

INTERVIEWS FROM 2017 BOULDERING OPEN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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Alex Puccio- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifiers Interview

Chris Weidner: With us in the booth now, we have Alex Puccio, now of Salt Lake City, formerly of Boulder, CO. Nice to watch you climb Alex. You topped four of the five problems in very good style. How did it go for you, how did you feel?

Alex Puccio: It went pretty well, I had a little bit of a technical that me and bunch of people feel like I should have won. But I didn't- I've had technicals the past couple of years and I've never won one. Whatever, it happens. So I flashed four of them, the one I didn't do I asked a judge if the arete was on when I was on it, I pointed to it, the whole crowd even saw it.

Neely Quinn: Yeah we saw.

Alex Puccio: I said "Is this on?", and he answer was "No, there is black tape". And then she said "But there is a blue wall. The blue wall is on". In that position you can't see around the arete, but my question was "Is this arete on?", and then "No there is black tape". And that's why I avoided it, and fell. After I fell, I realized that there was another arete. I don't know if she didn't realize that that was considered an arete as well, because the second arete was off.

Chris Weidner: Well yeah we look forward to hearing what the judges decide.

Alex Puccio: Oh they already decided. I had this huge debacle, I was in a secondary isolation zone, Pete told me they went back in time, talked to the judges, and the judges changed their wording, and said "We didn't say no, we said that there is a blue wall, and there arete after the blue wall is off".

Chris Weidner: Well in any case, you're still sitting in an excellent position.

Alex Puccio: Hopefully it doesn't come back tomorrow in count backs to anyone else above me. I knew when I was making the appeal, I knew I was going to be in even before I saw the results, I knew I climbed well enough. But it's one of those things, it's the principle of it.

Chris Weidner: Of course. you want to feel like it was fair. Fair enough.

Alex Puccio: Everyone makes mistakes and that's completely fine, but it's nice when someone owns up to the mistake. We're all human, But it happens, I just have to move forward from that. I definitely was a little blood boiling at first, if I'm completely honest which I usually am. But I watched my boyfriend climb, and I'm having fun watching everyone else climb.

Chris Weidner: And I think you flashed both 4 and 5, didn't you?

Neely Quinn: You did.

Alex Puccio: Yes I did.

Chris Weidner: Which is super impressive because those proved to be pretty hard problems for a lot of the women. Maybe it was the blood boiling that you're talking about that helped propel that, but in any case it was awesome to watch you. How did you feel on those problems?

Alex Puccio: They were quite pinchy, and if anyone knows my

style, the third one would be the least my style, and the first one I felt the most nervous on. The fourth and fifth, I looked at the pinches, and I was like "Okay, this is a lot nicer right now".

Neely Quinn: That's what we were saying- we were like, well this is Pooch's style.

Alex Puccio: And then the last one was lots of heel hooks which I like as well. Actually the fourth one was physically the hardest. At the top some of the holds were a little worse than I was expecting, but they were fun and there's a lot going on today. A lot of action.

Neely Quinn: How are you feeling? How's your body holding up?

Alex Puccio: Pretty good. I'm still getting over this virus. It's been twenty something days, and I ended up taking a course of antibiotics. I posted on my Instagram, and everyone was telling me I shouldn't take antibiotics for a virus. But after ten days, the doctor told me if it doesn't get better, take antibiotics, because it might be a bacterial infection. Which, I think it was just a virus. But I'm getting better from that, and I think the hard part is breathing when I'm on the wall.

Chris Weidner: How do you feel about finishing as well as you did and heading into semi-finals tomorrow being the nine time defending champion? What's your mindset going into tomorrow?

Alex Puccio: Hopefully there is not going to be a need for technicals- that would be nice. But in all honestly, I'm psyched. I'm one of the older competitors now, which is kind of cool. I've been saying that it feels like it happened overnight, and I don't know how all the time has passed. But I feel really strong, really excited, and yeah. I feel like I'm getting stronger as I'm getting older, which is

really cool. Coming back from injuries is an inspiration even to myself, to be like "Okay I can do this". It's another challenge. People ask me how my neck is, and I forget that I had that injury. I don't feel anything from it, which is awesome.

Neely Quinn: Does it make you nervous mentally at all, when you're jumping down?

Alex Puccio: Actually I'll always feel my knee, and I think about my knee more than I do my neck. I think about falling weird on dynos, for the sake of my other knee. Injuries just suck, but I think once you've had one big injury you kind of know that you can get over them. I think the first one is always the worse, and after that you don't want to get another one, but you know you can handle it. I'm just psyched for tomorrow, and whatever tomorrow brings. Hopefully awesome boulders and a fun time.

Chris Weidner: Is there anything you're worried about in particular, considering tomorrow, with some of the younger athletes coming in? Anything at all?

Alex Puccio: Not really. I just get nervous, ever since I started competing, whether it's a big comp or a little comp, all the same. I don't worry about other people- I've never wish someone wasn't there for me to win, that would be ridiculous. Want the best of the best to be there, and to climb my best that day, and that's why I won. Not because so and so messed up, or so and so wasn't there. It just makes me get stronger seeing the level of athletes and females getting stronger, and that makes me push myself. And that's an amazing thing. If they weren't there, I'd just be stuck, and thinking I don't need to progress. Everyone else getting stronger is making me stay with that wave and get stronger still.

Neely Quinn: How have you been preparing for this comp on particular?

Alex Puccio: It's funny, I haven't really been training. This is the first time, this year, that I decided to just climb for fun. Just go to the gym and climb more. Maybe listen to my body, like if I'm tired don't push it. But I don't do a structured training. The only thing I do regularly is running, five days a week, and that's just because I like to stay fit all around, and I like it. I like that weird stuff [laughs]. I like to sweat, and I don't really get that climbing. And doing my core workouts. But other than that, I don't have a strict thing of having to climb this many boulders, or do four by fours, I haven't done that in over a year. It's just going out climbing. I think for me, I decided this year that I just want to climb outside and do competitions when they're there and just have fun. For me it's never been not being strong enough, it's more of a mental block and messing up in finals because I put all my eggs in one basket.

Chris Weidner: Yeah, that's only happened once or twice ever though, right?

Alex Puccio: Well in the World Cups it's happened a lot. Here, I think if you start winning a lot of comps in a certain type of comp, you have that mentality and that knowledge that you know you can and it's like a snowball effect.

Chris Weidner: That's what I was going to ask- how is your confidence level having won nine out of nine comps?

Alex Puccio: I mean, I haven't competed against Ashima in any of them. But I feel like I've competed against most of the other athletes. I know anyone can have a bad day, I've had plenty of bad days. Just because you, say, beat someone at one of the other

comps, doesn't mean that they can't beat me here, and it doesn't mean that they aren't strong enough, and that that day isn't their day. It comes down to the perfect boulders for you, how you feel that day, how you can manage the stress level. It's just all of it.

Neely Quinn: You gonna get some good sleep tonight?

Alex Puccio: I hope so- I banged my knee really hard in ISO, there's this wall of all these volumes, and I have this horrible knot. It hurts so bad- I mean it's superficial, it's one of those things that just hurts, it's not a injury. But I have to ice and stretch and take some Ibuprofen. My friend Grace McKeehan was doing this run and jump, and I thought it looked cool, but that you could potentially hit this volume. She was like "That's what I thought, but my friend that made it up said you wouldn't hit it". I said "Watch, I'll be the one to hit it". And then I go to do it, and just banged my knee so hard. I was like, alright, that's enough, I'm done.

Neely Quinn: No more of that!

Chris Weidner: Well Alex, thanks for joining us. We are really looking forward to seeing you in semis tomorrow and almost certainly in finals tomorrow. Thanks for joining the booth, and we will be talking to you again tomorrow.

Alex Puccio: Thank you!

Alex Puccio- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Finals Interview

Brian Runnels: Hello again, Alex Puccio.

Alex Puccio: Hi!

Brian Runnels: How does it feel to be the ten time national champion?

Alex Puccio: I like that number better than nine [laughs].

Brian Runnels: You were stuck on nine for almost two years.

Alex Puccio: I was, I get to live ten for a year. I have a whole year to hold that.

Neely Quinn: Yeah, it's a solid round number, congratulations.

Alex Puccio: It is- my lucky number is 11 though. It has been for years. My lucky number is 11, so...

Neely Quinn: We know what's going to happen next year then!

[laughter]

Alex Puccio: That would be awesome.

Neely Quinn: How did you feel out there today?

Alex Puccio: I felt mentally really good. I've been doing this thing recently where I put my headphones on and I don't listen to how anyone is doing.

Neely Quinn: I saw you out there with those on. And that helps?

Alex Puccio: Yeah- I definitely- I don't know. I used to like to hear

how people are doing, but I think it would just play tricks on my mind. So this year, I was like- you know what, I'm just not going to do that. Even if I want to take my headphones off to know if they topped or not, I'd be like oh, okay, I know I have to do that, and that sucks. Then if they don't top I think, they're really strong, is it too hard? Can I do it?

Neely Quinn: So either way, it helped. This is the first year you've done that?

Alex Puccio: Yeah, this is the first year that I've done that. I did it in a few other competitions. And when I didn't do the last boulder, I thought Ashima or someone before me would have done it. You can kind of see when they come back into isolation, but the last boulder, they stay out there. So I had no idea, I just knew it was hard. And I knew that we weren't- you know, if a guy and a girl finish really quickly, then you're going to go up, because it's the four plus clock. So I had no idea, I just knew that everyone was kind of like...using their time.

Neely Quinn: What did you think about number four? It looked hard.

Alex Puccio: It was really cool- it was hard. It was really fun. I found the beta the second try, it was kind of a long boulder. Involved. The second try, I was just so pumped, I fell off and I was on the ground, like how much time do I have? They said 30 seconds, and I was like, oh no, I'm so pumped. I was really impressed that I even got back up there. If you could feel what I was feeling- you're a sport climber- you know when you're hands are just opening up? That was what was happening, and I was like, oh no! I had the perfect beta the second try at the top- left hand-

Neely Quinn: I saw you execute that, it was so smart.

Alex Puccio: You know when you go to something and your hand just melts, you don't even stop. I couldn't. But if I found it that first try I'm pretty confident that I would have done it. When we were previewing the route with other girls, I said "I think this is the beta". And they were like "I don't think so". And I said, "I think it is..." And they were like, "I think the last hold is a jug". And I said "I don't think it's a jug, I think it's kind of bad". That's the hard part, I'm learning, previewing with other people. Sometimes it's good, and sometimes it makes you second guess. But I think ultimately, you have to really be smart about it and have your own intuitions and use those.

Brian Runnels: Ultimately it's up to you to decide in the moment what's going to work best for you.

Alex Puccio: I think I need to sport climb a little bit and I wouldn't be as pumped maybe, after trying it again. I think that's why I try and flash everything, because I know second try is going to be horrendous.

Neely Quinn: You going to try sport climbing?

Alex Puccio: I need to a little bit- I think for bouldering it helps. The boulders are really long here, and for the world cups they're eight holds or something per boulder, and they can't really exceed that. But here... our third boulder was really long too.

Brian Runnels: Yeah that was super strenuous looking.

Neely Quinn: There were a couple of those where you could actually rest for a while on them.

Alex Puccio: We were all back there and we were like “Margo is still on the wall!”.

Neely Quinn: Oh you could tell.

Brian Runnels: What is going on out there?

Alex Puccio: We could hear- we can tell when they fall because they crowd goes “ohhh”. You’re trying to wait and go, and so you’re trying to gauge your time because you have to be prepared, and we were like “I think she’s still on the wall”.

Neely Quinn: So are we going to see you at Lead Nationals?

Alex Puccio: I don’t know for sure, but I think it’s the same time as the Tri-State Championships- a big bouldering comp on the east coast. Scarpa, one of my main sponsors, is a main sponsor for that event. If it is the same time, I’ll be going to that one.

Neely Quinn: Well we’d love to see you there. What are your plans besides that? Are you going to go outside?

Alex Puccio: Yes. I’m going to start going outside a lot. I haven’t made definite plans, but I kind of want a loose year of deciding on the fly, if I’m psyched to go here or there and just see where it takes me. And do comps along the way if it lines up with my schedule.

Neely Quinn: Are you staying in Salt Lake, or are you going to move somewhere else?

Alex Puccio: Oh we’re staying here.

Brian Runnels: Alright Alex Puccio, congratulations, great to see

you back on top with your tenth national championship. It sounds kind of good doesn't it?

Alex Puccio: It does sound good. This is my 12th time I've competed in Adult- that's crazy.

Brian Runnels: Pretty strong record!

Brian Runnels: And most importantly, you have one more National Championship than Daniel Woods now, so you can remind him of that when you see him down on the floor out there.

Alex Puccio: And I'm the oldest by quite a bit in finals.

Brian Runnels: That's strong.

Neely Quinn: By six years! Well congratulations again.

Brian Runnels: Congratulations Alex, you gotta go out there and collect some money.

Alex Puccio: It's a good payday- I'm working hard for it.

Neely Quinn: You get both of them!

Brian Runnels: You're the national champion as well, so...

Neely Quinn: Yeah you get to collect for both!

Alex Puccio: It's a good payday. But I think winning this title actually meant more than the money itself, which is really cool. My mom cried- afterwards I hugged her and I started crying. Just thinking about it, I'm tearing up. I was like "Mom, stop it, you're

going to make me cry!”.

Neely Quinn: You should be proud too.

Alex Puccio: I am.

Brian Runnels: Alright, congratulations Alex, thanks for stopping by.

Alex Puccio: Thanks guys.

Sierra Blair-Coyle- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifications Interview

Brian Runnels: Sierra, welcome to the booth.

Sierra Blair-Coyle: Thank you for having me!

Brian Runnels: How did the round go for you out there?

Sierra Blair-Coyle: You know, it went pretty well. I flashed three problems, and then the other two- one I fell at the top on, and then the fourth one I kind of got to the 3/4 way mark. It was good, I think I'll be good for semis, but you never know until the round is over.

Brian Runnels: It seemed like the women's round started on some easier problems. Did you get a sense that they were easier than in years past, and how does that set you up? The third and fourth problems seemed much harder without a lot of ramp up between.

Sierra Blair-Coyle: Yeah that's definitely what I felt like. The first problem was, you know, it's slab, so even when it's easy you still feel

a little sketched out, especially the first problem- but the second wasn't too bad. The third problem, it just started to get real, and especially the fourth. The fourth was hard. I felt like fifth ramped it down again, so it was nice to end on that.

Brian Runnels: It's always a pleasure to watch you climb in these comps- you're a consistent competitor. It seems like the last couple of years you've gotten even better. How has your training and your climbing and your experience helped you consistently perform so well?

Sierra Blair-Coyle: I've been competing forever, so the experience factor is obviously there. I think one of the things that comes with competing for forever is you're not only getting more comfortable at it and more used to it, but you can identify your weaknesses. Every comp away I walk away from, whether I do well or not as well as I want to, I try and work on what I got exposed on, and I think doing the circuit last year for the World Cup- they're definitely a few things that really stood out. I was like "Okay, I need to take care of this and get as good at it as I can, because I want to be able to send everything".

Brian Runnels: If you had to point out one of the so-called weaknesses of yours in this comp, can you even think of anything?

Sierra Blair-Coyle: I definitely wasn't too pleased with how I did on the dyno on 4. I felt like I did well but I couldn't get my feet in, and I wish I'd maybe tried to go two hands to the black hold, instead of one hand to the black and one hand to the pink. Overall I didn't totally mess it up, but I think I could have done a little better.

Brian Runnels: We've seen a lot of women on that problem reading the sequence like you did, making it more complex than it

maybe needed to be. Is that something that you evaluate after the round and think about different ways that you could have approached the different problems?

Sierra Blair-Coyle: Definitely, and it's really helpful to see the other competitors after you're done climbing because it gives you different ideas. There is a set number of ways you can climb a boulder problem, but sometimes you just won't think of something and someone does, and you're like "Wow, that was the way to do it, I'll have to keep that in my bag of tricks".

Brian Runnels: Yeah it's super hard when the people at home don't realize just how pressure packed the situation is here. You don't have any preview, you've never seen the problem until you turn around and the clock starts ticking and then four minutes goes by really quickly.

Sierra Blair-Coyle: I think that's totally true, and I was talking to Connor Gurzi the other day actually. He said when you're a spectator it seems obvious- you're like, oh that's the obvious beta. And then you forget the next twenty people don't have the obvious beta to send, and they're starting from scratch again.

Brian Runnels: Does the four minute break between problems feel like it goes really quickly?

Sierra Blair-Coyle: Sometimes it goes by quickly, and sometimes it's slowly. For me if I'm flustered when I come off a problem it goes by fast. I'm like "Whoa I have to get my shoes back on and my chalk, what happened!". But if I did well or sent, I'm ready for the next boulder problem- let's go.

Brian Runnels: Cool. And what do you make of the field this year

for the women? Who are some of the competitors you're looking at and watching, and who should we be watching at home?

Sierra Blair-Coyle: I mean, all the women are really strong, but definitely Ashima and Brooke. I think this is their first year in Open, and everyone knows they are good. I think they'll perform really well. That being said, there are a ton of other strong competitors, but they're the two that I know of that just aged in.

Brian Runnels: Yeah I think a lot of people are watching them this year. It feels like they've been competing for a long time, for people who follow the Youth circuit, and obviously Ashima is one of the most famous climbers in the world. It's their first year of eligibility for Adult Nationals, it's kind of crazy.

Sierra Blair-Coyle: I can't believe it. I remember a few years ago, I was like "Man, Ashima is so good but at least I have another four years where she's not in Open", and she's in Open now and I'm competing against her.

Brian Runnels: Everyone's on notice now. That's funny. Alright well Sierra, thanks for stopping by the booth, we really appreciate you stopping by, and best of luck with this whole weekend.

Sierra Blair-Coyle: Yeah thanks for having me!

Kai Lightner- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifications Interview

Chris Weidner: Hi Kai, welcome. That sure was a pleasure to see you climb today. You looked a little flustered, but ultimately you

came away with four tops. Tell us how you felt.

Kai Lightner: Well, I'm happy that I got four tops and that I'm in semis, but I definitely made a lot of mistakes that I wasn't very happy about. But I think that it just gives me something to improve on for tomorrow, so I'm just going to go in and try my best.

Chris Weidner: What are some of the mistakes you made you think?

Kai Lightner: Well I think sometimes I've lost a little bit of concentration, maybe on number one and number three and number 5...

[laughter]

But I think tomorrow I really just have to be in competitor mode and make every attempt count, because the scoring system every attempt does count. It can make the difference between being just out of finals and finals.

Neely Quinn: Is it hard to keep your concentration, are you nervous, or what's going on?

Kai Lightner: I've been competing for eleven years, so I've figured out how to keep my nerves under wraps. I think what it was, that I haven't done so many competitions since I had a back injury last year. I have done Darkhorse and such, but I'm still just kind of getting back into the groove of competing and being in this atmosphere, so I have to keep my head in the game.

Chris Weidner: Do you feel more comfortable or less comfortable in a bouldering competition than in a roped comp?

Kai Lightner: I think that I've gotten a lot better in bouldering in the last few months. I think that I feel a little more comfortable, but I still recognize the fact that bouldering is really stacked and we have a lot of really great competitors who have yet to come. So I just have to stay on my A game and make sure that I'm on point.

Neely Quinn: Can you tell us a little bit about your back injury? What happened and how you are recovering?

Kai Lightner: Last year I fractured two parts of my back, in my T1 and my T2, and because of that I took about four months off of climbing, where I couldn't raise my arms above my shoulders.

Neely Quinn: Wow.

Kai Lightner: After four months, I spent the next two months just kind of climbing in the gym maybe an hour at a time, doing lots of rehab exercises and just trying to get mobility back in my arms. That was around October, and I still had to do the Youth World Championships. It was a little bit stressful at the time, and really frustrating for me. But I definitely think that I'm back from that, and I'm really psyched to move on into these next competitions.

Chris Weidner: Nice.

Neely Quinn: So what's your hope for this competition?

Kai Lightner: I hope... well, I mean, the goal for everyone I think is to just go out there, approach each boulder, boulder by boulder, focus, and do your best on each climb. Really if I do that, I have nothing to be disappointed about. Last year I did make finals here, and I hope to do it again- I always have goals in mind. We'll see.

Chris Weidner: Alright, well four tops, and you looked really great out there. Besides a few frustrating moments, you always seem to deliver. Hopefully we will see you in semis, I'm pretty sure we will.

Kai Lightner: Thank you.

Neely Quinn: Good luck out there!

Chris Weidner: Thank you so much for joining us Kai.

Kai Lightner: No problem, thanks for having me!

Kai Lightner- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Finals Interview

Chris Weidner: And now we have sitting next to us, Kai Lightner. Barely enough time to dry to sweat from his brow after making that fourth problem. Kai, you gave it your all on that last problem, tell us about that.

Kai Lightner: Yeah, that boulder was really powerful and I mean, if I had to pick a boulder for me, that wouldn't be it. But I just really wanted to top this boulder, because it was the last boulder and I wanted to put on a good show. I just gave it everything I had and I was really happy I was able to top it.

Neely Quinn: Yeah, you were sitting there in that kneebar for a little bit, using your route climbing skills.

Kai Lightner: If there's one thing I know how to do it's rest.

[laughter]

Chris Weidner: Coming into finals you were in first place, and it was tough to say how that would shake out- there were so many strong men, and you finished a very close second place. Did you feel that kind of confidence during the whole round?

Kai Lightner: Yeah, I felt really strong warming up, and semi-finals definitely gave me a little bit of confidence. When we were reading the boulders, I really liked what I saw. I was just really excited to go out and climb.

Chris Weidner: When you came out for number 3 for that dyno to the crimp, you knew that Nathaniel had just done it. How did the pressure feel?

Kai Lightner: Well, the jump was really awkward, and I knew once I fell on that boulder that I had a slim chance of winning. Then sitting in ISO and hearing that Nathaniel flashed the fourth one, I knew I couldn't win. So my mindset just changed to topping the last boulder.

Neely Quinn: Was it disappointment that you felt at all?

Kai Lightner: I don't know if it was disappointment. I don't think anyone who showed up today came to get second place

[laughter]

Not taking away, I'm proud of the place I got and I think it's awesome. It's just the fact that we're all shooting to win. So when I realized that it was out of my reach for the moment, I just had to switch my mindset from playing the attempts game to just topping

the boulder.

Chris Weidner: And that switch was very effective.

Kai Lightner: Thanks. I think that one thing that was maybe a little frustrating, was that I felt the first three boulders were just genuinely too easy. I think maybe it was a little bit frustrating in knowing that he [Nathaniel Coleman] flashed all four, and that I didn't even have a shot. But still. I was still happy to do what I did.

Neely Quinn: I think there are some competitors that would disagree with you about them being too easy.

Kai Lightner: Yeah exactly- maybe they were too easy for you and Nathaniel, but they sure put up a fight for a lot of folks.

Neely Quinn: Today you seem a lot more confident and grounded than you did yesterday. What was the difference?

Kai Lightner: I've never considered myself a boulderer, I've always trained ropes. It's just always been part of training and who I am since I started climbing. I actually wasn't allowed to boulder until six years into climbing. It was always just a discipline that I didn't have a lot of confidence in because it wasn't where my training was focused. Recently, I've gotten stronger and I've been training really hard, and I've had a few comps in the past that have given me some confidence. Being able to test that out and see, oh, I can hang with all these guys, was just really a confidence booster. It gave me a lot of confidence going in today.

Neely Quinn: So what are you going to train for next?

Kai Lightner: Well right now I'm going to be training for Youth

Nationals next weekend, and I'm still in Junior. I still have two more years in Youth, so I'm going to try for that. After that is rope Nationals, which is the beginning of March.

Neely Quinn: We'll be there.

Kai Lightner: Yeah it's really exciting.

Neely Quinn: I have a question about how it feels to compete against the youth as opposed to being here. How do you do that?

Kai Lightner: Well, I think that the style of boulders are different. I find that in Youth, the moves are a bit smaller, the climbs are less powerful, and it's more so just about being able to climb efficiently and not doing too many attempts. You don't want foot slips, or too many attempts, because that can be the difference between first and fifth. I think it's just about staying focused. I do still have some competition, out on the floor actually Shawn Rabotou is in Junior also.

Chris Weidner: Ah yes.

Kai Lightner: And Drew Ruana, who just missed out on Finals. He's also Junior.

Neely Quinn: Yeah he just missed out.

Chris Weidner: Which competition style do you think fits your style better, the Adult Nationals or Youth Nationals?

Kai Lightner: Oh definitely Adult, hands down. I don't know if anyone has noticed, but I'm not kid sized.

[laughter]

Neely Quinn: You are a large size.

Kai Lightner: So I find that Youth, when everyone else is so much shorter than me, it's a little more difficult for the routesetters to cater to everyone. But in Open the boulders are more powerful, the competitors are a lot bigger, and there's a lot more room for diversity. Definitely Open suits me better.

Neely Quinn: Speaking of the routesetting, any quick thoughts on these routes besides them being too easy?

[laughter]

Kai Lightner: I think that the one thing they did a really good job with was diversity. I think number 1 was slab, number 2 was a run and jump, number 3 was a little coordination jump thing, and number 4 was super powerful. They definitely got the diversity thing going down, and it was really fun to climb every boulder.

Neely Quinn: That's what they were going for, so that's good to hear. Well good luck in Youth, and good job tonight, we loved watching you.

Chris Weidner: You have to repeat this all over again next weekend.

Kai Lightner: I only have two more years though, so after that it's going to be only Adult.

Neely Quinn: Got it. We we look forward to seeing you next month in Denver, Colorado for the sport climbing Nationals.

Kai Lightner: Yeah that's definitely the discipline I've trained the hardest for, so we will see how I do.

Chris Weidner: Alright, Kai, thanks so much for joining us, really appreciate your time.

Kai Lightner: No problem, thanks for having me!

Maya Madere- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifications Interview

Chris Weidner: Joining us in the booth we have Maya Madere. Great, great performance out there. How did you feel about that?

Maya Madere: I was pretty psyched, thank you so much. This is only my second time competing in Open Nationals, so it was definitely a lot of fun. The problems are really cool. I especially liked number 4. Those moves are super varied and challenging, I liked the balance of different holds.

Chris Weidner: Nice. And you now, you are still, I believe- I missed a few competitors- but you go the first if not the only top of W3. Really impressive. What clicked for you on that?

Maya Madere: Well, you know, slab climbing is normally not my forte, but I saw that it was a slab, and I thought "Okay, I'm going to have to go really slow on this", and I got to the last move and realized I wasn't going to be able to try it again because I was out of time. I think that's probably what gave me the extra try to hard actually stick the move- knowing that if I fell that was going to be it.

Chris Weidner: Nice. And it was a perfect read.

Maya Madere: Thanks!

Chris Weidner: That was great.

Maya Madere: I've been working on that skill a lot this year-reading. It used to be a big challenge for me but I've been working at it.

Neely Quinn: So you train onsighting at the gym?

Maya Madere: Yes. I live in Austin, where Austin Bouldering Project just opened this year, and I think it's the biggest bouldering gym in the country. There's always a lot of new boulders in there for me to practice onsighting.

Neely Quinn: I was wondering about that- do you do comp rehearsals, where you only give yourself four minutes?

Maya Madere: Yeah, I'm on a youth team actually. I'm 18, so I'm about to age out, but we do mock competitions a lot. Last weekend we had one where the whole team- or as much of the team as could make it- came in and just set up a round based in the same format as this, and just four minutes on four minutes off.

Neely Quinn: Do you feel like it helped?

Maya Madere: I feel like it really, really helps. That kind of practice is definitely one of the most important things for me to prepare for onsights.

Neely Quinn: Probably a lot mentally.

Maya Madere: Oh yeah. It's all mental game for me.

Chris Weidner: And speaking of, Meagan Martin right now is trying W3, just a minute and a half left. But she tagged the finishing hold but didn't quite hold it. We saw the same from Margo Hayes. You just seemed to grab that thing correctly.

Maya Madere: I think I got really lucky. I hit it in the exact right spot.

Neely Quinn: Is there a little pinch on it?

Maya Madere: Yeah it's a bad sloper, and it gets a little bit better if you get closer to the outside. I hit it and then my hand slid a little bit, and I was able to re-grab it. There's a little lip on the bottom that you could thumb catch.

Neely Quinn: Lucky you. I have a question- you said that you've only been in the Open category a couple of times.

Maya Madere: Yeah this is my second Open.

Neely Quinn: Is it intimidating?

Maya Madere: Oh yes. It's very intimidating. A lot of these people, obviously, they're famous. I've seen their names in the news and in Rock and Ice and stuff, and it's pretty surreal to be competing against them in person. It can definitely be intimidating, but I really like the experience. It's thrilling more than scary.

Neely Quinn: Yeah that's good. Do you have high hopes for this

comp?

Maya Madere: Um, yeah. I think- hopefully I'll be able to keep my act together in semi-finals. Usually I have a pattern of having a better performance in qualifiers than semi-finals, but hopefully I'll break out of that pattern this time. This year I feel a lot more prepared than last year, so hopefully things go in my favor.

Chris Weidner: So far it shows.

Maya Madere: Thanks!

Chris Weidner: Thanks so much for joining us in the booth Maya- really appreciate it.

Margo Hayes- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifications Interview

Neely Quinn: Hi Margo!

Margo Hayes: Hello!

Neely Quinn: How are you?

Margo Hayes: Good, doing well.

Neely Quinn: How was it out there?

Margo Hayes: It was fun, the climbs were really enjoyable. The setters definitely did an awesome job, I was happy climbing on every single one of them.

Chris Weidner: That's awesome. One thing we noticed is that there were a couple of problems that you put a lot of effort into. You came down, you looked at the clock, and you had to make that quick decision of do I try again. It seems like you pretty much always made the decision to try again, and I think it paid off. What do you think?

Margo Hayes: Yeah, I think it paid off. I was on number 3, and I fell on the last move twice. Of course now I'm sitting here like, oh I want to try it again. W4, I took a couple kind of nasty falls, but I always want to try again. I always have so much fun when I'm on the wall, so it's hard, when I'm making the decision to go or not to go, most of the time I decide to go just because I want to get back on it.

Neely Quinn: We noticed that you looked a little uncomfortable after a couple of those falls- are you okay?

Margo Hayes: Yeah I'm okay, my back is definitely sore. But you know, it's all good. Take a hot shower and get to bed early and be psyched for tomorrow.

Chris Weidner: Is that kind of the same pain from your back injury way back in the Pan Ams?

Margo Hayes: Um, it can kind of be pain that I get once in a while, and I think that it's due to that injury, but it's nothing serious. Nothing that will hold me back.

Neely Quinn: Good. You spent a lot of time sport climbing this year. Do you feel like you've prepared a lot for a bouldering comp?

Margo Hayes: I've done quite a bit of sport climbing and bouldering. When I climb outside, at least for the past several years,

I've really only sport climbed. But I'd like to get into more bouldering outside. But I have trained both.

Neely Quinn: Cool. So what are your hopes for this comp?

Margo Hayes: Well, my hopes for this comp are- my goal is to top every climb. I didn't succeed in that in this round, but I'll bring that to the next round.

Neely Quinn: And you're living in France right now?

Margo Hayes: I am, I'm in Aix-en-Provence. It's in the south, about thirty minutes north of Marseilles.

Neely Quinn: And how long do you get to be there?

Margo Hayes: Originally I was going to stay there about four months, and I was going to be back in Boulder by December, but I decided to extend my visa. Now I will be there through the World Cup season, until October.

Neely Quinn: Well it will be easier for you to get to the World Cups.

Margo Hayes: Exactly, it'll be cheaper that way staying there, and it's nice to be immersed learning another language. That's something I'd really like to progress in my French and eventually be fluent.

Neely Quinn: Yeah that's exciting. What will you do to prepare for tomorrow?

Margo Hayes: For tomorrow? Probably go eat some yummy food,

and then get to bed pretty early, and I have homework to do. I'll be doing that. And I'll be watching the comp at the same time, because the men are going so late. They're definitely troopers hanging in ISO for so long. It's wonderful to be here with so many motivated climbers. The community is so fantastic. Every time I come to a comp I'm just reminded.

Neely Quinn: It's good to be home then.

Chris Weidner: Cool, well it sure is fun to watch you climb. It's a little surprising to hear you say that you really have fun when you're on the wall competing. You're actually having fun when you're doing those problems.

Margo Hayes: Yeah, most of the time I feel very happy when I'm on the wall. I really enjoy it.

Chris Weidner: Awesome.

Margo Hayes: Yeah it's wonderful.

Neely Quinn: Well good luck to you, we love watching you.

Margo Hayes: Thank you, that's really sweet. I love watching all the other climbers, it's so fun to see the different beta that people choose.

Neely Quinn: It is, it's been really interesting.

Margo Hayes: Yeah, it's gonna be a really exciting weekend, I'm excited.

Neely Quinn: Cool, well looking forward to seeing you tomorrow.

Margo Hayes: Thank you, I appreciate it!

Chris Weidner: Rest well, thanks so much for joining us Margo.

Ashima Shiraishi- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifications Interview

Chris Weidner: And joining us in the booth, it is our pleasure to bring you Ashima Shiraishi. Welcome.

Ashima Shiraishi: Thank you!

Chris Weidner: That was so, so fun to watch you climb.

Ashima Shiraishi: Thank you so much!

Neely Quinn: How did you feel out there?

Ashima Shiraishi: I was extremely nervous, and in isolation, I was just trying to calm my nerves. Even during the comp, I was super nervous the whole time, because this is my first ABS Nationals. So, I was filled with excitement, which probably helped.

Chris Weidner: It's amazing because you did not look nervous at all. It looked like you had not a single feather ruffled, even while you were climbing. How did you mask that so well? That nervousness?

Ashima Shiraishi: I don't really prefer to do competitions that often, so I'm not used to it as much as other competitors are. I feel like I prefer to climb outside, so once in a while when I do these

competitions, I put a lot of energy into them. I feel like I've prepared a lot for this one.

Chris Weidner: Excellent. So were any of those problems hard for you?

Ashima Shiraishi: Yeah they were all pretty challenging, especially number three and number four. Those were the hardest for me.

Neely Quinn: Yeah we noticed on number three you grabbed the finish hold differently than any other competitor. Did you see something over there to the right?

Ashima Shiraishi: Yeah- actually my dad, he always tells me that it's a bad habit for me- but I have this habit of really looking at the climb for a long time, before I try the problem. With this one, I was looking at the problem, and I saw that next to where all the chalk is on the side, it looked like there was a better part to hold on to. When I jumped to it, I grabbed the side instead of where all the chalk was, and it was better I think.

Chris Weidner: Well you're the only competitor to have flashed all the problems, giving you the hashtag "flashima" online.

[laughter]

Neely Quinn: So going into tomorrow now with the confidence of that- does that help you for tomorrow? Do you feel a little more in the game than you could be today?

Ashima Shiraishi: I feel like- I don't know. Tomorrow is a different day, and the climbs are going to be different. I can't really expect myself to do anything. But I feel like this gave me some confidence

in myself, and it sort of gave me an image of where I am in this competition. I'm excited for tomorrow, yeah.

Neely Quinn: What does it mean to you to be competing against Alex Puccio on the stage?

Ashima Shiraishi: It's not my first time that I've competed against Alex Puccio, but she's one of my heroes, and it's an honor to compete against her and so many of these other talented climbers.

Neely Quinn: What do you think about the differences in the styles of your climbing between you and Alex Puccio?

Ashima Shiraishi: Alex and I have dramatically different styles, and she's really powerful. I'm more static and prefer to, you know, not jump to everything. I feel like on different climbs it's nice to see the contrasting styles.

Neely Quinn: Yeah, it's really cool for us too.

Chris Weidner: Definitely fun to watch you climb. We're all looking forward to seeing you tomorrow, definitely, in semi finals. And I'd imagine in the finals as well.

Ashima Shiraishi: Thank you.

Chris Weidner: Is there anything in particular you're worried about in the finals?

Ashima Shiraishi: I don't know- I feel like I'm just worried that I would get super nervous and doubt myself. I feel like at some competitions I end up doubting myself, and that's what makes me not do as well as I expect myself to. I just hope that I keep myself

together mentally.

Neely Quinn: Do you have any tactics for calming yourself down?

Ashima Shiraishi: I don't do too many comps, but what works for me is just focusing on my breathing, and look up sometimes. Looking down really makes me flustered, so I like to just look up at the ceiling or something, and just focus on a certain spot.

Neely Quinn: That's interesting. Well good luck to you.

Chris Weidner: Yeah, Ashima, thank you so much for joining us in the booth here, it's great to talk to you. I hope we will be talking to you in the booth again tomorrow.

Ashima Shiraishi: Yeah, thank you so much!

Daniel Woods- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifications Interview

Chris Weidner: Daniel Woods, welcome to the broadcast booth sir.

Daniel Woods: How's it going?

Chris Weidner: Good how are you doing?

Daniel Woods: Whoo, pretty good.

Chris Weidner: How are you feeling today? We've been talking about your round quite a bit today, it was very interesting for a lot of reasons.

Daniel Woods: Oh perfect [laughs].

Chris Weidner: What do you make of how things went out there?

Daniel Woods: Um, I guess it is what it is, you know? I felt sort of good, but I just didn't climb the best I've ever climbed before. The nature of competitions. But the boulders were well set, and they were powerful, and actually really fun to climb on. My head just wasn't completely in the game. I'm kind of on the bubble at the moment.

Chris Weidner: Kind of a waiting game for you, hanging out to see.

Daniel Woods: I've kind of accepted my fate and I might just move on [laughs]. We'll see what happens.

Chris Weidner: A couple of the problems in the middle of the round, the third boulder, the technical slab that we are looking at here.

Daniel Woods: Yeah.

Chris Weidner: What do you make of how things went on that problem?

Daniel Woods: I mean, I didn't feel the best on it I guess. It was, to be honest, a straight forward boulder, just kind of had to stick to the slopers and trust the feet, but there wasn't any trickery or anything to it. I guess this morning for some reason, I couldn't stick to any of the grips, they felt like-

Chris Weidner: It was pretty early in the round still.

Daniel Woods: They felt like too new, I don't know. Like they didn't have enough chalk on them. I don't know, I'd always get purchase on them and feel my body sliding out. Yeah, it is what it is [laughs].

Chris Weidner: Then you moved onto the fourth problem, and we knew at the time you had this moment on the problem. You were one of the first climbers- I think the first climber- to actually stick the moves and get onto the headwall.

Daniel Woods: To that crimper yeah.

Chris Weidner: You fell going to the finish hold- we knew at the time that was probably an important difference given how problem three had gone for you. Did that affect how you climbed on problem 5 at all, or was that out of your mind? It seemed like you struggled a little bit on that one.

Daniel Woods: It was pretty much out of my mind. In general, problem number 5 isn't my forte. I'm probably not the best coordination climber out there. I knew after I fell off of number 4, I was like "Oh man, I need that third climb to secure a semi-finals spot". That was my shot to do that, but I don't know. I was disappointed for five seconds and then you just move on.

Chris Weidner: Yeah you just do the best you can.

Daniel Woods: Exactly.

Neely Quinn: How are you feeling about comp climbing in general these days?

Daniel Woods: I think it's cool. I feel pretty psyched on it. I haven't

had the best last couple of comps- Dark Horse didn't go so well for me, and then this hasn't gone that well. But to be honest, the level of climbing is just going up right now. There's a lot of new, really good, talented climbers getting into it. The style is getting a little bit different... you just have to really be on your A game to be able to make it into the rounds. It's definitely felt like a lot of pressure, and just trying to deal with the pressure and accept it, and be like "Hey look, this is just one day". I'm not going to stop competing because I had one bad comp. It's just a good learning experience. I actually feel more psyched because I didn't go good [laughs].

Neely Quinn: Interesting. The challenge.

Daniel Woods: I kind of want to go back and perfect some things and stuff like that.

Neely Quinn: How have you been preparing? I know you've been Moonboarding at the BRC a little bit.

Daniel Woods: A little Moonboard, but the Moonboard is probably the worst way to prepare for a comp like this.

Chris Weidner: There aren't many Moonboard style problems here.

Daniel Woods: No, it's better for outdoors. I was hitting it up a lot, but I took a break because I knew I had these comps coming up. Mostly just been in Movement, a little bit at ABC and stuff.

Neely Quinn: Just bouldering?

Daniel Woods: Just bouldering, yeah. Trying to set some funk, but it's kind of hard to set it on your own. It's good to have someone

else help set it for you.

Neely Quinn: Yeah. I saw you doing- there was some video of you doing one arms with weight in your other arm.

Daniel Woods: Oh yeah.

Neely Quinn: How do you feel like that helps?

Chris Weidner: Helps your Instagram.

[laughter]

Daniel Woods: I don't think- I don't know. The thing is, I don't think raw, pure strength is necessarily key to doing well in these things. It's more coming to problem solving, and being confident, and just being able to read moves well, and execute them well. I'll just figure out what to do next, I guess, after this.

Neely Quinn: Any projects outside that you have right now, or any trips coming up?

Daniel Woods: Umm- oh nice, Josh just did number one. Coming up, the goal is try to get to Europe in March. Other than that I'll probably be at the Rodeo next weekend, and then the goal was to do some of the World Cups as well starting in April. It also depends if the whole US team decides to go do it, then that kind of eliminates that goal [laughs], because they only send four people. But over the years, there's usually a spot open.

Neely Quinn: Cool.

Daniel Woods: Maybe I'll luck out.

Neely Quinn: Well nice work today.

Daniel Woods: Thank you.

Neely Quinn: We'll keep our fingers crossed for you.

Daniel Woods: Sounds good, thanks.

Chris Weidner: We definitely hope to see you out there in semi-finals going for ten.

Daniel Woods: We'll see what happens, but eh. It happens sometimes.

Chris Weidner: We really appreciate you stopping by.

Daniel Woods: Yeah no worries, nice hanging out.

Nathaniel Coleman- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Qualifications Interview

Chris Weidner: Welcome, Nathaniel.

Nathaniel Coleman: Thank you. Hello everybody.

Chris Weidner: It's great to have you here. You are the defending champion from last year. It appeared like you were off to a little bit of a slow start to be honest, but you topped out every single problem, and you're the only guy to do so, so far. Tell us a little bit about how it went and how it felt.

Nathaniel Coleman: I agree with you, after the first problem I was a little bit bummed. My finger was hurting a little bit more than usual. But then, luckily, thank god, the routesetters threw in a kind of easier slopey-er one and then my finger felt great.

Neely Quinn: You just needed some slopers.

Nathaniel Coleman: Yeah, from then I was just on a roll. I was lucky enough to flash number 3, which was tedious. You're always on the edge of falling off, and from there it was just momentum.

Chris Weidner: And you were the only guy to have done mens 4.

Nathaniel Coleman: Solomon Barth finished it.

Chris Weidner: I mean up until that point, and then right after Solomon did it as well. But that was amazing, because we were all commentating on how tired you looked, and then thirty seconds to go, bam. How did you do that?

Nathaniel Coleman: I don't know... I was kind of putzing around at the beginning for a while. But once I had already gotten to that hold and already felt how it was, I knew I was able to do the problem. I was honestly thinking, if I can stick this white hold, it'll put me above a lot of people in the rankings, because I know the scoring system is kind of comparative to other climbers. I was just really intent on catching that, and once I caught that, I knew I could finish the problem if I went fast.

Neely Quinn: Nice work.

Nathaniel Coleman: Thanks man.

Chris Weidner: Super, super impressive.

Neely Quinn: So tell us about your finger, what happened to it?

Nathaniel Coleman: I was climbing in Moe's Valley/Saint George, just trying to flash this boulder problem. I was on a good hold, actually, with my left hand, three finger crimping, and I pulled into try and get a right heel hook up. It popped, and I heard it, but my buddy didn't hear it, and a camera that was recording didn't hear it, which is funny. I think the diagnosis is either partial or full rupture of my a4 pulley in my right ring finger.

Neely Quinn: How long ago did that happen?

Nathaniel Coleman: That happened, I want to say, three or four weeks ago.

Neely Quinn: Oh, so this is new.

Nathaniel Coleman: This is new, yeah.

Neely Quinn: Have you taken time off?

Nathaniel Coleman: Yeah, I didn't climb for about two weeks. Maybe it happened more than a month ago now that I think about it. I didn't climb for two weeks, and I wasn't able to compete in the Dark Horse championships, which I was really bummed about. But I've been climbing pretty well in the gym, I sent my first v10 in the gym since being back, right before this comp, so that was a confidence booster.

Chris Weidner: That's awesome. And it's showing here- the only

person to top out all five. Well we wish you the best of luck.

Nathaniel Coleman: Thank you.

Chris Weidner: Thanks for talking to us.

Nathaniel Coleman: Yeah thanks for having me!

Nathaniel Coleman- 2017 Bouldering Open National Championships Finals Interview

Brian Runnels: Nathaniel, incredible job.

Nathaniel Coleman: Thank you, hi everybody.

Chris Weidner: Yeah, welcome to the booth. That was amazing watching you flash all four of the finals problems. Really setting the scene, making us all think they're easy, and then watching everybody else.

Nathaniel Coleman: Thank you, very much.

Chris Weidner: How did you do it?

Nathaniel Coleman: It was a mental state of going first in the running order. It's a completely different game. You walk out, and you're not worried about doing the wrong beta, and having everybody think you're stupid or anything. You're not worried about even topping, because you're setting the bar.

Chris Weidner: That's right, and what a bar you set.

Brian Runnels: How did you feel? We talked yesterday and you said you had a bit of a finger injury. It didn't seem to slow you down at all this evening.

Nathaniel Coleman: Yeah I got incredibly lucky. The setting was really conducive to my style, there were no really heinous left hand crimps or anything. Yeah. I think I just got really lucky, or maybe the setters were favoring me a little bit [laughs].

Chris Weidner: I doubt that, but wow. You just seemed to explode on the scene here, and all that after barely making it into the finals, Nathaniel. What was the difference for you between the semi-final round just this morning, and the finals tonight?

Nathaniel Coleman: I think it was the style of problems that made it most, you know? I love doing dynos, I love coordination moves, so when I saw number 2 and 3, I walked back into ISO after preview, and I was just psyched. I was so excited. Then when 1 went so well, I just knew that I had good roads ahead of me. And the home crowd, man. That was unreal.

Brian Runnels: Really great crowd here this year.

Nathaniel Coleman: For sure.

Chris Weidner: And here we have Alex Puccio, on her final problem. She can secure a victory right now with a top of this problem.

Brian Runnels: This means everything for Alex Puccio right now.

Nathaniel Coleman: Come on Alex! That would be really cool to have a double local win, I think.

Brian Runnels: Oh yeah, right. Alex is out here in Salt Lake as well.

Chris Weidner: Yeah, absolutely a double Salt Lake representing- this could be for the win here if Alex Puccio makes this happen.

Brian Runnels: Just one move away from her tenth national championship.

Nathaniel Coleman: Yeah, come on!

Brian Runnels: We're all rooting for Alex at this moment.

Chris Weidner: What a great moment it is!

Brian Runnels: And Alexi making moves on men's 4 there as well. A lot of sports action right now at finals.

Chris Weidner: Incredible efforts.

Brian Runnels: There's a top from Alexi.

Chris Weidner: And Alexi getting only the second top of that problem after Nathaniel Coleman here!

Nathaniel Coleman: And a stylish kneebar finish, that was a nice touch.

Chris Weidner: Heck yeah.

Nathaniel Coleman: I think one of the keys on that move up over the lip was you either had to stick the hold low and then bump so you could get your thumb around it, or just jump straight to the

thumb.

Chris Weidner: And you just made these decisions right on the fly?

Nathaniel Coleman: Yeah.

Chris Weidner: That was amazing.

Nathaniel Coleman: Thank you, it was a good climbing session. I felt confident, and no hesitation really helps.

Chris Weidner: So good.

Brian Runnels: There's Alex back on, pretty quickly.

Nathaniel Coleman: Props to the routesetters for giving two such viable betas. Ashima did this so much differently.

Brian Runnels: Yeah it's been really cool to watch her make up her own sequences all weekend long here.

Nathaniel Coleman: Yeah [laughs].

Chris Weidner: I mean everything she's done was unique.

Nathaniel Coleman: The potential to unlock crazy betas, with her flexibility, it's like a whole different climber.

Brian Runnels: Such a different approach from Alex Puccio, we talked about it a lot yesterday. Ashima even acknowledged it, they just have such completely different styles. That's what makes climbing such a beautiful sport.

Chris Weidner: Two different approaches, same result. What do you think, Nathaniel is going through Kai's mind right now, as he quickly reviews this problem and is stepping up?

Nathaniel Coleman: I'm not sure, I hope he's not thinking about anything other than the climb. I know that we were back in ISO talking about who was leading, and what we had to do to beat each other out. I think he's an experienced enough climber that he can shut all that out and just do his thing on the wall.

Chris Weidner: Nice.

Brian Runnels: Kai is likely on the podium already, but can solidify his second place finish here with a strong showing on this final problem.

Chris Weidner: Wow. Kai Lightner.

Nathaniel Coleman: Massive hands, he can pinch the bottom of that thing you know? Come on Kai. Classic sport climber.

Chris Weidner: Yeah, amazing right? Shaking out on the worst holds.

Brian Runnels: Did you even bring a chalk bag up there Nathaniel?

Nathaniel Coleman: I did, I didn't use it [laughs].

Chris Weidner: Just for the crowds afterwards.

Nathaniel Coleman: That's right.

Chris Weidner: Oh- Kai not making the flash.

Chris Weidner: Nathaniel, it was great to see you. We got some fun shots of you and your friends here, in the crowd right after you came down.

Nathaniel Coleman: Oh, I know!

Chris Weidner: It seems like you got a lot of love from your hometown crowd, your competitors, everybody.

Nathaniel Coleman: They're fantastic man. I jumped off this final boulder, and I'm ecstatic that I did it, but I'm not thinking about if I won or not. And then I see my friends and they just bear hugged me and I know it's happened. That's when it's real.

Chris Weidner: That's really what climbing is all about.

Brian Runnels: Alright congratulations Nathaniel Coleman, our two time defending National Champion now. We'll see you at the awards ceremony.

Chris Weidner: Yeah we'll see you at the awards ceremony, thanks so much for joining us Nathaniel.

Nathaniel Coleman: Thank you guys!