

Bank of Utah Championship

Sunday, October 4, 2026

Ivins, Utah, USA

Black Desert Resort

Austin Smotherman

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome the winner of the 2026 Bank of Utah Championship, Austin Smotherman, to the Media Center.

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Good to be here.

Q. First win in your 100th start. Can you put into words how you're feeling right now?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Probably not, but I'm going to try. 100 starts out here is an incredible number, just to be blessed to have 100 starts, but even more so, to play professional golf now for 10 years, travel the world, have the support I've had, it's pretty unreal to lift a trophy at the highest level. It's something we've dreamed about since I was a kid, and here we are.

Q. Third year in a row that this tournament has produced a first time PGA winner. I just wonder why that might be in your thoughts. Then the follow-up question for our local fans, who was your impression of St. George? I know your wife was here. Did she like it?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yes, have loved St. George. My wife and two girls at the time came here to the first event two years ago when I played. We stayed here on property, saw everything kind of open up, and then to come back -- I didn't play last year. To come back this year and see how much it's grown is pretty amazing. To see the master plans for Black Desert is unreal.

I'm sorry, I know you had another part.

Q. The first question is why do you think this event has first-time winners?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: I think any time you kind of bring a brand new event on the scene, I think there's a good bit of no scar tissue for guys, but also it's a blank slate, and maybe not everybody knows how to play this course as you need to to be able to win. So it kind of evens the playing field a little bit and kind of feels like



everyone has a chance.

Every week I think everyone does have a chance. We're all pretty good players out here.

Q. You bogey at 13. Your lead is reduced to one. You held it pretty much all the way through since the second round, but it was getting a little intense and a little stressful. What was your thought process at that point? And seeing you get the birdies back at 15 and 16, that reset you a little better.

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yeah, no doubt. The double plugging it into the bunker wasn't planned. Just a heavy 7-iron that probably is a little nervy, maybe not just the perfect number. Trying to get a lot out of it and just mis-struck it.

I was really proud of the way I focused on -- we have the drivable hole and 18, which are pretty good birdie holes. I knew I had at least a shot lead where, if I just make two birdies like that coming in, it would be tough without making eagle on 18, which is a tough eagle to make, to really catch it.

Q. Tougher than 14?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yeah, I think so. I think that pin on the front left is a little trickier and not as much room.

Yeah, I mean, just super patient down the stretch. Finding fairways, just very, very level-headed, fairway, green. Did not have my best iron swings down the stretch at all. Just trying to kind of limp it in, and I did. The lag putt on 18 was pretty nice.

Q. (No microphone)?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yeah, it did. Maybe that was the nemesis out there. I thought it would have been pretty cool to get to 30-under. Regardless, win by one, win by ten, I'll get there.

Q. There were a lot of guys that went low today before you even started teeing off on 1.

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yeah, I saw that.



Q. You noticed. Did it go through your head maybe about how the course was playing, if it was playing a little differently, if you were going to look at shot selection differently throughout all 18?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Maybe just a little bit. I was coasting through the leaderboard this morning as guys were getting started. I'm sure my caddie was maybe a little more attentive to that as far as where shots are finishing and how guys are doing on these trickier holes.

As far as game planning, I knew it wouldn't change much. Birdies early are going to happen for a lot of guys, and for me it was nice to hit those two shots close and make that long putt.

Then I had a bunch of looks today, which is kind of the state of my game. When putts go in, it's tough to shoot high scores.

Q. What was going through your mind walking up 18?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Honestly, just reverting back to some breathing, drinking some water. Doug's a great guy to chat with. I don't know how much nerves he was feeling or whatnot as well. He's trying to make eagle to tie me or maybe win outright if I do something crazy.

We're both kind of friendly on the tee box, definitely chatting, but we both hit the fairway. From there, I knew I kind of had the driver's seat a little bit to force his hand to make eagle. Hit a great 5-iron in front of the green. The fact that I was greenside enough to putt it was pretty nice.

Q. 32 birdies this week to lead the field.

(Applause.)

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: That's an insane number, wow.

Q. What was it about Black Desert that fits your eye or your game that just was working so well this week?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: I mean, working this well, just firing on all cylinders, iron game really. Drove it great, hit just so many shots close. I think just -- we hit our numbers, had a bit of the skips and the feeds with all the slopes that are out there.

I played two weeks ago in Asheville, which was 2,500 feet, not as hot, and then I went back home and kind of just stayed on that altitude when I was practicing with all of our technology and everything like that with GCQuad and TrackMan. Kind of just never really left that mindset of where the ball was going.

So I felt like we adjusted really quickly. Came out here -- I mean, I played okay in the Pro-Am, had a great group. Then to come out and shoot those first two rounds that I did, it's not like you're expecting to do that. I felt like I was playing well, but just a lot of putts and a lot of good par-5s. I think I birdied every par-5 but two this week. So that's the state of my game. Yeah, thank you.

Q. So your first win in 100 starts. Let's talk about your next hundred starts. What does this do for your confidence, and how do you foresee the future?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yeah, another hundred starts out here would be the dream. Take care of my body, take care of everything I need to do to be able to do that and at a high level. You see guys out here that play to 500 starts and whatnot. Probably need to pick their brain a little bit more, see what they've been doing the whole time to be able to get to that many.

What it does for me, it just breeds confidence, validates a lot of the stuff I'm doing with my team, everything I'm doing at home, just life in general, just trying to get everything on track, and we are. I've got a great wife, great family. The support is unreal. I'm sure my phone is nonstop ringing in her purse right now. So thank you.

Q. Going back the other direction --

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Sorry, I've got this mountain of a trophy right here, but I'm going to work around it.

Q. How would you describe the ten-year journey as a pro to get to today?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yeah, ten years, graduated June of 2016, had some Q-School stuff lined up, was unsuccessful at second stage, and proceeded to do Latin America Q-School in December and then go down there and play for the next two years, again missing out at second stage trying to get a Korn Ferry card at the time.

Then that second season, I kind of felt like I matured and won the second event, stayed in the top 5, graduated off that Tour. Then following that puts you on the Korn Ferry, kind of -- not a struggle, but a big learning curve. Then that second season, kind of picked it up a little bit, made some hay.

Then COVID hit, and I had an extended season like that, and I was able to win and play really consistent golf. I feel like this second year -- this is now my fourth year on the PGA Tour. So I'm sure that learning curve is now kind of soaking in a bit different.



The journey is taking all the information we got and doing the best we can with it. I feel like I acquired a lot of information and a lot of just enjoy playing this game too all over the world.

Wearing a First Tee Utah T-shirt, I see that.

Q. That's what I want to talk to you about. I also president of First Tee in Utah. We had Angie Dixon on our show yesterday morning. You have a First Tee logo on your bag. You are a First Tee kid. What does it mean to you to have this trophy, to have a PGA Tour win as an example to First Tee kids across the country?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: I don't think I have to have the trophy to validate that. I mean, I think it's just -- I might get a little emotional, about time. Yeah, they gave me everything, all the belief from such an early age, just that you're going to be a good person, good human, and go use this game for a lot more than just cashing a check every week playing professionally.

I got to go to college on a golf scholarship, and I had a First Tee scholarship awarded to me to be able to do that. I've been to leadership academies to help boost my resume and get into a great school at SMU.

I just think it's so cool out here every single week there is a chapter associated with the tournament. They do caddie par-3s with us in Pro-Ams. And just to see how far the program's continuing to grow, I'm honored to carry the logo at least across the country wherever I'm at. It's an incredible program. Thank you for being president out here.

Q. Thank you for First Tee Utah, for First Tees across the country, we thank you for everything you're doing for us. You are a wonderful ambassador. It's a real honor. Thank you very much.

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Appreciate that.

Q. You told us earlier this week that you had a lot of pressure coming into this week because it is your Grandpa Bill's 89th birthday.

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Yeah, happy birthday, Grandpa.

Q. Could we hear more about that? Have you talked to him yet?

AUSTIN SMOTHERMAN: Not today. I talked to him yesterday. I think he set a tone. He said go get 5-under

tomorrow, for Saturday, and got 6. He was very pleased.

He gave me a tall tale Wednesday or Thursday on the phone. He said you know what Friday is, Junior? That's what he calls me. I said, yeah, it's your birthday. How old are you turning? He didn't want to tell me. He said old enough. Then he said, you'd better play good.

Then we come out and shoot 9-under, tie my PGA Tour record, leading the tournament. I mean, it's just like, all right, Grandpa, what else you got to say? Keep putting it out there. Keep putting it into the universe, right?

He's been a blessing to me. So thankful to have that relationship that he supports me every single week. We talk almost nightly. It was really cool. I'm sure he was glued to either the TV or the computer. He always takes notes on his legal pad to discuss afterwards. It's pretty cool.

He lets me know it. He tells me how different -- I don't want to say just bad because it's not bad. I'm working on it. My bunker game, when I'm missing bunker shots, he hates that.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Austin. PGA Tour winner.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports