

Bank of Utah Championship

Sunday, October 4, 2026

Ivins, Utah, USA

Black Desert Resort

Kihei Akina

Quick Quotes

Q. Kihei, really solid finish. Your third PGA Tour start and looking like it will be your best finish on Tour. Just overall thoughts on the week.

KIHEI AKINA: Just a great week to be back here in Utah again. Just really lucky to have the privilege to be able to play here for the third time, and to be able to play well, it's pretty awesome.

Q. Can you talk about the support of all your family and friends? You have a huge crowd out there that were following you today.

KIHEI AKINA: The support from all the people all over Utah, I've met so many new people this week, it's been awesome. It's really cool to have a bunch of family here down to watch -- my grandparents, all my uncles and aunts. Yeah, it's really cool.

Q. Talk to me about last year, not even making the cut, to this year finishing top 10 and making all of Utah proud. How are you feeling right now?

KIHEI AKINA: Good. I definitely feel a lot better than I did last year. Just another great experience to be able to play on a PGA Tour. Feels great to be able to put four solid rounds together.

Q. Tell me a little bit about your local journey in terms of high school product at Lone Peak, college product at BYU. Here you are in the PGA at St. George. Talk about just how good the progression of golf is for young golfers here in Utah and how you feel like your own career is kind of a reflection of the quality of Utah golf?

KIHEI AKINA: Definitely, yeah. I'd say go out my roots from here in Utah, even though I'm from Hawaii, but I went to high school here and now I'm obviously in college here in Utah. I hopefully can set an example for some of the Utah junior golfers out there. I've definitely seen that Utah junior golf is making their way up right now, so it's really cool to see that.



I feel like Utah golf is in a pretty good spot right now for sure.

Q. Did the experience of Puerto Rico fighting for a top 10 help you today?

KIHEI AKINA: Definitely, yeah. It's a little bit of a different pressure than playing a regular round or fighting for a cut. Yeah, that experience definitely helped me. I definitely kind of relied back on that today. I think that helped me finish pretty good today.

Q. And so do I assume that, if the top 10 holds up, you'll go to Bermuda?

KIHEI AKINA: Yeah, we'll see if I can get excused from class, but hopefully.

Q. In Puerto Rico, you had your BYU coach Todd Miller on the bag. He is a remarkable asset in terms of playing the course and executing the game. This week you did it more on your own. What was the difference -- what was that difference like for you?

KIHEI AKINA: Yeah, I wanted a caddie that I was going to feel comfortable with. I know that my game is good enough to compete out here, and I just needed somebody that I was comfortable with and that would keep me grounded and pretty level throughout the day.

I've known Lincoln and his family for a long time. He did a great job out there this week.

Q. There were already low scores by the time you got to the tee, so you knew you needed to go low. Did you view that as a challenge, pressure, opportunity? You came out gunning, made 3 on the 1st hole.

KIHEI AKINA: Yeah, I looked at the leaderboard a little bit, I think once before teeing off, and I saw that there were already some low scores out there. So I knew I had to put out a low one. Birdie on 1 always helps.

Q. The birdies are huge, but also to make one bogey on the weekend, talk about the consistency of that.

KIHEI AKINA: I'm a little bummed out on that bogey. I



wanted to go bogey-free. Yeah, to play 36 holes with only one bogey is impressive, and I try to do that every time I tee it up.

Q. Tell us about your second shot on 18, 72nd hole, to put a cap on everything.

KIHEI AKINA: My drive had gone a little shorter than I expected. So I had a little bit further coming in. It was just another perfect mini driver, which I've had so many times throughout the week. I felt really comfortable with that club. I think we were trying to hit a 275 shot a little bit into the wind. I hit it a little bit further right than I wanted to. To get it up around the green pin high was a great shot.

Q. If the leaderboard stands, you would be top 10, into the Bermuda tournament. Did you know that? And what are your thoughts on that?

KIHEI AKINA: Yeah, I knew that.

(Laughter).

I try to keep that in the back of my head all day and just try to play golf. Whatever happens now is just golf, but I'm just really proud of the way I fought out there today.

Q. Speaking of things you might know, but my calculation this is point 9 on PGA Tour, you accelerated almost halfway to a Tour card. Are you tracking that, or are you aware when you're doing that stuff?

KIHEI AKINA: Yeah, it's in the back of your head, like I said. At the end of the day, you've just got to play golf, and that's what I did this week.

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