

# U.S. Senior Open Championship

Thursday, June 27, 2024  
Newport, Rhode Island, USA  
Newport Country Club

## Alex Cejka

### Quick Quotes

#### **Q. Strong start here, birdied 2 of the first 3. Your thoughts on your start on the round.**

ALEX CEJKA: I'm really delighted. I had no idea what's coming. I had nine weeks off. Still struggling with a little sore back. It's getting better.

I literally started to hit balls Monday here after nine, whatever, eight weeks. I didn't know how I was going to play. I didn't know how I would handle it. I didn't know how I was going to make 4-footers under pressure.

But I hit it pretty good. I had a good start. I tried to still like chip it in place somewhere and gave me a couple chances. So the putting was great. I kept the ball in play today, what's really like a miracle the way I feel right now.

But I'm really overall pleased. I didn't even know like yesterday if I'm gonna play, because it's still -- the kink in my back is still there. I have a little pinched nerve. It's a little annoying, but I took a couple painkillers.

I said, just go out and fight as good as you can. If it's 4-under or 10-over, it is what it is. I have to start somewhere.

It's not pleasant to start at a major after nine weeks. Obviously I would have liked to start last week and get like a couple reps in, but overall I'm really pleased with the first round.

We had a little bit easier, no wind at least for the first, whatever, ten holes. It was a bonus the front nine at least. Now it's blowing the usual 15, 20. It's tricky out there, but it's doable if you hit good shots.

#### **Q. You worked it to 6-under starting off. Was it the conditions that kind of got you a little bit, or was it the course?**

ALEX CEJKA: No, I actually -- I three-putted, that second



bogey, I three-putted, putted for birdie and hit it two feet past and let it just slip out. That was a bummer.

The first bogey, I was in a bunker, and I hit a poor bunker shot, to be honest, and didn't even hit the green. It was actually a lucky bogey. It's a tough hole, that 6th hole. That's where I bogeyed.

7, three-putt from 10 feet. You're looking at a birdie, trying to make the bogey from the previous hole, kind of wipe it out, and you walk off with another bogey. So the wheels came off a little bit.

Again, I'm really, really happy how I fought today for how I feel.

#### **Q. You've obviously had a lot of success at senior majors. Do you feel like that's helping you out already on day one?**

ALEX CEJKA: It's always nice to have a good start, but majors, all the best players out here. It's four rounds, not three rounds. You know what I mean? It's pressure.

It depends on luck of the draw. I played in the morning, no wind. It's so many factors. Obviously with good players, you can see it everywhere in the majors, like the longer the tournament, the better player comes always somehow through right under normal conditions.

I obviously like four rounds. You can make ground up, but you can also lose ground in four rounds, so it's always a give and take.

But in the past, I've had really good success in the majors. Again, I'm really happy the way today turned out after the last nine weeks. I really had no expectations. I just wanted to tee it up and fight for 18 holes; that was the goal.

I'm going to do the same thing tomorrow. Maybe it was a lucky -- nine weeks is a long time not even playing -- not playing a tournament. Not even touching the club.

So you lose your touch, everything. But today it felt like I never stopped. Tomorrow can be another story. We know golf.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports



