

Zurich Classic of New Orleans

Thursday, April 23, 2026

Avondale, Louisiana, USA

TPC Louisiana

Eric Cole

Hank Lebioda

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: A 60 this afternoon. Excellent round. If we can get some comments. Hank, let's start with you.

HANK LEBIODA: Yeah, it was nice to turn it on there at the end. I joked that Eric was really carrying me on the front nine and early part of the round, and I was just glad to chip in, no pun intended, to pull my weight part of the team coming down the stretch.

THE MODERATOR: Take us through that stretch, six, seven, and eight.

HANK LEBIODA: Six was playing really long back into the wind. Driver in the fairway. 5-iron to the middle of the green, kind of the fat part. Saw a good line from 40 feet and rolled it and had the right pace. It went in.

On seven, par-5, thought I left my second shot in a really nice spot, kind of pin high left, far enough into the slope of that bunker to where I was actually down-green pitching rather than into the green, which out here kind of makes a world of difference.

It came out right. Rolled really well. Didn't grab necessarily and went right in the cup.

Eight, I figured Eric was going to make birdie on eight no matter what I did, and I liked my read. I got up on that putt. I probably had 15, 20 feet or so. Liked my read, and I liked the speed I was going to hole it at and just hit it.

THE MODERATOR: Then, Eric, you closed the round out with the birdie there on number nine. Talk about both of you guys, your play today?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, like Hank said, I think we played pretty solid most of the day. You know, scored okay, but didn't really have a ton of stuff go our way. Then there at the end we kind of kept doing what we were trying to do and holed a couple of long putts and chipped in.



Then on nine I hit a good shot into the middle of the green and definitely wanted to hold up my end of the team and make sure I'm contributing, so I wanted to make that. Was very happy to see it go in.

THE MODERATOR: Best round so far of the afternoon. How were the conditions out there today, Hank?

HANK LEBIODA: They were good. They were good. You know, I know the course got a little bit of water last night with the storm rolling through at the end of the pro-am, but our superintendent here and his staff have done a really good job of prepping the golf course for us.

Had a little bit of wind, and I think we both agreed it felt a little swirly. They were having a little bit of problems figuring out what direction it was coming from in the end, but it's just a treat for us to be out here.

THE MODERATOR: Eric, talk a little bit about the partnership with Hank, how it came about, and how much you enjoyed playing with him?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, no, it's cool. Hank asked me earlier in the year, maybe two months ago. At the time I had a partner, so I told him that, you know, I wish I could, but I can't. Then that partner dropped me, so I was very happy to accept Hank's invitation.

He knows my mom a little bit from St. Augustine area. Yeah, it's work out great and looking forward to the next few days.

THE MODERATOR: Alternate shot tomorrow. If we with get your comments on the strategy for that?

HANK LEBIODA: Yeah, Eric is going to be on the odd holes, so he'll have the two par-3s and our lead tee shot. I think the way the hole is bent kind of work for us. I like to hit a draw. Eric likes to hit a draw. It's kind of the perk of having a lefty and a righty. They both curve it different directions. You can kind of mix and match a little bit better that way.

Q. You're out there for a long time, obviously. A



different format than the usual week with the teammate. What was the most interesting conversation you had not about golf today?

ERIC COLE: Probably not safe to say on TV, I would say, yeah. No, it was more about just having fun. Like you said, the days are long, and you want to stay relaxed. Yeah, we definitely covered a lot of topics out there.

HANK LEBIODA: About our conspiracy theories from yesterday.

ERIC COLE: Yeah, there you go.

Q. How are we on the moon landing theory?

ERIC COLE: Well, we're going to the moon shortly, I guess, so maybe we'll see and get the info. I don't know.

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