

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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AUSTIN LEMIEUX



Q. We'd like to welcome Austin Lemieux to the Butterfield Bermuda Championship in 2026.

Pretty exciting time, this is your first PGA Tour event after open qualifying. Just talk about what the anticipation's been like. Because that qualifying was actually a week ago --

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah.

Q. -- unusually, but what's that been like getting ready, prepared to play here?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah. I mean, my game was good enough to get through the Monday qualifier. I felt like it's been trending in the right direction for some time now. It's just going to be a great experience for me to come out here and compete with these guys and see if my game's good enough for the time being.

Q. When did you actually arrive on the island and have you been here before?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: No, first time here in Bermuda. Arrived early Sunday. I just wanted to get a few extra looks at the course, so did nine on Sunday, nine Monday, nine Tuesday. So I've seen enough of the course, seen enough of the wind that we've been having. I feel prepared and ready to go.

Q. Given the weather that we had yesterday with a lot of stops and starts during a practice day, that sounds like a veteran move coming in early. How beneficial do you think that was to you to be able to see that course in that manner without having to chop and change?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah, certainly I felt like my preparation was ahead of everyone else just because we had maybe a few hour delay there. I thought maybe the weather was going to continue to come in and just told myself I was already prepared. So if we get a few extra looks at the holes that we needed to finish yesterday, it would be a bonus, but if we didn't, everything was fine.

Q. You won on the minor league tour, you're still playing as an amateur, but I want to talk about the Monday qualifier a little bit. When you went there, how many Monday qualifiers have you attempted and what was that feeling like after you shot 66? Did you have to sit around long or did you play late or early? How did that pan out?



AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah, just been sharpening up my skills on the minor league tour down in Florida. That's been good. That's certainly taught me a lot playing competitively and to get ready for Monday qualifiers. And then that was my second Monday qualifier, so I just -- I wasn't too nervous going into that Monday, tried to learn from my past experience of my first Monday being a little too nervous. Just went out there and things kind of started rolling for me, got a few under par early and just stuck with it.

Q. You played hockey in college at Arizona State. How did you transition into golf? And there's a lot of hockey players that play golf, but how does it correlate between golf and hockey? How different is it?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: I think it's extremely different, but some of the movements that I find and my coach finds are very similar.

You know, I find that good hand-eye coordination helps a few times around the greens. And certainly when I was younger, just learning how to hit a ball that wasn't moving. But yeah, I mean, there's certainly a few things that I took away from hockey. As of now, it's been pretty different.

Q. Do you have any apprehension or nerves, and if so, how do you manage that, or if not, how do you come into a PGA Tour event, your first start, without having that?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah, I mean, I'm already pretty nervous a little bit, but might be a little bit more nervous on the first tee tomorrow, but everyone gets nerves. Just trying to deal with them as best I can. With hockey it was just getting out there, making a good play or getting a hit, obviously that got you in the game, but golf's a little bit different. Just get a few good swings under your belt and take it in stride.

Q. When you saw the tee times coming out yesterday, your pairing includes Neal Shipley, a fellow Pennsylvanian, how does that make you feel? Do you know him well? Are you looking forward to playing with him?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah, certainly a comfortable pairing for me. I was very excited when I saw that pairing. I know Neal pretty well from Pittsburgh and I worked with him a little bit down in Florida. Played with him a few times and pretty friendly with him. Should be a good day and I'm looking forward to it.

Q. And just do you have any family here with you, expecting any family, friends --

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: My parents are coming down. The rest of the gang are going to be watching from home. I know they'll be supporting me, and it's good to have my parents here.

Q. You shot 78-68 at the Suncoast Classic in 2024 on the Korn Ferry Tour. What did you learn from that experience and how has your game evolved over the last couple years?



AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah, certainly progressed every week by week, month by month, and I feel much better than I was then. I was just maybe too nervous going into that, a little bit overwhelmed. I feel much better here this week, a lot quieter, a lot less nerves, and I feel prepared. We're just going to go out there and try my best and learn from this experience.

Q. As a kid growing up in terms of golf, who did you watch? Who were your idols in golf?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: In golf?

Q. Yes.

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Everyone watched Tiger, watching Tiger. As of now, as in a few years ago watched J.T., Gary Woodland, Spieth. All these guys, all these big-name guys, that's kind of who I grew up watching later on after hockey. Yeah, certainly would love to be out there with those guys eventually and we'll just keep putting my best foot out there.

Q. What is it that you learn from those guys just even watching them on TV?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Probably just how calm they are just playing an event, they almost seem like they're playing with their buddies and that's maybe the mindset to take into tomorrow playing with Neal, just try and dumb it down a little bit and try not to think of it too much as a PGA Tour event as being my first. Certainly going to be a good pairing for me tomorrow and hopefully that helps me out a little bit.

Q. Last one from me, just what do you think is the major strength of your game and maybe something that you really need to work on in your game that you're not comfortable with?

AUSTIN LEMIEUX: Yeah, certainly I drive the ball very well. My middle iron game is really good. Then just over the years just learning a little bit more about shotmaking around the greens. Certainly everyone can be better at that. A little tricky bermuda here this week, so I feel like I did a lot of good practice around there. And the putting has certainly come a long way, become a really good putter. Yeah, I feel like the all-around game is there and hopefully it can show up this week.

