

RBC Canadian Open

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Caledon, Ontario, Canada

TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley (North Course)

Alex Smalley

Quick Quotes

Q. Great playing today to kick off the RBC Canadian Open. What was working well for you out there?

ALEX SMALLEY: Most things. I made a few good putts early on. Nice kind of 10-footer on 10 up the hill for birdie, which got me going. The birdie putt on 11 was a little tougher, downhill right-to-left, right in the middle. So that kind of, you know, whenever you make two putts like that to get your round going, it certainly helps.

Hit a lot of good shots. I felt like I had a lot of pretty good chances inside of 10 feet for birdie today and was able to capitalize on a majority of them, I think.

Approach shots felt really good. Driver was so-so, but was able to draw pretty good lies when I wasn't in the fairway. Yeah, very pleased with how it went.

Q. There was talk earlier this week about whether this course would like yield a ton of low scores, but it seems like it's held up pretty well. How would you describe where the teeth and challenge of this course comes from?

ALEX SMALLEY: The conditions changed a decent amount from yesterday to today. I played in the afternoon in the Pro-Am yesterday, and it was fairly breezy. The fairways were running out a decent amount. There's a few fairways that are pitched pretty good from left-to-right or right-to-left.

Obviously the rain overnight kind of helped the ball not roll out as far in the fairway. If your ball hit in the fairway, it was probably going to stay there, which helped.

I think the most challenging thing today was controlling your spin on your approach shots. There's a number of holes where you have wedges into greens and the greens have a decent amount of slope in them. So if you weren't -- if you hit a wedge full, it was going to spin back probably 20 or 25 feet.

I hit a lot of really good wedge shots where I had to take a



club more and kind of chip it in there. I think that that certainly helped me today to have kind of good numbers where I could do that.

Q. Was there any -- did you change your Tuesday, Wednesday preparation to conserve a little more energy after the play you did?

ALEX SMALLEY: For sure. I played 40 holes on Monday. I think I was in a playoff for an alternate shot in my U.S. Open qualifier, and I think the last putt dropped at 8:40 p.m. I was supposed to have a 7:00 a.m. flight Tuesday morning to come up here. I was like that's not going to happen. So I changed it to 11:30 so I was able to get a little more sleep.

I didn't come to the golf course at all on Tuesday. I got seven holes in the Pro-Am in yesterday before the horn blew. So the only holes I saw this week were 10 through 16 before today.

I obviously feel pretty good with where I'm at given I only saw seven holes on the golf course.

Q. What's the process of like a hole that you've never seen? Like do you rely on your caddie a little more and look at the yardage book? What was the process for preparing for those holes?

ALEX SMALLEY: Yeah, for sure. He came out and walked 18 holes on Tuesday. Good for him. I mean, holy cow, I know how tired I was. He must have been super tired because I think his flight was at 6:00 a.m. on Monday to come up here.

I think the holes are pretty straightforward. There's no really blind tee shots, maybe one, No. 8 was kind of funky. I think the biggest thing was not seeing the green complexes and not knowing where slopes were and where the hole locations might have been and what was around the hole locations. So that was kind of the biggest question mark I had.

But luckily our yardage books are good enough to where you don't really need to see a golf course per se to have a decent idea of where you have to leave it off the tee.



Q. Was it like the emotion of not getting in the U.S. Open after playing all those holes, did that sting a bit, or what was kind of the feeling Monday night?

ALEX SMALLEY: I felt like I played well in the first 18 holes on Monday and really felt like I should have qualified, but that's how golf goes sometimes. You get good breaks and bad breaks.

Obviously there was disappointment, but you have to kind of put your mind forward to getting ready for the tournament this week, and that's what I did. Fully invested in this tournament now.

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