

2025 PGA TOUR: The CUT #14
International Script

COLD OPEN

TONY FINAU: Laurel, we meet again.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yes, sir. So I heard you were throwing out the first pitch at the Astros game.

TONY FINAU: Friday.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: That's so exciting.

TONY FINAU: It is exciting.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Huge Astros fan, yeah.

TONY FINAU: I've never thrown a first pitch, so...

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Well, you're gonna do great.

TONY FINAU: I hope so!

WELCOME TO PGA TOUR THE CUT

TONY FINAU MEETS TEXAS CHILDREN'S PATIENT LAUREL BATCHELDER

TONY FINAU: Happy to walk with you for a hole.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yeah.

TONY FINAU: If you're up for it.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yes, please, that'd be great.

TONY FINAU: Let's do it.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Just smoked.

TONY FINAU: What's your low score of your career so far?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Low score is 70.

TONY FINAU: Nice. Wow, so you're good?!

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yes, sir.

TONY FINAU: You're really good.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: 10 handicap.

TONY FINAU: Nice. So you know, sorry to hear about the cancer you had at such a young age.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yeah.

TONY FINAU: I'd love to learn from you and draw some strength if there's anything that you would like to share.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Absolutely, so definitely resilient. It was 54 weeks, multiple rounds of chemo and radiation, multiple surgeries, but for me, at least, I've learned just don't let anything get you down and there's always a way to come back from anything and even, like staying in touch with Texas Children's over the years and all the help that they've done for my health and all of that, it's just been absolutely amazing.

TONY FINAU: Incredible and are you cancer free now?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: I am. Yes, sir.

TONY FINAU: Amazing!

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yeah.

TONY FINAU: Way to go.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Well, thank you.

TONY FINAU: Well, we can go inside the ropes. We don't gotta hang outside.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Sorry.

So you're from Utah?

TONY FINAU: That's right, born and raised right in Salt Lake City.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Awesome.

TONY FINAU: You ever been?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yeah, multiple times. We go skiing every year.

TONY FINAU: Oh yeah!

LAUREL BATCHELDER: We have a house in Red Ledges, and so we go there summer and play as well.

TONY FINAU: Oh wow. Yeah, have you ever played the par three course at Red Ledges?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: I have, yeah.

TONY FINAU: It's pretty cool, right?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: First hole in one there.

TONY FINAU: Really? Which hole? I know it well. Do you remember which hole it was on?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: No, I don't. It was during COVID.

TONY FINAU: That's awesome, though.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: I think it was three.

TONY FINAU: Perfect. I was hoping it didn't reach this bunker. Now we can give it a go.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Perfect.

TONY FINAU: Little right. Chip and a putt mix.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yep, up and down.

TONY FINAU: Get us a bird. That's right.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: I'm heading to the University of Tennessee to study nursing.

TONY FINAU: Oh, you too? Wow. Congratulations.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Oh, thank you.

TONY FINAU: UT!

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yeah.

TONY FINAU: Go Vols, huh?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yes, sir, go Vols.

TONY FINAU: What kind of piqued your interest in going to nursing school?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: I mean, really just my history.

TONY FINAU: Yeah, I figured.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: I've even just with doctors' appointments have always seen like nurses' hands in everything and so just wanted to go be a part of that, somewhere.

TONY FINAU: A little too soft.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: That was awesome. Talk about a dream come true. He was just so down to Earth and just so easy to talk to and it was just so inspirational to meet someone that you've looked up to a majority of your life, and have them be so kind and welcoming and just fun to talk to.

NATS: Turn, turn, ohhh.

TONY FINAU: Yeah, it's incredibly inspiring to meet Laurel and to hear about her story and her resilience. I draw so much strength and inspiration from individuals like Laurel that have to deal with cancer at such a young age.

All right!

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Thank you so much.

TONY FINAU: Hopefully you can read my handwriting.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: I can thank you.

TONY FINAU: You're welcome. Thank you, it was nice to meet you.

LAUREL BATCHELDER: So nice to meet you.

TONY FINAU: Maybe we'll see you later this week?

LAUREL BATCHELDER: Yes, sir, absolutely.

TONY FINAU: All right, be well.

ISAIAH SALINDA MEETS TEXAS CHILDREN'S PATIENT ALEK AVILA

ISAIAH SALINDA: Hey, what's up, man?

ALEK AVILA: What's up?

ISAIAH SALINDA: What's your name?

ALEK AVILA: Alek.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Alek, Isaiah, nice to meet you.

ALEK AVILA: Nice to meet you.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Let's do some putting over there, huh?

ALEK AVILA: Let's do some putting.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Let's do it. Do you play a lot?

ALEK AVILA: I play recreationally once in a while. I unfortunately tore my ACL twice and my meniscus.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Really, how'd you do that?

ALEK AVILA: Playing soccer, but led me to pursue the medical field.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Oh, awesome.

ALEK AVILA: Becoming an orthopedic surgeon.

ISAIAH SALINDA: That's amazing. That's amazing. I applaud you. That's awesome.

ALEK AVILA: Thank you.

ISAIAH SALINDA: That's really cool.

ALEK AVILA: After the first injury, I was very negative towards the whole situation, thinking I would never be able to play better than I used to play. After I started practicing, I got better

after I tore it again, I knew, since I had done it already, I could do it one more time. Then I healed, and now I can play better than I used to. I had to get through it if I wanted to keep doing what I loved.

ISAIAH SALINDA: What's your putting like, how would you describe your putting?

ALEK AVILA: I'd say, I struggle.

ISAIAH SALINDA: You struggle?

ALEK AVILA: I struggle getting the right distance. (Yeah) Being able to measure your power.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yes, that's the most important thing in putting. That's the most important thing in putting is speed. Obviously, you want to kind of read the putt get a feel for kind of where it's going to break. I'm kind of just, I like to pick a spot in between me and the hole that I kind of want to roll it through (Okay) and then I'll go in there and try and just try and just replicate the practice strokes that I'm just made.

So that's, that's pretty good. I mean, I left it, I left it, you know, a foot and a half short, but the line was perfect. I just hit it a little soft.

So you kind of saw what mine did and then take a couple practice strokes, yeah, while looking at the hole. So you're just like, taking it back here, going through to there. Try to take it back the same distance and go through the same distance. Yeah, just try and keep it a nice constant speed. Yeah, it's a lot better.

ALEK AVILA: Yeah, way better.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Let's try one more.

ALEK AVILA: One more.

ISAIAH SALINDA: You're getting closer. I think you just gotta just slow it down a little bit going through. There you go. That's perfect. It's better than mine.

ALEK AVILA: I saw that curve that you're talking about.

ISAIAH SALINDA: There you go. That was nice.

ALEK AVILA: Thank you.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yeah, good putt.

Kids anywhere and everywhere who are dealing with whatever medical condition they're dealing with, I want to be someone who, you know, they can look up to and be just like a positive, positive influence on them and, you know, like Alec, you know, he's played soccer, and now he's, you know, pursuing becoming a orthopedic surgeon, which is incredible.

So it's funny story. I like to name my putters. I named my putter Aisha. I think it's just kind of funny and it you get like, I don't know, you want to be close to your putter. Want to have a good relationship with your putter, you know I'm saying?

ALEK AVILA: Yeah I get that.

ISAIAH SALINDA: I think if you like, name your putter, that makes it a little more personal.

ALEK AVILA: Yeah, it's like your car.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Exactly like a lot of people name their car. They name whatever. So I decided to name my putter.

ALEK AVILA: I had a deep connection with my putter.

ISAIAH SALINDA: It could be anything. It could be like your favorite, like...

ALEK AVILA: It would be like, Stitch.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Stitch?

ALEK AVILA: Stitch.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Stitch, I love it. Like Lilo and Stitch?

ALEK AVILA: Like Lilo and Stitch.

ISAIAH SALINDA: All right, I love it, honestly, perfect.

ALEK AVILA: Yeah. Stitch

ISAIAH SALINDA: Hell yeah, I love it.

Alec, it was great to meet you.

ALEK AVILA: Great to meet you.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Best of luck in all your future endeavors and yeah, just make the most out of every opportunity you get.

ALEK AVILA: Yes sir, thank you!

ISAIAH SALINDA: You got it, great to meet you.

ALEK AVILA: Great to meet you.

PADRIG HARRINGTON WHAT'S IN THE BAG

ANNC: Padrig Harrington. I don't know about you, but he makes me want to play golf. What he puts out there on social media, the tips and everything else and just the intensity and the passion that he still has.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: This would be a pretty standard setup for me during the week. I always carry two drivers, not in the tournament, but I warm up with a backup driver, because I don't want to crack the face. So, I've always got two drivers on the go, because if they crack, you know, you got to have a backup there, so.

Then I carry a very strong three wood. It's an old Taylor Made Q-10 like that's 12 degrees. So, it's a 2 wood, you know, it says 3 on it, but it's a 2 wood. Another old club, 5 wood in here. As you can see, the beauty here is, I use whatever clubs I want. You know, so some of these are, are two/three years old. My driver's a model, two models ago.

Then we get into the irons. Pretty straightforward, you know, like most players, I've got a bit of a... bit of help when it comes to the 3 iron. It's a staff model three iron, but it's got the cavity back to get the ball up in the air. There's no 4 iron in my bag, so I have a gap. So my five iron, I go 3 iron... 5 iron.

Brand new set of irons this week. They're the exact same irons I've been using for the staff model forged. I've been using these for different versions of them for about three years now. So, I put a brand-new set in, 5 through pitching wedge of the standard staff model set forged.

Pretty straightforward. I have a 52-degree bent to 50, I have a 58 bent is 57 and I have a 64 so that's why I don't carry the 4 iron. I have an extra wedge in here at the top of the bag. The gapping is okay. It works, works for me. I know it's a big enough gap I can hit. I've got a number of shots. I can hit a half shot, three quarter shot. I can hit a half chip. I can go down the shaft. I can narrow my stance, that's a great way of taking some distance off your wedges, just narrow your stance. I have a 2-ball putter. Interesting, I changed putter this year, so I don't change putter very much. So, I went for the technology. What's interesting is I haven't putt as well. This says it works better. So it'll be interesting to see how long that stays, or whether I go back to the other one.

MIN WOO LEE WINS THE TEXAS CHILDREN'S HOUSTON OPEN

ANNC: At one point it was a five shot lead for Min Woo Lee, he now has a one-shot lead. He's trying to win for the first time in his PGA TOUR career.

A par will win it for Min Woo Lee.

Well, we just found out that Min Woo Lee's got the right stuff! That's the kind of personality and energy that this young Aussie brings.

And all that promise is realized, Min Woo Lee is a PGA TOUR champion!

MIN WOO LEE: They always say, you know, the six inches between your ears, I think that was a big part of this week. I always felt like I had the assets to win, it was just can you do it mentally. I only won by one and that's, it's tough. I think just everything aligned this week and I'm so proud to be the winner of the trophy.

WIN WOO LEE'S WIN MOVES HIM TO A CAREER BEST 6 SPOTS OUTSIDE THE COMCAST BUSINESS TOUR TOP 10, WHICH CELEBRATES CONSISTENT AND RELIABLE PERFORMANCE.

MIN WOO LEE: Props to the guys that win week in, week out. I mean, it is, it is very hard just again, so proud. Yeah, let's keep doing it.

FEDEXCUP STANDINGS

IN THE FEDEXCUP STANDINGS, LEE JUMPS TO 16TH, HIS HIGHEST POSITION EVER, WHILE RUNNER-UP SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER INCHES INTO THE TOP 10 FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS SEASON.

MULLIGAN MOMENTS

THE CUT PRESENTS... MULLIGAN MOMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH.

ANNC: All right now, Justin Lower, he's at even par. Oh he flew the green! Wow. That's a big-time mistake.

Whoa, look at that little low follow through, trying to skip it back in there. Oh yeah! How about that? Justin Lower a par the hard way

ANNC: He just has no chance to get it anywhere near the hole. That was a terrible lie.

Still a terrible lie not much to work with for Bud. Are you kidding me?! What a four that was! From nowhere!

ANNC: That's got some heat on it. Look at the heat. Look at the change in grain and slope. That's gotta stop. Oh, it's gonna be right against the collar.

We'll see if Hideki can save par here. Did he hit it though, oh go in! There we go. The par streak continues for Hideki!

ANNC: Here's Kizzire. Oh man. So the wedge stays in the hand of Kizzire.

Ohhhh! An exclamation point for Kizzire to finish of his round.

VALERO TEXAS OPEN LOOKAHEAD

ANNC: Beautiful place here, the Oaks Course, the roots of golf in San Antonio. You get off the fairway here at TPC San Antonio and it can be a rugged ride. The Texas hill country meandering its way all around this golf course. Keep it in the fairway, and you can score.

From 87 yards ... picture perfect as JJ Spaun drops it in for the eagle!

JORDAN SPIETH: The golf course here is really challenging. I mean it's very rare you get to play it without a 15-mile an hour wind.

It's a blast to play in the state of Texas, I've always really, really enjoyed that extra support.

ANNC: In the state of Texas, Jordan Spieth breaks the winless drought!

COREY CONNERS: Ballstriking's a big strength in my game, and I feel like there's so many holes out here I just see my shot shape fitting into.

ANNC: He's one of the best ball strikers in the world.

Valero Texas Open double! What a ball striking clinic!

AKSHAY BHATIA: This golf course is awesome. It's hard, stressful and you just feel like you never are safe.

ANNC: And Bhatia's a winner again, on a wild Sunday at TPC San Antonio.

DEFENDING CHAMPION AKSHAY BHATIA RETURNS TO SAN ANTONIO IN STRONG FORM, WITH THREE TOP-10 FINISHES IN HIS LAST FOUR STARTS, INCLUDING A TIE FOR THIRD IN THE PLAYERS, AND HIS SOLID PLAY IS NO SURPRISE GIVE HIS ATHLETIC GOLF SWING.

AKSHAY BHATIA SWING THEORY

MARK IMMELMAN: Fresh faced, dynamic, affable and talented, Akshay Bhatia has seemed destined for success at the highest level.

ANNC: Bhatia has got some amazing speed. He's so limber. He's got a 130-degree shoulder turn. The amount of flexibility in his core and midsection, it's amazing. Generate a lot of power that way.

MARK IMMELMAN: Akshay Bhatia is a tall man; he's 6'1". He's slightly built, yet strong. I mean, he weighs only 130 pounds, but he can pummel it off the tee because he has this very dynamic golf swing. One thing you can really count on with him, though, is he will hit the left-handed fade that starts down the right and bends back to the left. So, he's setting up lines that are looking down the right-hand side – and notice how the clubface is looking in that direction too – so he can create a swing path that goes in that direction so he can swing to the right side of the golf ball, creating that fade spin.

You will see a lot of tells with Akshay Bhatia that say fade when he swings. At address, plugged in, powerful, dynamic and ready to go. So, as the club moves away, you'll see an early move here in the torso. How those hips wind up, they almost guide the movement. If we stop him right there, notice how the club shaft is sort of looking in the same direction as where the body lines were, but he's creating huge width, huge extension. Look at the arms here. Check out this position and remember that for the future. See, how left elbow is higher than right. Left elbow, his trail elbows, almost fully extended. So, he's creating maximum width there and it's how the slightly built man creates his speed.

From there we continue up to the top. Now watch the shaft plane differential. I'll draw this so you can see it. So here's him halfway back. Shaft plane with the driver almost standing straight up. Middle winding up. Look at that stretch and now from there he continues to go, as the middle continues to turn, he settles into that hip turn. The big reach in the arms and up at the top there I mean, look at that – stretching hips, full wind up pressure shifted in the feet, eyes on the back of the golf ball. That is some mobility and that is some flexibility there but wait, into transition, watch how the lower body leads. That's the cue and as the arms shallow down, remember where the shaft plane was going back. Look at where it is right now. It's almost like if he was on a clockface, he's going from about 12:30 to about 2:30. It's a beautiful shallowing move. Now he continues to unwind. See how the legs now begin to press up underneath him. He's still creating that spine and shoulder tilt and right here as the club lands up over the hands, that is incredible stuff. This trail foot's completely off the

ground, the lead foot is plugged into the ground, his hips almost looking at the target yet his chest is square to the golf ball. That is fantastic. Dynamic stuff.

Now as he begins to line up contact, watch how the clubface releases and swings outside of the golf ball. There's the fade path set up. Face outside the golf ball, body opening up. Watch that trail elbow now how it goes from bent by his side to full extension, as the club now will swing across him on that sort of a line. So, swings to the right side of the golf ball, that's his fade move. Eyes are down. Bodies up. Chest is tilted over. Look at that side bend. My goodness gracious, this hurts just to watch him do it but he is an athlete.

He's a classic fader of the golf ball, but does so in a very athletic, very powerful manner.

ANNC: Akshay right down the middle, no curve whatsoever. Let's see how far it gets up there. It'll be interesting to see if he actually wants to send it up onto the green.

Really goes down and chases with that trail shoulder. Uses the shoulder and the rotation of his body to just hold the face off and that's the result especially with the speed that Akshay can generate.

J.J. SPAUN FEATURE

ANNC: Big putt for birdie for J.J. Spaun, chance to increase the lead. Got it! Another clutch putt. And now the lead is two.

J.J. SPAUN: I was playing really poorly. I was going through a lot of things with my health, but I was able to kind of claw my way out of it, get treated the way I needed to and it felt really good kind of coming from such a low place to into the winner's circle.

ANNC: This is gonna be the first win for J.J. Spaun, coming at the Valero Texas Open!

J.J. SPAUN: I was just super grateful to show to myself that, you know, anything's possible and as long as I put my mind to it and commit to my craft I can always be happy with whatever ends up happening.

ANNC: J.J. Spaun, who really has seen his game kind of get back to where when he won his lone event. He says he's just feel like he's been freed up to make a run after playing well the last few weeks.

J.J. SPAUN: I just feel like every time I'm teeing it up, I'm just super lucky and grateful to, to have that opportunity and I got nothing to lose. So, I feel like that's the motto we've been going with these last few weeks, and it's worked out pretty well for me.

ANNC: He's been really consistent this year and it's been because of his elite ball striking. Super consistent.

J.J. SPAUN: My approach to the green has been pretty solid this year. I've kind of tightened up proximity. The more greens you hit, it's harder to make bogeys and you got more opportunities for birdies. So, I think that's kind of what's been putting me in these high finishes.

ANNC: Even though this is a bitterly disappointing playoff for J.J. Spaun, what he can get out of this week is immeasurable.

J.J. SPAUN: Although I haven't won, I would say that I'm playing better consistent golf, and hopefully my best golf still ahead of me. All I can do is kind of go about my days, how I've been the last three or four months, and just try to put myself in position to win golf tournaments on Sunday.

ANNC: He's gonna climb into the top 30 in the world rankings and that is gonna help him get into some of the majors to come, so he continues to build on his career.

IN 10 STARTS THIS SEASON, SPAUN HAS RECORDED 4 TOP-15 FINISHES, INCLUDING A PAIR OF RUNNER-UPS. NOW SITTING AT 28TH IN THE OFFICAL WORLD GOLF RANKING, THE TOUR VETERAN IS SET TO MAKE HIS SECOND CAREER START AT THE MASTERS, WHERE HE FINISHED T23 IN 2022.

J.J. SPAUN: I'm super excited to return. Last time it was a bit of a chaotic moment, kind of winning the week before to get in and it was tough because I felt like I couldn't really look forward to it because I was so elated and happy with winning my first TOUR event the day before and then now it's like, okay, now you're off to Augusta.

Although I had a great turnout, great event. I really would like to not be so stressed out getting there. Definitely gonna get there early and do the par three contest. We didn't get to do that. The weather kind of ruined that moment for us but yeah, super excited to get there and, and hopefully soak it all in this time.