## Daniel Bennett

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, we'll get started. We would like to welcome Daniel Bennett to the interview room here at the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard. Daniel, PGA TOUR debut for this week. Got in from the Palmer Cup as an exempt player. Talk a little bit about what you're looking forward to most this week, and how the last 24, 48 hours have been for you.

DANIEL BENNETT: Yeah, it's obviously pretty cool to tee it up with some of the best in the world, so super exciting to be here and just kind of be in their space. Yeah, hopefully one day I'll be out here. Yeah, super exciting. Had a good past couple days preparing. Yeah, excited for the week to get started.

THE MODERATOR: Can you take us back to where you were and when it was that you found out that you would be playing in this event, when you got the phone call.

DANIEL BENNETT: Yeah, obviously at the Arnold Palmer Cup, on the final green during the prize ceremony, they award the lady and the male golfer exemption into obviously the API and then the Evian Championship. But, yeah, obviously really special moment. I really wasn't expecting the exemption considering the way I played during the week. But, yeah, obviously couldn't be more thankful for the opportunity and, yeah, just super happy to be in this position.

THE MODERATOR: Then you just got finished with a practice round with Pierceson Coody, fellow Longhorn. Talk a little bit about your relationship with him and then maybe some of the other former Texas players that you keep up with.

DANIEL BENNETT: Yeah, it was good fun today with Pierceson. Nice of him to go out there and play 18 holes with me. He comes around to the university once in a while and does some practice in his off time. So we get to see him a little bit at our golf course. And then, yeah, he's just been willing to help. He's played out here a couple years ago, I think once, so yeah pretty cool to just learn from him and see what he has to say, and ask him a bunch

of questions about how his life has been on TOUR the last couple years. But, yeah, pretty cool to learn from some of those guys.

THE MODERATOR: Last one before we open to questions. First start, have you set any goals for yourself this week or what are you hoping to accomplish or learn about yourself.

DANIEL BENNETT: Nothing specific. I've obviously got very low expectations coming in. Yeah, hopefully I can go out and compete and be around this weekend. Yeah, I'm just going to go out there and have fun and have a good time and just enjoy this experience.

THE MODERATOR: Awesome. We'll open it up to questions.

**Q. Curious your experience against professionals. I assume you've done the SA Open at least once, Dunhill. What's that been like?**

DANIEL BENNETT: Yeah, obviously a couple big DP World Tour events, I played four in the last couple years that have been good experience obviously. But it's nothing like a PGA TOUR event, I don't think. This is another level. Those guys out there are really good and, yeah, it will be good to kind of see where my game's at against some of the best in the world. Yeah, just obviously grateful to be here.

**Q. What was the experience like in the Africa Amateur?**

DANIEL BENNETT: Yeah, I struggled this year. I played it twice. It's been around the last three years. Obviously high hopes going in for some of the exemptions and whatever's on the table. But, yeah, I didn't really plan properly leading up to the event, and arrived the day before the practice round with a bit of jet lag and all sorts going on. But, yeah, just played poorly and yeah, hopefully can play it the next couple years and get one of those invites.

**Q. How is your relationship with Aldrich or any of those other South African guys, what are your**



## relationships like?

DANIEL BENNETT: I played a bit of junior golf with Aldrich growing up. He hit it probably 70 yards past me when I was 16 years old. But, yeah, we, I know him really well and got to catch up with him on the range earlier this week. Yeah, just pretty cool to see what he's done the last couple years. Obviously been really successful so young also. It's good to see that someone you competed with when you were young has done it and kind of follow in his footsteps. But, yeah, there's a lot of good young South Africans coming out of the country at the moment. Yeah, cool to see, obviously.

## Q. What did you learn out there from Pierceson today playing with him?

DANIEL BENNETT: Yeah, I would say, I mean, he's been out the last couple years, and he's been around some of these golf courses. Kind of just seeing how him and his caddie work through some of their stuff. Just what they do in their practice rounds, how diligent they are with numbers and making sure everything's right. The amount of time they spend around the greens, it's different. I mean, in college obviously we play practice rounds and we only get one day to prepare. Then you come out here and you have three days early in the week to prepare and you've got a lot of time. I think learning how to use that time properly is really important. Yeah, these guys when they're out on the course, I mean they obviously prepare really well. So that's a big thing I think that I picked up from him. Yeah, he helped a lot today. Kind of just giving me some advice on what he's done here in the past and, yeah, cool to play with someone who's been out here.

## Q. Have you had a "pinch me" moment yet this week being out here?

DANIEL BENNETT: Yeah, for sure. It's kind of cool, I stepped up on the 11th tee box, and Rory was hitting his tee shot on 15, and it's obviously the same tee box, so pretty cool to be standing like right next to him. Yeah, I'm taking it all in and it's nice. I feel kind of comfortable, to be honest, which is weird to say, but yeah, I hope I would be able to play out here one day and this is kind of just that first step.

## Q. This could be a short answer. Curious, given the great heritage at the University of Texas, if you've had a chance to play Augusta National yet?

DANIEL BENNETT: Yes, we have, yes. Fortunately, yeah.

## Q. What was that like? Was that last year, I assume?

DANIEL BENNETT: We played early this year. It was really cool. Our whole team got to go out there and, yeah, cool to experience that as an amateur. Yeah, hopefully we get to go out there the next couple years and then play the Masters one day too, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Daniel, really appreciate the time, best of luck this week.

DANIEL BENNETT: Thank you.

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