

26ICUT14 – CADILLAC CHAMPIONSHIP – MASTER SCRIPT

A1: Open - The Life Akshay

ANNC: Oh what a shot! What a shot! First career win! Barracuda Champion!

ANNC: Bhatia is a winner again! With authority to win Arnie's tournament!

SOT: This is the life with me, Akshay Bhatia.

A2 – Titles

(NO COPY)

A3 - Tee it Up - Cadillac

THE TOUR MAKES THE RETURN TO DORAL THIS WEEK FOR THE CADILLAC CHAMPIONSHIP, AND ADAM SCOTT IS THE LAST PLAYER TO FIND THE WINNER'S CIRCLE AT TRUMP NATIONAL DORAL ... WITH HIS WIN COMING A DECADE AGO. HIS PERFORMANCE IN MIAMI HAS BEEN STELLAR ... WITH FIVE TOP 10 FINISHES IN 11 STARTS.

ANOTHER PLAYER LOOKING TO FIND VICTORY ONCE AGAIN ... PATRICK CANTLAY ... PLAYING SOME IMPRESSIVE GOLF AS OF LATE ... TWO TOP-10 FINISHES AND A T-12 AT THE MASTERS.

COMING OFF TWO RUNNER-UP FINISHES, SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER IS LOOKING TO STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT AND CAPTURE HIS SECOND VICTORY OF THE SEASON.

A4 - Segue to Akshay

ALSO IN THE FIELD AND UP THE ROAD, WE GET A GLIMPSE OF THE LIFE OF RISING STAR AKSHAY BHATIA AT HOME IN JUPITER, FLORIDA.

A5 - Akshay - The Life Content - Part 1

AKSHAY BHATIA: This one's pretty good. I'm more of a creative person when it comes to playing golf. Even if I go bowling or play pickleball, always trying to like curve it. I write right-handed, everything else is left-handed. It's just not conventional. I don't do it straight.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I'm pretty sure there's a study behind it where we use more percentage of one side than the other. I just always found it fascinating that anytime you'd see a left-handed golfer, they didn't do it normally. I've always thought there's something behind it being left-handed that I think has a little more creativeness and how they use their brain. Everything is very unconventional.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I give my dad a lot of credit for doing it differently than most parents.

SONNY BHATIA: We didn't know anything about golf. One of the first tournaments I put him in was the Donald Ross Jr. in Pinehurst, and this is where I knew there's something. That's probably the first couple that he played, and all of a sudden I'm looking at the scorecard and I have a picture of the scorecard where the scores was 72, 78, 84, 83... and Akshay's 67.

SONNY BHATIA: Huh, maybe there's something here. I'm going to continue to raise the bar on Akshay and let's see how far he goes. If he can hit that bar. And he continually kept hitting the bar. And from there, it's just history.

AKSHAY BHATIA: There's a story where I was probably 10 or 11 years old, probably 2:00 in the morning, going to his room and ask him, "Hey dad," you know, he's like "What are you doing up?" It's like "Dad, how do I become the best player in the world?"

AKSHAY BHATIA: And at the time his answer was, "Be the first person at the golf course and the last person to leave. Just work as hard as you can and you'll achieve it." These small things that he did, you know, it always worked out for me.

AKSHAY BHATIA: And so that's why I give him a lot of credit because a lot of people doubted the decisions that we made as a family, and more so towards him--"He needs to go to school, he's not ready." I just did so many things differently. I progressed a lot faster. I was just playing golf but I was doing things at a higher level than I probably realized.

AKSHAY BHATIA: By the time I was 15, 16 years old is when I really knew I could go compete on the PGA TOUR and then learn a lot just showing up and trying to learn and trying to shoot low. I mean, you have to do that when you're trying to qualify for PGA Tour events.

SONNY BHATIA: When he turned 17, he was ready to turn pro. And that was a risk that we took. I got a lot of negative feedback that he's not going to make it, and I said, "You're wrong, you don't know." Yeah, he'll make it.

ANNC: Akshay Bhatia looking for his first career win with a huge putt!

AKSHAY BHATIA: That's always what I dreamed about. You have just like this great feeling of success, one step at a time. And that's kind of what I did when I turned pro at 17 years old. You know, I wouldn't trade it for the world now.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Now she always, you know, supports me and is always there for me for whatever I need. I mean, carrying the bag for 72 holes is not easy.

PRESLEIGH: Yeah, I mean he kept asking me "Are you nervous?" I'm like "No, I'm fine." But my--I say it as a joke, but we try to stay pretty calm and it worked out.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I met my wife Presleigh on social media, that was crazy. I DM'd her on Instagram and gave her some compliments, got her Snapchat, which is kind of the next step for a guy to try and get a girlfriend I guess. And then she ignored me for about 3 weeks and then she finally texted me back and then we met a couple months later.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Just saw a sea turtle.

SONNY BHATIA: They balance each other. So she's good for him and you know, he leans a lot on her and that's something special.

AKSHAY BHATIA: We've lived together for pretty much our whole relationship. We have a couple dogs and it's been a fun journey for both of us.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I'll take you guys through my car collection. One of my favorite things ever to have. Very blessed to have everything I do. So we'll start: Escalade V. This thing is awesome. I mean, this is great for like the Florida swing when we're driving to tournaments, we bring our dogs, taking a trip to Disney in this thing. It's loud, it's fast, it's got cool custom wheels on it.

AKSHAY BHATIA: This is the fun stuff now. This is my M3 Competition. Super fun, fast car. I put an exhaust, really loud as you can tell, downpipes makes it even louder. Feel bad for my neighbors. But Rickie Fowler is kind of the one that kind of got me into this car. He has one, his is really cool, really souped up. The interior is really cool too, it's got these carbon red seats which is sick. I love driving this, I drive it most of the time.

AKSHAY BHATIA: All right, my favorite of the favorites. This is a '24 GT3 RS. I just got it, pretty much my dream car. I never thought I'd ever buy it but you know, had a great couple years. And again, I feel like anytime I've gotten a car, it's been something I always worked towards. Motivates me in a way to obviously keep pushing so I can afford things like these. And again, very blessed to have this.

AKSHAY BHATIA: So it's crazy. I mean, it's a street-legal race car. Massive wing, all this aero, carbon roof, carbon hood. These have got really sick racing seats, it's got a roll cage in here which again, aesthetically looks awesome. Can't really put anything in here other than myself and the golf clubs in the front seat. But yeah, super fortunate to have this. And having your dream car at 24 years old is pretty nuts to me.

A6 - Akshay Life Lookahead

STILL TO COME, MORE ON THE LIFE: WITH AKSHAY BHATIA.

B1 - Fitzpatrick Shot Shaping

AHEAD OF THE ACTUAL COMPETITION AT THE ZURICH CLASSIC OF NEW ORLEANS, MATT AND ALEX FITZPATRICK TEAMED UP FOR A FRIENDLY SHOT-SHAPING COMPETITION.

MATT SOT: Okay. First shot. Driver. Stinger.

MATT SOT: This pole's in danger, I think.

MATT SOT: Does it have to get airborne?

ALEX SOT: That was low.

MATT SOT: That was a good one.

MATT SOT: Too low. Negative.

MATT SOT: You win. You were in the basket. I give you that. Yeah.

ALEX SOT: I didn't even did that, did that bounce in?

MATT SOT: It bounced in. Well, we'll give you that one because it went in the basket.

MATT SOT: Okay. Round two. 200 yard high draw.

MATT SOT: I'm going to go over the stake. So let's see what we can do.

ALEX SOT: It's good for someone who cuts it.

MATT SOT: Yeah, brilliant. And a left to right wind. Just to clarify, for people at home.

MATT SOT: The good news is, is a draw. I can't say it was high.

ALEX SOT: I think that with the left to right wind, it's drawing.

MATT SOT: I'll give you that one. That's two nil. It's two nil. Yeah.

MATT SOT: Okay. Round three, long drive. Or, certainly an attempt to be a long drive anyway. After I've just sat down for an hour. I've no idea where that one went.

ALEX SOT: It's an arrow, straight.

MATT SOT: Has it?

ALEX SOT: Should sit down more often. Think I might win, not going to lie.

MATT SOT: Yeah. Be willing to put money on that one.

MATT SOT: Yeah, that one's mine. Sorry, Al.

ALEX SOT: That's almost in the first fairway.

MATT SOT: That's okay. Yeah.

ALEX SOT: Two one. Back in it.

MATT SOT: That was a pathetic attempt.

MATT SOT: Okay. Round four. 250 yard three wood. We'll go to that tree up the left, Al.

ALEX SOT: Okay.

MATT SOT: Might be a little short, but think that's a long ways, that tree. And double cross.

ALEX SOT: Wind helped you out?

MATT SOT: Not really. It was a bit toey.

ALEX SOT: Well, this should, this should be okay, if I can't do this, it's a bit wrong.

MATT SOT: Yeah. Okay. Well done. Three, one. Damn you!

ALEX SOT: I'll take it.

MATT SOT: We'll go tie. You won the most of them, so well done.

ALEX SOT: Thank you.

MATT SOT: Well played. You win.

ALEX SOT: I'll take the victory.

B2 - Zurich Winners

THE FITZPATRICK BROTHERS WATCHED THE SHOT-SHAPING SKILLS AND MORE PAY OFF ON SUNDAY IN NEW ORLEANS ... FOLLOWING A BEST BALL RECORD 57 ON SATURDAY.

ANNC ZURICH 18 BUNKER: All golf ball. Does it spin? Oh, what a shot! Is that any good? And the fans here in New Orleans go wild.

ANNC WIN ZURICH: A day the Fitzpatrick family will never forget.

B3 - FEC Standings

WITH THE WIN, MATT FITZPATRICK VAULTS INTO FIRST IN THE FEDEXCUP STANDINGS, AND IT'S A MOMENTOUS DAY FOR HIS BROTHER ALEX, EARNING HIS PGA TOUR CARD THRU 2028, AND AN EXEMPTION INTO ALL REMAINING 2026 SIGNATURE EVENTS.

B4 - Winner Walk

ALEX SOT: Is your phone blowing up as well as mine?

MATT SOT: It's Rory. What a bunker shot. Rory.

ALEX SOT: I've just watched it, it's one of the disgusting bunker shots I've ... I've just watched it. Two and a half of years of PGA, PLAYERS...

BALIONIS SOT: Your schedule just changed drastically. Like, for the better.

ALEX SOT: Oh yeah, crazy.

ALEX SOT: Oh my God. It's just not going to sink in.

ALEX SOT: It's something you dream of as a kid, is to hole a putt to win a PGA TOUR event, and yeah, I did that.

ALEX SOT: This is absolute bonkers. Has it sunk in for you yet, or?

MATT SOT: Not yet.

C1 - Rejoin

WE CONTINUE WITH A LOOK AT THE LIFE OF AKSHAY BHATIA.

C2 - Akshay - The Life Part 2

AKSHAY BHATIA: My career in golf as a professional has been very interesting.

NATS: A little right to left, right?

AKSHAY BHATIA: I got seven tour starts on the PGA TOUR at 17 years old, missed every cut. Didn't have any status. Went to PGA TOUR Canada, didn't get status there. COVID hit. Then we had four or five months of no golf. Changed a couple things with my coach and my golf swing. Changed putters, won my first mini-tour event. Made my first cut on the PGA TOUR, Monday qualified a couple times, more sponsor invites. Made enough points to get into the Korn Ferry Finals.

AKSHAY NATS: I'm just excited to be able to have this start, yeah it's going to be fun.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Missed getting my TOUR card by a couple spots. Cognizant Classic I show up, I think I made the cut, maybe finished 30th. Then the next week, Puerto Rico, finished

second, which then earned me enough points to get special temporary status. Then ended up winning the Barracuda Championship that year in '23.

ANNC: Akshay Bhatia. What a putt!

AKSHAY BHATIA: I have so much belief in myself, and to finally get it done... I can't even describe it. Which then secured two years on the PGA TOUR, was qualified for my first Major Championship which was the PGA Championship, and then from there on, you know, been on the PGA TOUR.

AKSHAY BHATIA: My mental coach at the time, we were talking about some goals that I had set to start the year. One of the goals was to play all four majors. The week before the Masters is the Valero Texas Open, and we knew that goal of making it to Augusta was very rare. The Valero Texas Open was one of the craziest weeks of my life.

ANNC: Unbelievable! Akshay matches it!

AKSHAY BHATIA: We had a world ranking goal by the cutoff date, we both agreed on 35. So anytime I saw 35 throughout the week, I just made a, I guess a mental picture of that. I remember my final group tee time on Sunday was 11:35.

ANNC: We'll see the Bhatia tee shot.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Had a lot going on with my shoulder and my physio is taping my shoulder up when Denny hit it in the water. I wasn't aware at the time, then all of a sudden I heard "Oh my goodness." Okay, I just need to hit it on the green.

ANNC: Deep breath by Bhatia before he settled in. Flying it past the hole! Well I think it all worked out! Sure did. That drops in and Bhatia is a winner again!

AKSHAY BHATIA: Just a crazy wave of emotions.

PRODUCER: This win means you go to Augusta next week for the first time!

AKSHAY BHATIA: My mom's birthday was on April 1st and her wish was to, uh, get into the Masters. So I'm hoping I make her proud.

AKSHAY BHATIA: You win, you go to Augusta, you're kind of like the guy everyone's congratulating you, standing ovations. The cool part about the story is I was thinking about 35 this whole time. After I won that week, Monday they changed, you know, official World Golf Rankings--go to 35th in the world! It's the craziest story. And then at Augusta, I finished 35th. Manifesting all that, it was like fairy tale story for me.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I was definitely like nervous a little bit to start the year. It kind of showed in my performance. And then my wife had a sit-down talk with me, which rarely happens,

she's a pretty quiet person. But she had this talk with me about anxiety or nerves. How do we change that?

AKSHAY BHATIA: I've always been the type of person that has kind of told myself or people in my team like "It's going to be a great week" or "This is our week, this is just my time." Like I feel it. She made me realize that and recognize changing certain habits or words when I do feel nerves or anxiety, turning it into power energy throughout the week. It's kind of what I started to do and then started to play well.

ANNC: And that sets up Bhatia for a winner! And it's opened the door wide open for Akshay to put away his third PGA TOUR victory!

AKSHAY BHATIA: This is another big step for me. I won the Barracuda, which is the opposite field event, now winning a Signature is huge. I'm excited. I love the big moment, what I play for.

SONNY BHATIA: And he's always that player that whatever he does, he does it on the last hole. That was a big moment. How great is this? Like you actually made it. 'Cause I promised him, I said "You're going to play here one day, you watch." And he did. Yeah, that was inspiring.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Sorry, my dogs get a little excited. This is our first dog Torrey, she's four years old, Golden Doodle. Kind of the favorite--if you can see my golf bag in the back, she's my headcover. Torrey was named after my first US Open, Presleigh came up with that name. This is Sadie, she's our newest puppy, she's a year old Golden Doodle. And then Goose over here, he's the boy, protects all the girls, he's three years old. Come here!

AKSHAY BHATIA: I've always loved dogs. We never had dogs growing up. Presleigh had a bunch of dogs growing up. We were in Mississippi where Presleigh's from and there was a litter of Gold Doodles. We ended up going to see them and her mom was like "Okay, which one do you guys want?" We love dogs so they're just the best. Even when your days are not good, they just love you. So it's a nice feeling all the time.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I'm going to turn pro at, you know, at some point either end of this year or beginning of next year. I'm ready to go and play against the big boys.

AKSHAY BHATIA: It's a huge thing for your growth as a person. I've matured a lot. I'm still a kid at heart, 100%. Pretty sick, man. We're so blessed to play this game at a high level, to play in front of people. I wouldn't trade it for the world and I love everything that golf brings to my life.

D1 - TV Times

THE TOUR MOVES TO THE NEXT SIGNATURE EVENT, THE CADILLAC CHAMPIONSHIP, AS WE MAKE OUR RETURN TO MIAMI - AND THE BLUE MONSTER AT DORAL...WHERE WE IDENTIFIED A SURPRISING CRITICAL HOLE TO CAPITALIZE ON FOR SUCCESS.

D2 - Champions Hole - 4th Par 3 - Doral

EACH WEEK ON THE PGA TOUR, THE BEST PLAYERS IN THE WORLD NAVIGATE RAZOR-THIN MARGINS AS THEY SEEK VICTORY... IN MANY CASES, ONE HOLE CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE...

THE FIRST PAR 3 ON THE COURSE, THE 4TH HOLE IS AN EARLY CHALLENGE THAT TESTS GOLFERS THE MOMENT THEY WALK TO THE TEE... WITH WATER TAUNTING YOU ON THE RIGHT, THE TEE SHOT IS ALL CARRY TO AN ELEVATED GREEN...

FROM 1983 TO 2016, THIS HOLE HAS SEEN THE LARGEST STROKE DIFFERENTIAL FROM THE WINNERS' SCORING AVERAGE COMPARED TO THE FIELD... THE 34 WINNERS OVER THAT TIME HAVE AN AVERAGE SCORE OF UNDER PAR... THE REST OF THE FIELD IS A QUARTER OF A SHOT OVER PAR...

ANNC: Shaping a draw in there, oh that's a pretty good looking shot. Oh, it is a beauty, Rog!

SINCE SHOT LINK BEGAN TRACKING STATS IN 2003, WINNERS ARE MORE THAN 2-AND-A-HALF TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BIRDIE THE 4TH HOLE, WHILE THE REST OF THE FIELD IS MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO BOGEY THIS HOLE... THAT GLARING DISPARITY IS BEST ILLUSTRATED BY LOOKING BACK TO 2012...

IN THE FINAL ROUND, JUSTIN ROSE ROLLED IN A LONG BIRDIE PUTT TO FINISH THE WEEK 1-UNDER ON THE FOURTH HOLE... THAT MOMENT JUMP-STARTED HIS SUNDAY CHARGE...

WHEN THE NEXT GROUP CAME UP, BUBBA WATSON BOGEYED THE HOLE FOR THE THIRD STRAIGHT DAY... THAT WOULD DROP HIM FROM THE SOLO LEAD AND ROSE WOULD LATER OVERTAKE HIM - AND THE REST OF THE FIELD - FOR HIS 4TH CAREER WIN ON TOUR...

ANNC: Justin Rose has won the WGC-Cadillac Championship.

THE NEXT YEAR, IN THE FOURTH AND FINAL WIN OF HIS CAREER AT THIS VENUE, TIGER WOODS ONCE AGAIN SET A STANDARD...

ANNC: Nice looking ... oh! Speed and line equals a birdie for Tiger Woods.

WITH A SCORE OF 3-UNDER ON THE 4TH IN 2013, TIGER PLAYED THE HOLE BETTER THAN ANY CHAMPION THIS COURSE HAS EVER SEEN...

OF THE LAST 15 WINNERS HERE, 11 OF THEM PLAYED THE 4TH HOLE AT PAR OR BETTER FOR THE WEEK, WITH A CUMULATIVE SCORE OF 3-UNDER PAR... THE RUNNER UP FINISHERS? THEY WERE A COMBINED 7-OVER... THAT'S A 10-STROKE DIFFERENCE THAT TELLS US WHY THE 4TH AT DORAL IS THE CHAMPION'S HOLE.