

Bank of Utah Championship

Wednesday, September 30, 2026

Ivins, Utah, USA

Black Desert Resort

Tony Finau

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Tony Finau into the interview room, making his debut appearance at the Bank of Utah Championship, a native of Utah and a resident.

Welcome, Tony. If we could get some comments on being here for the first time for the tournament.

TONY FINAU: Yeah, this is exciting for me. It's the third time the tournament is being played here, but it is my first time -- but not my first time in Utah (laughter). It's nice to have a home game.

I live up in Lehigh, grew up in Salt Lake, and we never had a PGA Tour event. We had the Korn Ferry Tour up throughout the valley in Salt Lake, and it's a tournament I watched many times growing up. So I have really nice memories there, but never had a PGA Tour event.

To have a PGA Tour event in Utah and now to be participating in it on this stage for a home crowd, I'm really excited about it. So I'm looking forward to the week.

THE MODERATOR: Talk to us about this golf course. Do you have any history at this course?

TONY FINAU: I played it for the first time yesterday. Most people are surprised by that. Actually, I've never even been on property until yesterday. Unbelievable property, like the resort is really cool. The golf course is really cool, really different than anything I've ever seen on Tour.

Obviously the black lava stands out. The views are unbelievable. I don't think -- if you dropped me here, I would think I might be on a different planet. It's incredibly cool.

I obviously love Utah. I think we have maybe the most beautiful state in all of America. So we get to display that this week here in St. George. It's going to be a fun week.

THE MODERATOR: Talk to us a little bit about your season, four top 25 finishes, No. 100 in the FedExCup



standings. If we could just get some comments.

TONY FINAU: This is my second start here in the fall, and I feel like my game is coming together. I didn't have the PGA Tour season that I wanted throughout the '26 season, but the great thing about this game with the experience that I have is any time you're playing well, it's a good time to play well. It doesn't matter if it's in the fall, in the spring, in the summer.

We have golf all year round on Tour. Any time is a good time to play well. Hopefully I start playing better at this tournament this week.

Q. Six wins. How motivated are you to get back in the winner's circle for the first time since '23?

TONY FINAU: Always extremely motivated. That's what continues to drive me. Sports is all about winning. I think I've said that many times. Sports is all about winning, and I feel like on my resume six doesn't sound like nearly enough. We're continuing to work towards more. That's a daily process type situation. Why not number seven this week?

Q. Tony, so good to see you. You're in search of points, oddly on the bubble, and yet you've got the winner's exemptions that stacked up from the previous six wins just mentioned. I'm curious about your thought process and decision process that brings you here this week. Tell us about that, please.

TONY FINAU: No question, that's a big part of why I'm here this week. It's a situation I've never really been in in my career, where I've had to play -- although I am exempt through next year, the '27 season, because of my wins, I want to finish in the top 100 after the fall just to kind of secure my status and my spot.

This is a tournament that stood out to me as one that I haven't played in the past, and obviously it is a home game, so it's one that made sense for me to play this year. Again, I'm excited to be here and play in front of a home crowd in Utah.

Q. What can you say to -- as the PGA is now in Utah, what can you say to the golf culture that exists here in the state, being that you're from here?



TONY FINAU: We have a rich culture in golf. I think it's a super underrated culture in golf. I think we have some not only amazing players, but so many amazing pros and just great programs.

The junior golf programs in Utah have continued to grow. To see that flourish now with my kids being involved in those programs is an incredible thing. The PGA of America has always been a huge benefit in the state. The PGA Tour now being in the state of Utah, I think, is an incredible thing.

The culture here is rich. To add a PGA Tour event to that rich culture and the history of this state, I think is super meaningful. I think we deserve it. No question.

Q. Just curious, how's the game? How are you feeling? How's the putting? Obviously that's been something you've been really working on.

TONY FINAU: No secret I'm using a hockey stick to putt with. If you saw me putt a couple weeks ago in North Carolina, I was trying out a kind of a hockey stick style putter, and I really liked it. So I'm going to stick with it.

I've been working hard on my game, working hard on my body. I feel good about the direction that it's pointing. I'm sure the results will follow.

Q. Talk about the course. What do you think so far with the rain? Talk about your approach, your strategy going in that you and your caddie are going to try to execute throughout the week?

TONY FINAU: As I mentioned, it's a golf course unlike anything I've ever seen on Tour before. The lava is basically out of bounds. It's not like hazard. It's not a golf course that I'm looking particularly to play super aggressive on. I'm going to play it a lot more conservatively than I think I would have liked. I would have liked to be playing a golf course where I can hit more drivers and have that kind of luxury to use my distance.

It's a golf course where, if you just play it the right way, I think you're going to score it better through 72 holes. That's how I see it. I'm going to play it pretty conservatively actually. I'm not going to hit many drivers this week. I'm really good with my driving iron. That's something I'm going to utilize throughout the week and just try to keep the ball in front of me.

Again, because lava is a hazard, it's like hitting it out of bounds. That's a big penalty. If you do that a couple times throughout the week, you're not going to have a chance to

win the tournament. Keeping the ball in front of me is going to be a huge thing for me this week after -- again, I've only seen the golf course once, but that's kind of the way I see it to play that best fits my game.

Q. Tony, I noticed your practice round today looked like an all-Utah foursome. Just curious how that came together, how you got matched up with those guys. Then if you could just talk about their games a little bit. We've got a lot of exciting young guys from Utah in the field playing on sponsor exemptions. Just curious what you thought about those guys and their games.

TONY FINAU: It was fantastic. I played with Kihei Akina, Braxton, and then Bowen Moss. It's all these kids since they were 11, 12 years old playing on the Tour, and now they're making their first starts on the PGA Tour.

It's pretty humbling. They all asked me if I wanted to play with them and do a practice round the night before. They texted me and said, hey, we'd love to get out and play with you. I said, of course, it would be awesome.

Foursomes aren't looked at on Tour as things you should do in a practice round, but I hope it was an exception yesterday. I thought it was pretty special to have the other three Utah guys with me. They were just trying to soak up, I think, the experience, asked me a lot of questions about my career, how I got where I am. They've all followed me.

But to really just have that experience with them on the golf course at a PGA Tour event was a special thing, not only for them, again for me. It was super humbling to just be asked by all these great Utah players, as you mentioned.

I think we've got a nice pipeline running through Utah right now with so many great players. You've got Zac Blair, Patrick Fishburn also in the field, guys that I grew up playing against. Having us three on the PGA Tour representing Utah, I think motivates these younger guys and the next generation of Utah players to know that we can do it, you can do it coming from Utah.

This is a place you only play half the year. Six, seven months out of the year, we're playing golf. If we can do it, how come they can't? I think they draw a lot of inspiration from us, and it's cool to be one of those guys for just these Utah guys that are growing up.

Q. Who was it for you when you were their age that you looked up to?

TONY FINAU: Obviously I've always said my golfing idols were Tiger and Ernie Els. Those are my two guys. But here in the state of Utah, having someone like Mike Weir,



Mike Reid, Jay Don Blake, being a local St. George player, those are all guys that gave me inspiration knowing I could do it coming from a state like Utah, no question.

Q. When did you put the hockey style putter in the bag, and what do you like about it?

TONY FINAU: I put it in the bag about a month ago. I really liked the basic math of it, or basically what it teaches is everything is pointing to target, everything is lined up with the face. So nothing is -- it's not a round grip. It's literally perfectly flat, but everything, the way you put your hands on it, it all faces the exact same angle as the putter face. I thought that was a really cool thing, and I just think it's easier to aim.

I've always been really good from 20, 25-plus feet throughout the history of my PGA Tour career, and then as I got closer to the hole, not as good. Aiming to me is the most important thing. The closer you get to the hole, the better you have to aim. You don't have time to manipulate the face on a short putt. So it seems to help me aim better, and that's why I put it in the bag.

Q. How often can we expect to see you this fall? Is this your only stop, or do you have more on your schedule?

TONY FINAU: I plan to play a few more. I think I'm going to play Mexico this year and Vidanta. That's a golf course I've won on, and it's going to be a different time of year, but my family, we love that place, so we'll be back there. Not exactly sure after that if I'll play anything else, but at least that one.

Q. I know this was your first time playing at Black Desert, but I know you're no stranger to Southern Utah golf. What do you love most about Southern Utah golf?

TONY FINAU: It starts with the views. There's nothing like it really in the world. You've got red rocks; you've got black lava. I've played almost all the golf courses here except for this one. Entrada is right down the street. I grew up playing a lot of Southgate, St. George Golf Club, obviously Sand Hollow. I've played pretty much all of them. This one is unique and special.

You can't beat the views in St. George, in all of St. George. All the golf courses that you play here, they're unique this their own way. I don't know if you can call it desert golf because most of the courses are still trees and different things like that, but it's such a unique place to play. It's a special place to play. To showcase one of our courses here in Southern Utah, Black Desert, I think is pretty cool.

Q. With the event being here, a lot of family here, your family and then just other family following you this week?

TONY FINAU: Yeah, of course. My wife and kids drove down, easy drive, about 3 1/2 hours from Lehigh. They're down here. I think my parents will be here. I'm sure we'll get a lot of support, which is really cool.

When I used to play in Vegas in the fall, when we had the Vegas tournament, I had quite a bit of support there, and I felt like a lot of fans from Utah drove up. Yeah, I expect a nice Utah crowd, but I will have quite a bit of family out here this week for sure.

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