Production Transcript for REWIND\_23MEX\_FINAU.mp3

[00:00:28] >> The PGA Tour is proud to bring you the season-long race for the FedEx Cup. Now, coverage of the 2023 Mexico Open at Vidanta.

[00:00:40] >> Beautiful day, 80 degrees, sunny skies, winds 8 to 10 miles per hour. For the second time that this event is being played at Vidanta, second time this event is a PGA Tour event. While our defending champ, Jon Rahm earlier today, this was at the 17th. Two hundred and fifteen yard par 3. Look at where he puts this.

[00:01:05] >> Yeah, left of the hole. Not many tee shots left of this hole. Two hundred and fifteen yards, so wonderful golf shot. That kind of kick started his round right there, Justin.

[00:01:17] >> That was a birdie then over at the 1st. A birdie there. And he would follow up a birdie at 1 with a birdie at 2.

[00:01:29] >> Have a difficult second hole, 500 yard par 4.

[00:01:35] >> And how do you cap off your rounds? You know, why not another birdie. He birdied 7. He birdied 9. He went 4-under for a 67. They were to cap the day.

[00:01:49] >> At the 9, another difficult par 3. Here's Vincent Norrman trying to get the 4-under.

[00:01:54] >> Yeah. Good tee shot here. Not the longest of par 3s, but danger all over, and a beautiful birdie to finish up his round, 4-under par.

[00:02:04] >> Jump ahead to the 11th, the par 3, Jose de Jesus Rodriguez, the 42-year-old, one of the seven players from Mexico in the field playing on the Korn Ferry Tour this year, but happy to get a start on the PGA Tour. Rolls that one in, gets to 1-under early. Thirteen, Satoshi Kodaira. Long birdie putt here. Former winner in Hilton Head a few years back.

[00:02:26] >> A hundred and eighty-two yards today on this par 3. And no problem for Kodaira.

[00:02:34] >> Gets him back to even. Start his afternoon off on the backside.

[00:02:40] >> Finau in the bunker. Great technique here. Knees flex, low hands. Get that club straight up in the air, and get some speed. Pop it out of the bunker, little chunk and runner. Good shot.

[00:03:00] >> A little like that.

[00:03:03] >> Now, Echavarria at the 7th after blowing the eagle putt by this for birdie.

[00:03:09] >> And interesting enough there, Smylie, we talked about earlier, his best stat this year is three putt avoidance. So, that was a big putt for him.

[00:03:18] >> He's not a three putter.

[00:03:21] >> Well we mentioned Austin Smotherman. He is the leader right now at the 12th. Rolled that in for birdie. Austin Smotherman who won the Mexico Open back in 2018 at the 3rd.

[00:03:37] >> Yeah, a little out of position right there, but what a golf shot out of that waist area.

[00:03:43] >> Put it to 1 feet, 2 inches, so 14 inches away. And then, this was where the round just got going. At the 6th, birdie.

[00:03:53] >> Never left the center of the cup.

[00:03:56] >> At the 7th, he birdied. Then at the 8th, birdied. So that's three in a row. And then, he'd go to 9.

[00:04:06] >> Probably his worst iron shot of the day. Misses the green, but --

[00:04:11] >> Nice recovery.

[00:04:12] >> Pitches it in.

[00:04:15] >> Molinari on the tee at 9. Now, up at the green.

[00:04:29] >> Molinari now for birdie at the 9th.

[00:04:33] >> Yeah, also trying to get back on track after his Open Championship win at Carnoustie.

[00:04:42] >> Working pretty hard.

[00:04:43] >> Watched him hit some balls yesterday too as well, Justin. And how about that?

[00:04:48] >> Every shot he hit went right through the same pane of glass.

[00:04:54] >> As van Rooyen gets set for his second, he's got an iron.

[00:04:58] >> Please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please do.

[00:05:03] >> What's happening here?

[00:05:06] >> How about our cameraman back there and everybody? All right, stand in group now.

[00:05:11] >> I've never seen anything like that.

[00:05:13] >> Never, ever. Have been out doing this for 30 plus years and I've never seen anything unfold like that.

[00:05:19] >> Well, at the 12th, 633 yard par 5, Brandon Matthews going forward in two.

[00:05:25] >> That's 180 ball speed with a 3-wood.

[00:05:30] >> Oh my gosh.

[00:05:31] >> Landed perfectly right in front of the green.

[00:05:35] >> He would make birdie.

[00:05:37] >> Now, van Rooyen.

[00:05:42] >> You'd like to see one go in at some point in time. He's had some good putts.

[00:05:45] >> There it is.

[00:05:45] >> There it is there. Wow.

[00:05:47] >> Van Rooyen would shoot 64.

[00:05:51] >> More than a score, I'm proud that I was able to stay very present, you know, shot by shot. My coach, my old coach from school just told me, just enjoy it, shot by shot. Kind of caught fire in the last three holes, 7, 8, 9. And then just I didn't really want to do the same. Just wanted to given myself opportunities and gave myself a couple of opportunities in the par 5s and, you know, and bomber in the last hole. But, yeah, I'm not going to lie, I was a bit nervous, you know. It feels amazing to see a lot of people just walking around the course and just cheering for me. And it just feels great. And more than that, having my parents, my family around here and just playing on the soil, it's just -- I like to host people. I like to be a great host. So, it's just means a lot to play in Mexico.

[00:06:35] >> In his first tour event, Raul Pereda locks in a 65, good for a tie for fourth and 2-bacl the first round leader, Austin Smotherman. Round 2 is next.

[00:06:52] >> Beautiful day here in Mexico. Second year that this event is a PGA Tour event, previously PGA Tour Latinoamerica here at the base of the Sierra Madre Mountains in Vallarta, Mexico.

[00:07:09] >> Let's take a look at our leader Tony Finau, what he was able to do today. At the 12th, Tony Finau wearing some very nice Jordan 1s, rolls that in. At the 16th, his approach at the 511-yard par 4. Tony Finau, we know he can hit it far, and he puts it nice and close.

[00:07:31] >> Five hundred and eleven yards, and that's back into the breeze a little bit too, Justin. So takes advantage of that one.

[00:07:38] >> After the birdie at 16, he birdied 17.

[00:07:42] >> Two great birdies in a row.

[00:07:45] >> And then, he started on the front -- on the back, excuse me. He finished on the front. This is at the 5th. Little birdie right there.

[00:07:55] >> So Tony Finau, a 64 in his second round.

[00:08:05] >> Over to 12, Derek Ernst.

[00:08:13] >> Just short of the green. Hole location way in the back, and whoops.

[00:08:17][ Applause ]

[00:08:24] >> At the 18th, right at the cut line, it's at minus-2, this for birdie now for Vazquez.

[00:08:33] >> Yeah, he'll definitely need this. It has a pretty good chance it'll go to 3.

[00:08:38] >> Oh my gosh.

[00:08:39] >> You'd rather be on 3 than 2, but if you're on 2, you got a chance.

[00:08:43][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:08:51] >> Hojgaard on the tee at 9. That would be a birdie.

[00:09:03][ Applause ]

[00:09:09] >> At the 7th, seven second shot for Trainer. Oh, yes.

[00:09:13] >> There you go. See how we got -- kept that clubface moving through the ball and --

[00:09:19] >> Back to 6 for Rahm.

[00:09:23] >> Long eagle putt, trying to get to 6-under.

[00:09:25] >> Putting from the lower end of the green, up the hill. It gets fast past the hole. It's downwind. Had to be careful.

[00:09:31] >> Get in the hole.

[00:09:33] >> You got a pretty good slug up that slope.

[00:09:35] >> There you go. He figured at some point --

[00:09:39] >> That putter was going to heat up a little bit.

[00:09:42] >> At the 9th, Eric Cole.

[00:09:48] >> Hundred and forty-two yards, into the wind, front left hole location.

[00:09:54] >> Had that great run at the Honda Classic earlier.

[00:10:01] >> Right on line, but just a little short.

[00:10:06] >> Honestly, it's a very similar shot before --

[00:10:08] >> Yeah.

[00:10:08] >> -- with the 7-iron.

[00:10:09] >> Yes.

[00:10:09] >> I don't think it needs to be the lowest one.

[00:10:11] >> No, I agree. All right, buddy.

[00:10:14] >> Hundred and seventy-one yards, got a 7-iron. So that gives you all the indication in the world that he's going to definitely fade it up against this wind and make it fly very straight.

[00:10:26] >> Also tell you how hard the wind is blowing. Seven-iron usually for him, probably 185.

[00:10:35] >> He's riding this wind a little bit. I think he probably needs to get down a little left of it.

[00:10:44] >> Plenty to carry.

[00:10:47] >> He know what he's doing.

[00:10:49] >> Up ahead to the 9th, the par 3, here's Eric Cole, his birdie try.

[00:10:54] >> Right underneath the hole, up the hill, and just hung on the right. Good effort.

[00:11:02] >> Rahm to get to 8-under.

[00:11:06] >> Look at it go 4-under on his last three.

[00:11:09] >> This would be a great one to cap off. I think he hit it with the speed that he wanted. It broke off right there at the end.

[00:11:26] >> Settles for 4, remain 7-under. Now, over at 11, Pereda to get to 7-under.

[00:11:31] >> Hundred and ninety-one yards today. Started on the 10th, made a solid par and a nice birdie at the 11th.

[00:11:38] >> Let's go up to 11, Jonas Blixt over the green here at the par 3, his second.

[00:11:48] >> He's going to have to throw this back into the wind a little bit and --

[00:11:54] >> Just like that.

[00:11:55] >> Like.

[00:11:55] >> Easy two.

[00:11:56] >> Two is a two is a two is a two.

[00:11:58] >> Pereda has this for birdie.

[00:12:03] >> Hole location the back of the green, goes a little left. And --

[00:12:07] >> Look at this kid.

[00:12:10] >> This is his first PGA Tour event.

[00:12:13] >> I mean, what do you think is stopping going in now?

[00:12:29] >> Big tee shot here for Rahm at 11.

[00:12:32] >> Most certainly, Jon Rahm got an 8-iron out here. Hundred and ninety-one yards, just want to land at about eight steps short.

[00:12:42] >> Yeah. That get some just on the top of that level there, Smylie. So that'd be a perfect place to drop this in.

[00:12:50] >> On a nice high line at the middle of the green.

[00:12:53] >> Trying to work back to the right and --

[00:13:01] >> Now, up at the green.

[00:13:03] >> Jon Rahm, a little bit of very good, a little bit of indifferent. What sense are you getting, Smylie, watching him, the emotions, the frustrations especially over the last couple of holes?

[00:13:13] >> Well, definitely frustrated on the wind gusts he was -- he had at the 9th hole. But he's able to bounce back here with a nice iron shot, has an opportunity to make a birdie, heading into some scorable part of the golf course.

[00:13:31] >> It's kind of set out there to the left a little bit. I'm not reading a lot of break. Will it hang in there? It does. Just what he ordered up right there, Smylie.

[00:13:46] >> At the 5th hole.

[00:13:50] >> Mateo Fernandez de Oliveira who plays at Arkansas, won in Puerto Rico in January, just makes that putt right there to get back to even and a chance to get to that cut line, which right now is at 2-under.

[00:14:06] >> It's now the third shot for Jon Rahm.

[00:14:17] >> Really shouldn't present much of a problem here for Jon. Drives in there low up that hill.

[00:14:22][ Applause ]

[00:14:33] >> Jon Rahm at the 12th looking for back to back birdies.

[00:14:37] >> Well, he's already 2-under on the par 5s today, eagle in that sixth hole. Three more par 5s ahead of him.

[00:14:52] >> Good roll. Right at the center.

[00:14:55][ Applause ]

[00:15:03] >> Grillo at 13.

[00:15:06] >> Uphill, right to left. Does he have the pace?

[00:15:09] >> There it is.

[00:15:11] >> Yeah. It looked like he gave that a big hit. Just crept in that front door. Good birdie there for Emiliano.

[00:15:21] >> Smotherman was the first round leader at 8-under. And this birdie putt here would make him the third player in double figures.

[00:15:31] >> Just a beautifully controlled wedge shot like Billy Ray described. Drove it in there nice and low, a little spin, check and hold.

[00:15:41] >> And now, a putt that's actually back up hill maybe turn just a bit to the left.

[00:15:50] >> Second birdie of the day for Smotherman. He is 10-under, 3-back of Tony Finau. First look today at the 16th hole. You know, it's just a 511-yard par 4.

[00:16:05] >> And it goes into the wind.

[00:16:07] >> Oh, OK.

[00:16:15] >> Raul Pereda. One of the seven players from Mexico playing here in the Mexico Open. And he's got fairway wood out for a second shot here.

[00:16:38] >> Hole location in the back right. Good looking at golf swing. Very balanced, very athletic. How about it? Hit it.

[00:16:59] >> Are you kidding me?

[00:17:00] >> Pereda.

[00:17:00] >> Are you kidding me?

[00:17:01] >> What?

[00:17:01] >> The hardest hole on the golf course. Just makes a two. Raul Pereda with an eagle. I don't even -- I don't think he knows he did it.

[00:17:14] >> He has no idea.

[00:17:15] >> He doesn't know. What a shot. Playing the hardest on the golf course, 511, into the wind, head cover for your second.

[00:17:35] >> And it goes in. It goes in. It went in. Pereda on eagle at 16.

[00:17:44] >> Did it go in? Did it go in?

[00:17:45] >> Yes, it did.

[00:17:45] >> Yeah, yeah, it went in. That's right. High five. Enjoy that one. Taylor Pendrith at the 5th. Hundred and ninety-one yard par 3.

[00:18:07] >>Yeah, that kind of front left hole location, downwind.

[00:18:16] >> That's a birdie for Pendrith.

[00:18:19] >> Fantastic.

[00:18:21] >> At the 9th, Brandon Wu, tied for second in this event last year. And Wu, able to chip in for a birdie.

[00:18:35] >> There, it is given to Emiliano, just that positivity that, hey, we've had a couple rough holes and nothing's going our way, but let's stick it in here at 18 and make a putt. I love that from a caddie, especially when things are feeling like they're headed south in the round.

[00:18:49] >> And Justin and I were talking to Darren earlier this week. This is just a one off for him because he just picked Emiliano up because basically in the parking lot this week because him and Montgomery ended up not coming down here, his normal bag. Oh, dinner's going to taste so good.

[00:19:09] >> What do we eat now, guys?

[00:19:15] >> The positive vibes helps.

[00:19:29] >> Did Rahm get any teach on that putt?

[00:19:32] >> Yeah. He's about 4 or 5 yards on the inside of that line. Maybe a touch, but definitely not his best pitch shot and -- but he's played these par 5s today so well. And that's the reason why he's been able to really can be only a couple under par today if it weren't for the par 5s.

[00:19:51] >> Yeah. Watching this putt, Smylie, it does tend to leak a little to the right.

[00:19:58] >> Start outside the left.

[00:20:02] >> Well, beyond this hole occasion, looks like there's a cliff. So I can imagine why as it loses its speed, guys have been missing to the right.

[00:20:15] >> Four-under on the par 5s today.

[00:20:17] >> Get in the hole.

[00:20:19] >> Make it 5-under. What a way to close out the round for Rahm,

[00:20:24] >> That was in the center of the hole the whole way. Started just on the left edge, early break.

[00:20:31][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:20:38] >> Rahm with a Round 2 68, it's him within striking distance after 36 holes. But Tony Finau, 64, gives him a one shot lead over Erik van Rooyen. Round 3 is next.

[00:20:59] >> We are on the beautiful Pacific Coast of Mexico, Vallarta, hosting this event for the second year in a row. It's a tournament that dates back to the 1940s, but it's just this second year the Mexico Open at Vidanta is an official PGA Tour event. Vidanta, Vallarta, the longest par 71 on tour this season. And the weather has been spectacular. Temperature in the 80s. And as we've seen all week, calm winds in the morning. It gusts up a little bit in the afternoon. Tony Finau, the 36 hole leader, and he gets off to a great start. At the opening hole today, his approach would lead to birdie. And Finau continues to lead. But the Masters Champion is the hottest player on the course right now, and the hottest player on the PGA Tour as well, Jon Rahm, what a front nine. He goes out in 29. And Jon Rahm has moved within two of the lead.

[00:22:05] >> And it looks like Rahm will be next.

[00:22:12] >> Andrew. we know this where -- it's a golf course where it rewards power up in location around these greens is a big deal too. And this is about as easy as he could hope for. He has intentions from here.

[00:22:24] >> Oh my god.

[00:22:25] >> And the birdie putt for Jon Rahm.

[00:22:32] >> He's done a great job this season of bouncing back off to air and shots. Simple read.

[00:22:36] >> And he goes again.

[00:22:38] >> And back at 10 here, third round, Mexico Open, Eric Cole has found that left bunker short.

[00:22:53] >> His dad Bobby would be proud of that one.

[00:22:57] >> We go to Jon Rahm.

[00:22:59] >> Does he attack this left flag?

[00:23:02] >> You have to be a brave man. Left flag --

[00:23:04] >> Was going with a draw. It's not as a stock shot.

[00:23:07] >> You work in that draw, lead up to the Masters, Frank. That's a dandy.

[00:23:15] >> The defending champion began the day six shots back, but he's been on an absolute tear so far this afternoon. Right from the start, a birdie at the opening hole.

[00:23:26] >> Bonus shot here from a long range.

[00:23:31] >> Then up at the par 4, third hole, this for birdie.

[00:23:34] >> He's got his eye in early, making two bombs there in the first three.

[00:23:40] >> Really his one mistake, big mistake, yesterday, a double bogey at the ninth hole. He's been able to get back on track today. This is his second at the long fourth hole.

[00:23:50] >> Now, difficult hole here, but not for Jon Rahm. His swing is on the money.

[00:23:57] >> This has been a fun hole all week, the drivable seventh hole. Today, 309 yards.

[00:24:03] >> Yeah, just 270 to the front. So trying to land a fairway wood on the surface, just like that, and creep up the ridge to that back portion.

[00:24:17] >> Great shot there. He would make birdie. And now, at 8.

[00:24:20] >> For me, that's one of the best swings that I've seen Jon Rahm make in the last 12 months. And we've spoken about what an incredible year that he's had winning seven times worldwide. But that right there, the balance, the poise, the synchronization, the ball flight controlling every single thing about that shot was so pure.

[00:24:38] >> And then, you just saw it, the birdie at 12, his seventh of the day. He is 7-under through 12 holes so far today.

[00:25:05] >> Watch the tempo of the stroke. I like the up tempo.

[00:25:08] >> It's almost a quick tap, isn't it? And a quick birdie.

[00:25:13] >> Rahm, one more birdie, it'll be a course record.

[00:25:20][ Applause ]

[00:25:24] >> Now, Tony Finau out with one of the many iterations of putting strokes he's used over the years. Seems to have settled on this one. Flight 906 just leaving.

[00:25:38] >> Doesn't want to get caught in the jet stream there on 10 green.

[00:25:42] >> Well, it's going to affect the putt, isn't it?

[00:25:43] >> Nine-o-four going on the tee.

[00:25:45] >> It's been to the airport.

[00:25:47] >> Almost no follow through. Kind of stabs at it.

[00:25:52] >> Well done.

[00:26:02] >> Werbylo's fourth shot at 15. What a way to save par.

[00:26:13] >> Twelve.

[00:26:16] >> Sprinkler heads in the way there, Colt.

[00:26:21] >> Yeah, it looks like he's going to go low. He's going to have to hammer this into the bank.

[00:26:26] >> Bounce it around him.

[00:26:27] >> Oh, yes.

[00:26:29] >> That is some kind of touch right there.

[00:26:31] >> Oh, that's amazing.

[00:26:33] >> Finau would go on to make that. Now, Bhatia hitting his third at 14. That's another birdie.

[00:26:53] >> Back 1 to 13, the par 3.

[00:26:55] >> What a difference drones make, isn't it? Golf courses looks so much more different now, little features. We should find Tony Finau, Colt, just off the back left.

[00:27:05] >> Yeah. Not much rough this week. But this one is sitting down a little bit. But after that chip shot on the last, Frank, this one should be pretty easy.

[00:27:14] >> He did you get these good lies in the past, but you got to be careful. You don't hit the ball too high in the clubface though because then you get a little less spin.

[00:27:22] >> And it can come out dead and you don't get the carry that you're looking for. He's got the blade open, trying to land it on the putting surface.

[00:27:35] >> Took that upstairs. Come on. Hello. Colt, you called it. What a two from Finau.

[00:27:45][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:27:58] >> Something good perhaps for van Rooyen is needed.

[00:28:02] >> Yes, he does, Frank. And how about it?

[00:28:04][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:28:11] >> Jon Rahm, a chance for his 10th birdie of the round.

[00:28:16] >> That one-two rhythm where the stroke has been very much on point, watch I stick to the finish.

[00:28:34] >> Love to see Tony there. Sign a few autographs for the kids while he's waiting. Why not? How cool is this round?

[00:28:40] >> Yeah.

[00:28:40] >> Neat round.

[00:28:40] >> Very, very nice. Well, you know.

[00:28:50] >> Fifteen.

[00:28:50] >> And Bhatia, you saw his approach during our eye on the course. And he capitalizes with birdie.

[00:28:56][ Applause ]

[00:29:01] >> Here we are at 17 with Jon Rahm. Difficult par 3.

[00:29:04] >> Always one of the harder holes each day, depending on the wind.

[00:29:08] >> Down, yeah. And these pars, they call this a grande par 3.

[00:29:11] >> Tiny green.

[00:29:12] >> This is all over it as well.

[00:29:15] >> Hit a great show here on Thursday, made birdie.

[00:29:17][ Applause ]

[00:29:23] >> Two-sixty-two for Tony.

[00:29:26] >> He's got that strong 3-iron out.

[00:29:30] >> He's aimed at that water trying to turn it back in on the wind.

[00:29:35] >> Where it took off, it better keep turning.

[00:29:37] >> This is dangerous. Not anymore.

[00:29:42][ Applause ]

[00:29:47] >> Thanks. Thanks.

[00:29:52] >> Thirty-six feet for birdie.

[00:29:55] >> Make this eagle the last for 59.

[00:29:58] >> Are you calling it?

[00:30:01] >> I'm hoping for it.

[00:30:07] >> It's a good speed. It's a good speed. Rahm with a two at 17, goes to 17-under, and 10-under for the day. Can he make three up the last, Trevor?

[00:30:26] >> Sixteen.

[00:30:26] >> After that great second shot from Bhatia, that is a rare birdie here at 16.

[00:30:53] >> A putt for 60 for Rahm.

[00:30:55] >> Yeah, it was a good putt too.

[00:31:06] >> So three of the last four holes, he's misread, missed to the left. But what a spectacular round of golf. Twenty-five putts on that round when just missing one green in regulation.

[00:31:18][ Applause ]

[00:31:30] >> Flat as anything.

[00:31:31] >> Now, Finau.

[00:31:32] >> And we've seen him hit some beautiful draws with his irons. I expect him to do that here with 6-iron from 191, hold it up against that left to right breeze.

[00:31:47] >> It's a little draw to spike the week left hand.

[00:31:51] >> Sets it steeply on the backswing, then drops it underneath.

[00:32:00] >> Oh, he's got this one turning right at it.

[00:32:02] >> Get in the hole.

[00:32:03] >> Gorgeous shot.

[00:32:06][ Applause ]

[00:32:13] >> I still think it's more than right edge.

[00:32:17] >> Normally hit these with too much speed. He's kind of drips it in there.

[00:32:22] >> That is a clinical three.

[00:32:31] >> Let's go, Tony.

[00:32:32] >> We'll go to 18.

[00:32:32] >> And Bhatia in the fairway going for this par 5.

[00:32:37] >> Trying to hoist it way up into the air, see if we can land it on and keep it on. From 208.

[00:32:46] >> Yes.

[00:32:46] >> Oh, yeah.

[00:32:47] >> What a shot.

[00:32:54] >> Eagle putt for Bhatia. Yes. Just the second eagle of the day at 18.

[00:33:03][ Applause ] And here's how they got here. Missed for a two shot lead.

[00:33:28] >> Well done, Tony Finau. Runner up a year ago. And he enters the final round tomorrow with a two shot lead on Jon Rahm and Akshay Bhatia.

[00:33:41] >> The Mexico Open at Vidanta is setting up to be a duel between stars Tony Finau, World number 1 Jon Rahm, and young phenom Akshay Bhatia. Who will claim the victory in Mexico? We'll find out next.

[00:33:56] >> Being inside these ropes is a roller coaster. A constant battle to push yourself harder. And harder. And harder.

[00:34:08] >> Good night.

[00:34:09] >> It's an endless pursuit to be great.

[00:34:14] >> Are you serious?

[00:34:16] >> Inside these ropes, there's no slowing down.

[00:34:19] >> And he's done it.

[00:34:22] >> Because to be the best, you must be the best.

[00:34:32] >> It's another picture perfect day on the Pacific Coast of Mexico. Vallarta, a resort city on beautiful Banderas Bay. And less than one mile inland, you'll find Vidanta Vallarta Golf Course where the stage is set for a thrilling finish at the Mexico Open. It's the final round of the Mexico Open at Vidanta. And the 54 hole leader Tony Finau opens the day with a birdie at the first hole. Brandon Wu, 26 years old, for eagle at the par-5 6th. And he's only one shot off the lead. How about the 21-year-old Akshay Bhatia? Looking for his first PGA Tour, a victory of beautiful roll of a birdie at the 4th. And the defending champion, Jon Rahm with his third at the par-5 6th. It would lead to birdie as Rahm tries to go back to back in Mexico. Here's a look at the current leaderboard. Tony Finau just made a birdie at the 7th hole. He leads Wu by one. Rahm and Bhatia are three behind. It's the final round.

[00:36:00] >> Rahm splashing it out there, seemed like a decent lie, and it's a beautiful shot.

[00:36:03] >> Rahm would save par.

[00:36:04] >> Has to leave that sand there. He can't brush that away if he's off of the green.

[00:36:20] >> I don't think it should affect it too much, but pretty surprising for him to have this left for par after that tee shot. I would have lost a lot of money if you'd have told me all three guys, we're going to miss the green after those tee shots.

[00:36:31] >> Yeah, no kidding.

[00:36:36] >> Especially after perfect drive, great angle, not much breeze.

[00:36:39] >> Big putt here.

[00:36:42] >> It should move pretty good from his left to right.

[00:36:46] >> Yeah, it's not a putt he can be aggressive with. What I save for Finau at the 8th. He remains 22-under and two in front of Brandon Wu. That was excellent. After a poor bunker shot to keep the momentum going, Colt, that was huge.

[00:37:17] >> What a silly game this is.

[00:37:22] >> To 10.

[00:37:23] >> Just off that right side of the green is Wu.

[00:37:25] >> Ball down in this this paspalum rough. And it's quite spiny, Frank. Sticky stuff.

[00:37:31] >> It's chipped fairly well this week. It is 9th green.

[00:37:39] >> I think this is a big few minutes right here, Frank, because you've got Wu looking at bogey or more. Tony's got this birdie putt. He could have a huge cushion here walking to that 10th tee.

[00:37:51] >> Make it totally different too the way in which you would play the back nine, sure.

[00:37:59] >> Well, I think when you got world number one behind you, Frank, you keep your foot on the gas.

[00:38:03] >> Agreed.

[00:38:04] >> Second after this putt, going to break to his right.

[00:38:11] >> OK. Good looking putt. Had a chance to hole way.

[00:38:17] >> Three-under on his first nine holes today. Tony Finau in search of career win number 6 on the PGA Tour.

[00:38:32] >> Trevor, it always amazes me with Jon Rahm, whether the putt's 4 feet or 40 feet, if it doesn't go in, he's just shocked.

[00:38:37] >> He is. He can't believe it. There's a lot of hands on hips, gives it that glare, muttering to himself. But, you know, early on in his career, we used to give him a hard time about it and say that, you know, he needs to change that if he wants to get to the highest level, but we weren't correct. It's actually the opposite. That's how he spurs himself on. He's a fiery character. You know, that's how he is. He stays true to that. He's an authentic guy. And that type of mentality works really well for him.

[00:39:10] >> Whatever he's doing, just keep doing that. It's working out all right.

[00:39:15] >> Two birdies in his first nine holes.

[00:39:18] >> Going to need to get that putter warmed up. Only made 15 feet of putts in that front nine.

[00:39:26] >> To 10.

[00:39:27] >> Well, Trevor, you talked about the swing, so we desperately need this now.

[00:39:34] >> He has given it the full Monty, Frank. Looked at this from every which way. Putting strokes been well organized this week. Just too much speed.

[00:39:46] >> You could very well rue this 10th hole come the end of the day. Now, nine.

[00:39:51] >> And Bhatia for bogey. All right, that's his first bogey since the 8th hole in yesterday's third round. And Emiliano Grillo has this putt for birdie. Trying to get the 15-under par.

[00:40:17] >> Five-under for this round so far.

[00:40:19] >> How about it?

[00:40:21][ Applause ]

[00:40:30] >> We see the water all the way down the right side. Just one more sort of thing on Tony, if he's going to miss with the long clubs, Trevor, it's right with the driver. But then, generally, tends to draw the iron shots.

[00:40:41] >> Correct.

[00:40:41] >> So perhaps that has something to do with it.

[00:40:59] >> Similar distance to yesterday, Colt.

[00:41:02] >> Yeah, I got him at just under t240 yards. But we mentioned him and Jon playing a lot and practicing a lot back home together. You know, Tony's coach Boyd Summerhays thinks a lot of the reason for their success is these two push each other. They're out there, they're great friends, but they're extremely competitive.

[00:41:25] >> One yard.

[00:41:25] >> Three-iron, 3-iron here at the 10th. Good looking.

[00:41:29] >> That's an excellent.

[00:41:31][ Applause ]

[00:41:39] >> Gordon for birdie at 11.

[00:41:40] >> Come on.

[00:41:42] >> Come on, get in.

[00:41:43] >> Yeah.

[00:41:44][ Applause ]

[00:41:57] >> As we head back to 10.

[00:41:59] >> A good test for Finau here.

[00:42:01] >> Yeah, he didn't lose his turn. This every bit of 6 feet should move a little bit to his right.

[00:42:09] >> Beautifully done.

[00:42:10][ Applause ]

[00:42:18] >> Let's go up to 12.

[00:42:20] >> And here is Wu who finished tied for second a year ago, his third.

[00:42:24] >> Walked away all the way up to the green, get a bead on the landing spots.

[00:42:27] >> Wu would make birdie.

[00:42:35] >> To 17.

[00:42:36] >> Harry Hall, 25-year-old Englishman. Oh, and he's having a good day. It's Harry. He's 5-under now, 12-under total. Big putt here to try and extend the lead.

[00:42:58] >> And not too difficult. Just outside the hole on the right.

[00:43:01] >> Yeah.

[00:43:03] >> There's Finau.

[00:43:06] >> Finau, four in front.

[00:43:07][ Applause ]

[00:43:16] >> Now, Wu on the tee at 13. That's left for birdie.

[00:43:39] >> He puts this on. This could be a statement shot at the 12th. Already up by four.

[00:43:50] >> Boy, he hammered.

[00:43:51] >> Busted right though.

[00:43:55] >> It was just right of the hole.

[00:44:03] >> Let's go up to 13.

[00:44:05] >> Let's see if we can get to 20-under. It would be second all alone.

[00:44:11] >> That's a putt that looks like it could go either way. Definitely uphill.

[00:44:16] >> Just a hand --

[00:44:17] >> It's straight.

[00:44:18][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:44:26] >> Up to 14.

[00:44:27] >> And this is Eric Cole. Remember, he had trouble here yesterday. Hit it over the green in the water at 11. This for birdie. And he makes it. So Eric Cole, he's right there. Remember, he finished second and last in the playoff at the Honda this year.

[00:44:42] >> Finau for birdie.

[00:44:52] >> Tell you what, this goes right here, it can make things a little more comfortable on the way in.

[00:45:01] >> It's that speed I was talking about on short putts. Gosh, that was so similar to putt at 17 yesterday.

[00:45:09] >> Like a broken record on these par 3s, it's all about the flight, right, coming along.

[00:45:22] >> You hear Adam just talking about the flight to this broken record on the par 3s, all about the flight.

[00:45:30] >> Yeah, it's definitely blowing hard enough back into their face.

[00:45:34] >> Yeah. Well, I mean this one, he's obviously got up in the air with a quite a bit of spin that did a lot more to it. This one, it's just got to be -- it's got to be very easy one of those. It's a feel shot.

[00:45:43] >> Yeah.

[00:45:43] >> So --

[00:45:43] >> That's why I like it.

[00:45:44] >> Yeah. Love it, man. Just feel it out. See it land just short of it there.

[00:45:48] >> Sounds like he's going one extra club, Colt.

[00:45:51] >> Haven't got the signal yet, but I do like them talking about being just short of it because, Frank, anything past and right of it will feed off the green,

[00:45:58] >> Yeah, that's why I think it's green lie. Really don't have too many options.

[00:46:01] >> This is 7-iron.

[00:46:03] >> Oh, two more. Better chip is.

[00:46:09] >> Is it all right?

[00:46:13] >> Pretty good.

[00:46:15] >> Good shot.

[00:46:18][ Applause ]

[00:46:26] >> We don't see him come up this far short from 152 very often, Frank.

[00:46:31] >> That's tasty.

[00:46:32][ Applause ]

[00:46:40] >> Rahm now for birdie 13.

[00:46:52] >> What a putt.

[00:46:57] >> Twenty-under for Rahm.

[00:46:59][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:47:04] >> At least, it's been academic for Tony so far.

[00:47:09] >> Should be no problem. Just over 3 feet.

[00:47:20] >> The lead is three.

[00:47:26] >> Colt, he got a decent lie, got a good break.

[00:47:30] >> He did. It rattled around in the trees and dropped down.

[00:47:33] >> Two-fifty-nine all the way to the hole.

[00:47:36] >> Beautiful.

[00:47:37] >> That's coming out low and on a very nice line.

[00:47:40] >> Oh, that's a bullet.

[00:47:41] >> Sit right there.

[00:47:43] >> What a great shot.

[00:47:44][ Applause ]

[00:47:53] >> Much easier shot for Finau, though. Really flat lot, plenty of green to work with.

[00:48:02] >> Boy, is it some good pitches these last three holes? That was a lovely shot.

[00:48:06] >> He would make that for birdie, moving to 24-under par. Now, Wu for par at 15. And he remains at 20-under.

[00:48:19][ Applause ]

[00:48:27] >> What do you see here, Colt?

[00:48:29] >> Must make, but not much in it. If anything, I see it going to his left a little bit. Just got to make sure you give it enough speed.

[00:48:38] >> He was frustrated on this green yesterday. He said he misread a putt at 15. I'd be very surprised if he leaves this shot.

[00:48:47] >> Not many frustrated 61s out there.

[00:48:55] >> Must make and he's got it.

[00:48:58] >> Not over yet.

[00:48:58] >> OK.

[00:48:59][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:49:08] >> Grillo finishing up at 18. A birdie to wrap up the day.

[00:49:17][ Cheering and Applause ]

[00:49:26] >> With Finau's third here at 16. And that is a very good bunker shot at the right time.

[00:49:33][ Applause ]

[00:49:39] >> Let's see if we can get some more Rahm magic here.

[00:49:42] >> Oh, he's trying.

[00:49:45] >> Get in.

[00:49:46] >> Wow.

[00:49:48][ Applause ]

[00:49:54] >> Bhatia has tapped in for his four to remain at 17-under. Now, I mean, it's 6 feet left for Finau.

[00:50:01] >> To keep that three shot lead.

[00:50:07] >> And, Colt, we talked about the maturation of a player. You know, Tony was renowned for his length, his iron play cleaned up, but you could argue his short game has certainly stood up well so far this week.

[00:50:19] >> No doubt. And this club right here in particular, I know he didn't make many yesterday.

[00:50:24] >> Keep the speed up on this so it's going to crank left across the hole.

[00:50:29] >> Huge.

[00:50:31] >> That's great up and down at the right moment. Didn't allow any oxygen to go to Jon Rahm. Just the fall for Jon Rahm. Doesn't gain anything over Finau.

[00:50:50] >> We move ahead to the 17th green.

[00:50:54] >> This is one you don't practice very often.

[00:51:02] >> Beautifully played, Jon Rahm.

[00:51:04] >> That is so good from there.

[00:51:07][ Applause ]

[00:51:14] >> Hasn't he chipped well? A couple of great chips at 13 and 14, and another one here. Bunker shot's good.

[00:51:27] >> Disappointing bogey. Tony now with a four shot lead. This for par.

[00:51:47] >> This would make that walk up 18 much more enjoyable.

[00:51:53] >> Yeah. Back to back holes, great up and down when he really needed it.

[00:51:57] >> Finau takes the walk around the lake to the last with a four shot lead over Rahm and Wu.

[00:52:03] >> Nothing crazy here, just something on the dance floor.

[00:52:08] >> Tony's whole family waiting for him at the 18th green. They've been here all week.

[00:52:13][ Applause ]

[00:52:20] >> The defending champion returns for a second place finish at the Mexico Open at Vidanta. But Tony outlasts number 1, and it's a Finau family fiesta in Mexico.

[00:52:40] >> This concludes the PGA Tour's coverage of the Mexico Open at Vidanta.