

A1 – COLD OPEN

THE PGA TOUR IS BACK IN 2026, SHOWCASING A POWERHOUSE LINEUP OF ESTABLISHED ICONS AND RISING TALENTS, LAUNCHING THE FEDEXCUP REGULAR SEASON WITH OPENING DRIVE AT THE SONY OPEN IN HAWAII.

A2 – THE CUT TITLES

WELCOME TO PGA TOUR THE CUT.

A3 – NICK TAYLOR MINI

NICK TAYLOR HAS A KNACK FOR PLAYOFF DRAMATICS. AT THE 2025 SONY OPEN IN HAWAII, HE CAPTURED HIS 5TH CAREER PGA TOUR VICTORY ... AND HIS 3RD STRAIGHT WIN IN A PLAYOFF. BUT THAT WINNING MOMENT COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT AN UNFORGETTABLE MOMENT ON THE 72ND HOLE.

ANNC: Taylor, dumps it home at No.18! After the short misses for birdie to get in at 16-under. |

NICK TAYLOR: The chip-in on No. 18 was awesome. In that situation, I think I was, all I was thinking was hole-it because I felt like par or birdie wasn't going to change a whole lot with Nico having a really good birdie chance there.

ANNC: It just got wilder at Waialae. Unbelievable finish for Nick Taylor.

AFTER MAKING A CLUTCH 10-FOOTER FOR BIRDIE ON THE FIRST PLAYOFF HOLE TO STAY IN IT, TAYLOR FINISHED OFF THE WIN ON THE NEXT HOLE.

ANNC: And it's another playoff victory for Nick Taylor.

TAYLOR: I think I enjoy being in those moments. I think, for whatever reason, my mind gets clear in those situations of the shot I'm just trying to hit.

IT WAS THE SECOND STRAIGHT SEASON TAYLOR BEGAN THE YEAR WITH A VICTORY ... HE WON THE WM PHOENIX OPEN IN 2024.

ANNC: Absolute unreal stuff in the desert for Nick Taylor. Another playoff win.

BUT THE REST OF THAT SEASON DIDN'T LIVE UP TO EXPECTATIONS. TAYLOR FAILED TO MAKE IT TO THE TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP... AND WAS NOT GOING TO LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN IN 2025. HE FINISHED TIED FOR 19TH AT EAST LAKE.

TAYLOR: I think any time you're playing TOUR Championship at East Lake, it's a huge, successful year. I feel like I was in contention a lot, a lot of top 25s, late tee times on the weekend. That's what I was most proud of. It is easy to kind of get, not necessarily complacent,

but almost settled after an early win. And so, it was nice to keep the momentum going, sticking to that process of trying to just play better and get better each and every week.

IT'S A PROCESS THAT TAYLOR WANTS TO IMPROVE EVEN MORE IN 2026. AND WHILE BEING KNOWN AS "MR. PLAYOFF" IS NICE, HE WANTS TO USE THOSE BIG MOMENTS TO SPRINGBOARD SUCCESS ON A MORE REGULAR BASIS.

TAYLOR: In golf, it can be easy to see things you don't want to do and have more swing thoughts than you need to. Where, I think in those situations, I have clarity on the shot I'm trying to hit. My challenge is getting that into every shot.

A4 – TV TIMES

TAYLOR LOOKS TO DEFEND HIS TITLE AT WAIALAE COUNTRY CLUB IN HONOLULU, HAWAII, JANUARY 15th THROUGH THE 18th.

A5 – NEAL SHIPLEY | MY SWING

ALSO TEEING IT UP IN HAWAII IS NEAL SHIPLEY. WATCH AS HE BREAKS DOWN HIS SWING ON THE PRACTICE RANGE BEFORE HIS FIRST FULL YEAR ON THE PGA TOUR.

NEAL SHIPLEY: I'm going to shank these first two probably.

SHIPLEY: I've always been a very natural player. I feel like it's, my swing has always been just like, how my body wants to move, a little more vertical. I try to keep it, like, simple. You'll find, like, very good fundamentals. When I was younger, I was not a very good ball striker, so having good tempo is really important for me to try and be more consistent. Not like a Hideki pause, but, you know, had time to kind of gather and load into my lower body. More like an Ernie Els and his tempo.

SHIPLEY: Probably just hit a driver or two. My stock shot is probably like a little bit of a fade; ball is just falling a little bit to the right. I can hit like a high draw, kind of pull my shoulder back a bit, and kind of get the ball turning over, hit it high. High draw like that. Then you got the tee-down shot for some of those tighter tee shots or when you're hitting into the wind just kind of keep the ball on the ground. So, I like to tee down pretty low and just kind of, I feel like for me it's more of like a squeeze-cut from this tee height. It's kind of like that. That's probably the three I usually hit in competition.

SHIPLEY: I'm really excited for my first year as a member on the TOUR, and I'm really looking forward to going back to some of those tournaments that I've already played. It'll be fun to be at a place where you already know like where to go and where to hit the ball. It'll be nice to have less preparation those weeks for sure.

SHIPLEY: You know, I've got a long ways to go, I've got to prove myself still, but I think I have the skills to be, you know, one of those blue-chip players out on TOUR. But I've got to go out and prove it and that's the beauty of golf. You got to go earn it.

BI-HOT HANDS

HAVING THE HOT HAND IS A COMMON PHENOMENON IN SPORTS, BUT DOES IT ACTUALLY EXIST BEYOND A COMPETITOR'S MINDSET?

TWO PROFESSORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER CONDUCTED A STUDY USING SHOTLINK DATA TO FIND OUT.

ANNC: TOUR Championship winner. And Billy Horschel wins it all.

RYAN ELMORE: The way that we defined hot hand was, if you get a birdie or better on a hole, are you more likely to get a birdie or better on the following hole?

BILLY HORSCHHEL: You get things going your way, and you get the momentum on your side, it feels like it's not going to change. The hot hand exists, that entire feeling of, sort of invincible, and you can't do anything wrong. I think we've seen that plenty of times play out.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think there is something to that. Most of that has to do with just momentum, and golf's such a mental game. I think, one hole you make a mistake, on the next hole, a player may be thinking about that last shot still. A guy birdies a hole, all of a sudden, the hole just looks really big to him.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: If you're looking at it from a purely mathematical lens, I would say it's just kind of ... it's just randomness. Some people, when they make a birdie, they just go bananas, they just are like ok, let's keep going and they might birdie a few more holes in a row. When they make a bogey, it might go the other way around and it might just ruin the round.

ELMORE: We didn't find any evidence to support that notion that if you get a birdie or better, on the next hole, you're more likely to get a birdie or better, had you not gotten a birdie or better previously.

ELMORE: I would say Viktor Hovland is spot on when it comes to, "it's just randomness," like in a string of holes, and you're counting birdies or bogeys, you would expect streaks of either one during that round of golf.

HORSCHHEL: People that are more analytical or more data or scientific, they can't comprehend just a feeling and the sense of things. They're so much into they have to see the actual data and the numbers and so, as golfers when we are playing well and we have the hot hand, it doesn't matter what the data says, if they don't believe in it, there is something there.

ANDREW URBACZEWSKI: Golf, it's not the binary that you see in basketball, either the shot goes in, or the shot goes out. With golf, you can make a birdie, or maybe you can make an eagle, but there's only so low that you can go, whereas on the high end, you can keep pumping balls out of bounds for a long time, we found that making a bogey or worse definitely affects whether you're going to make a bogey or worse on the next hole, so as we like to say, "The birdie barrage is a mirage, but the bogey train is real."

MAX HOMA: Catching yourself on a cold spell is more important, just like a check-down throw from a quarterback, just hit one on the green and let's kind of find a rhythm. When you're really going and it feels good, there are definitely some shots where it's like, man, we would typically play away from this pin, but man, that looks good, let's take it on. But in my opinion, more often than not, it's important to not kill that momentum.

URBACZEWSKI: If people believe that because I made a birdie, it's going to make me better on the next hole, let them believe that, and the psychology that goes through to them puts them in a better frame of mind. That's awesome. Let them feel good.

B2 – LUDVIG ÅBERG IN STUDIO

WHILE THE FIELD KEEPS STACKING UP BIRDIES ACROSS THE COURSE, LUDVIG ÅBERG HAS BEEN QUIETLY TURNING PRECISION INTO AN ART FORM. HE'S IN OUR PGA TOUR STUDIOS WITH CHANTEL McCABE AND MATT EVERY.

MATT EVERY: Let's talk about the offseason. A lot happening for you, maybe some work with the coach, I saw Texas Tech made it into the playoffs, you went there, just speak a little bit on what went into your offseason.

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, it's been nice. This has actually been, sort of the longest time away from tournament golf that I've had, sort of, ever. So, I'm getting ready, getting to the point where I'm almost starting climbing on the walls a little bit and getting ready to go play again, but it's been really nice. I've been able to travel a little bit. Came back home to Europe for Christmas and the holidays which was nice. My girlfriend is from England, so we were able to spend some time over there as well and hang out with her family and obviously my family in Sweden. So, it was great, I got to see Texas Tech win the conference championship in Dallas against BYU, so that was really cool. Yeah, just been sort of back and forth. Obviously, it's the time of the year where you can dive deeper into some of the golf stuff and the improvements that you want to make for the rest of the year and it's been a good time for me.

CHANTEL McCABE: OK, so now to 2026, The American Express will be your first start of the year, you've been around the block for a couple of seasons now, what goes in to the defining factors of making and building out your schedule for the year?

ÅBERG: Yeah, I think, obviously I'd like to think that I'm still sort of new to all this, right? I've only done one and a half, two, full seasons on the PGA TOUR, so I'm still trying to figure out sort of how I like the structure to be. How I like, how many weeks off I want to play, when do I play my best, and for me, it all sort of comes down to the off weeks. When do I want my rest, my recovery, and my practice to be, and I'm in a very fortunate situation where I can pick my own schedule, which is a big deal, obviously. That's the way you want to keep it. I feel like we have a decent plan for this year.

EVERY: Let's get into this season a little bit, you know, you've got two wins so far on the PGA TOUR like you said, still a very young career, but your record in majors is pretty good so far as well, eight starts, two top 10s, both at Augusta as you kind of head into this 2026 season. What would, are you a goal guy, and what defines a successful 2026 season for Ludvig Åberg?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I think goals are very important, I think you should have goals in whatever profession you have, I like goals, I think it's great. I'm a little bit more process-oriented. I have a hard time saying, hey, I'm going to win four times this year, obviously I'd like to, but when I write that down on a piece of paper, I have a hard time doing that. So I like to be a little bit statistically-oriented, so I have parts of my game that I feel like I want to improve on, and I feel like if I improve on those things, that'll lead me to perform better in certain tournaments or certain events, so I do have parts of my game that I'd like to improve on statistically, and I feel like if I do that, that would be defined as success for me.

McCABE: We're going to dive into some fun questions now to wrap this segment up, so your favorite current swing on TOUR that is not yours ...

ÅBERG: Good question. I mean, obviously, everyone is going to say Adam Scott.

McCABE: I was hoping you wouldn't bail out, maybe a young guy that isn't on people's radar yet.

ÅBERG: I like Michael Thorbjornsen. I like the way he loads it. I like the way he plays a big power draw without getting flippy. I like that part of it. Obviously, he hits it long, straight and high. There's so many, there's so many, walking on the range listening to the sound, the acoustics are really cool.

EVERY: Plenty of ways to get it done, what's on your travel bucket list?

ÅBERG: Australia. Never been to Australia, so I'd love to go there at some point. I know there's a couple of good golf tournaments down there, so at some point I'll definitely make my way.

EVERY: I'm sure they can make room for you in those fields.

McCABE: Yeah, a lot of travel, but absolutely worth it. So we'll end with this ... your guilty pleasure, it can be food, it can be TV, something that maybe is out of what people expect from you.

ÅBERG: Yeah, I definitely like, so in Sweden, we have these pick and mix candy, obviously it's starting to grow a little bit here in America. I think TikTok is helping that a little bit. Pick and mix is ... I'll get a big old bag of pick and mix and I'll eat that.

McCABE: Well Sweden is on my bucket list, so I'll have to check that out once I make my way over there. Thank you so much for joining us in studio, Ludvig. Best wishes for 2026

CI + C2 – HANK LEBIODA

AS THE KORN FERRY TOUR ALSO DEBUTS THIS WEEK, IT WILL START TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE PGA TOUR'S NEXT STARS, BOTH THE YOUTH AND THE OLDER SIDE.

AND WINNING THIS VERY EVENT LAST YEAR PROVIDED QUITE THE TURNAROUND FOR HANK LEBIODA

NATS: Can you hit to the corner, baby? Nice shot. There you go. Woah!"

31 AND TOUR BOUND AGAIN, LEBIODA FINDS HIMSELF IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT STAGE OF HIS LIFE AS HE EMBARKS ON HIS SECOND STINT ON THE PGA TOUR.

NATS: "Woah! Nice hit, Henry."

AFTER TURNING PROFESSIONAL 10 YEARS AGO ... PLAYING AND WINNING ON THE PGA TOUR AMERICAS ... THEN TO THE KORN FERRY TOUR, HE FOUND HIMSELF ON THE PGA TOUR IN AN INSTANT.

LEBIODA SOT: "It's just what you did, you know, you just got your card, you just moved on from the Korn Ferry Tour. Thought I was a world-beater, I could do whatever I want. 24 years old and I had achieved a dream of being a PGA TOUR player."

THAT DREAM LASTED FOR THE BETTER PART OF 5 SEASONS ...

ANNC: "Oooh bend it in!"

... KEEPING HIS TOUR STATUS UNTIL 2023, WHEN HE MISSED 16 OF 24 CUTS.

MARY LEBIODA SOT: "The highs are high and the lows are low. The day when he lost PGA TOUR status, you know, we're trying to juggle newborn baby, just lost status, not really sure what's going to happen the next year. You can't ever feel comfortable where you're sitting because it can go away pretty quickly."

LEBIODA SOT "It was a reality check, you finishing 75th just being able to sneak into that last event and maintain full status for this 2025 season. I'm thankful I got through when I did and I'm thankful that I barely kept my status last year, cause I thought it prepared me well for the beginning of this season."

NATS: “The flight’s so much better. Yeah that’s nice. Yeah, that’s nice. Still at the top, and then as you move down...you’ve got space. Yeah.”

PART OF HIS PREPARATION WAS A CHANGE IN SWING COACH. CHAN REEVES COMING ON BOARD OFFERING A DIFFERENT AND SIMPLE PERSPECTIVE.

CHAN REEVES SOT: “We came up with some things together, some simple things to work on and it seemed like right off the bat it made sense to him and he saw some results pretty quick and it just kind of went on from there. It’s been fun.”

THAT CHANGE PROVIDING IMMEDIATE DIVIDENDS AT THE START OF THE 2025 SEASON.

ANNC: “Handsome Hank, a champion!”

LEBIODA SOT: “Maybe it’s the start of some, great, long second wind of career. Still got to put in the work, it’s not just going to happen because I say ‘Hey, I won.’ You still got to do the plan...plan to work and then work the plan afterwards.”

THE PLAN IS SOMETHING LEBIODA TAKES PRIDE IN, FOR WHEN THE JOURNEY IS THIS HARD, SO TOO MUST BE THE WORK.

NATS: “Come on right here. Fight it, fight it, fight it - hold.”

LEBIODA SOT: “It’s constantly changing. If you find something that works, you build on it.”

AND EVEN THOUGH IT MIGHT NOT BE WRITTEN DOWN ON THE SCHEDULE, AT THE END OF THE DAY, THERE IS TIME FOR REFLECTION.

LEBIODA SOT: “Very excited, and I’m looking forward to it. It will be an awesome opportunity to be back competing amongst the best players in the world.

LEBIODA LOOKS TO IMPROVE UPON HIS BEST PERFORMANCE ... A T-43 FINISH IN HONOLULU WHEN HE TEES IT UP AGAIN AT THE SONY OPEN IN HAWAII.

DI – PLAYERS’ FIRST INTERVIEWS ON CAMERA

IN HONOR OF THE 2026 TOUR DEBUT THIS WEEK, TRAVEL BACK IN TIME TO SEE THE PGA TOUR'S BIGGEST STARS GIVING THEIR EARLIEST INTERVIEWS ON CAMERA.

RORY McILROY: I just want to go out and play golf. That's all I want to do. I want to go out and play, and see how good I can get and try and win. And if I can keep that mindset for the rest of my career I think I'll do pretty good.

CURTIS STRANGE: What would be a successful week here in Milwaukee?

TIGER WOODS: Two things, I think if I play four solid rounds. I got off to a good start today, If I can do that for three more days, then I'll be very happy. And a victory would be awfully nice too.

STRANGE: A victory?

WOODS: Mhmm.

STRANGE: Do you think ... to me that comes off as a little cocky or brash. Especially talking to the other guys on TOUR that have been out here for years, and years and years, you know, certainly and incredible amateur record, but what do you say to those guys?

WOODS: Well, I ...

STRANGE: When you come out here, you know what I'm saying, your first pro tournament, and you say, "I can win."

WOODS: No, I understand that. I've always figured why go to a tournament if you're not going there to try and win? There's really no point in even going. That's the attitude I've had my entire life and that's the attitude I will always have. As I always explain to my dad, second sucks. And third's even worse. It's just a feeling that I have.

STRANGE: But on TOUR that's not too bad sometimes, though.

WOODS: That's not too bad, but I want to win. It's just my nature.

STRANGE: You'll learn. I'm just kidding. I'm sorry. I had to say that.

JUSTIN THOMAS: I'm pretty excited, but I mean, I'm a little nervous also. But I mean, it's just going to be a lot of fun this week to play with the pros and hopefully I'll do well also.

MODERATOR: Have you seen your pairing for Thursday and Friday?

THOMAS: Yes. Tommy, uh, Gainey. And Chris something. I forget his last name.

JOHN DALY: I'm just going to play the best golf I can. Same game plan. You know, I didn't realize I shot 63 on that round. I never looked at the leaderboard. I was just trying to make birdies and save pars when I needed to, and that's all you can do. That's all I'm going to try and do, is go out and play as hard as I can and act like there's not even a leaderboard out there.

REPORTER: I was talking to your dad out there during your practice round. You have a test in the morning, or are you missing any school?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I do. I have a calculus project I've got to do tonight and I have an aquatics science test in the morning that I've got to go take.

REPORTER: Can you just discuss how you're juggling being a normal kid, going through your high school senior year, and next thing you know, you're out here walking with the pros?

SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I mean, it's pretty cool. I've still doing everything that I've usually been doing, except going to school the past couple days. It's a really cool experience for me.

D2 – BEST OF WINNING INTERVIEWS 2025

JUST AS THEIR GAME CONTINUED TO EVOLVE, SO DID THEIR ON-CAMERA PRESENCE. CHECK OUT THE BEST WINNING INTERVIEWS FROM THE 2025 SEASON.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, when I think about this tournament, you know, I think about Mr. Nelson, I think about, you know, what he did for the game of golf, and, you know, he was a man of faith and he was a great person as well off the golf course. And, you know, he's a person that I've read a lot about. I had the opportunity to meet him a few times when I was a kid, and I know a lot about him, and he was a tremendous player and a tremendous person. And so we look up to him in a variety of ways and, you know, I'm proud to be here supporting his tournament and his legacy. You know, we have some great legacy tournaments on the PGA TOUR and, you know, I believe that, Mr. Nelson also did a lot for the PGA TOUR and, you know, for his tournament to have a lasting legacy here, not only in Dallas, but on the PGA TOUR as well, I think is really important. And, you know, when I grew up wanting to play in this tournament, I never really dreamed of being the number one player in the world. I never really thought about that stuff, but, I hope it does well for the tournament.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Winning's hard. It's really, really hard, but I've worked my butt off and stayed patient, stayed positive. I got a great wife, great team and now a great daughter, who's got her eyeballs showing right now, but just take for granted sometimes when you get on those runs and I just didn't realize how much I missed winning. And that's just ... battling out there today was so much fun.

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: I'm so blessed with the family that I have and the love that surrounds me and the support that I get, that it just makes everything that much easier, really. Whether it goes good or bad, you know, whatever would have happened today, I'd have walked off the 18th hole and Oscar would have given me a hug and we'd have gone home and everything would have been great, like everything would have been fine. I'd have been gutted. Oscar, you know, we'd have all been, you know, gutted and hurt a little bit. But, you know, life would still have been great, and I think that's something that I would never take for granted.

WHAT EXCITING FINISHES WILL WE SEE? FIRST-TIME WINNERS? A CAREER GRAND SLAM? WHO IS GOING TO GIVE US MEMORABLE MOMENTS IN 2026?