

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: GENE SAUERS**  
**Friday, August 28, 2015**



**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** Gene, you birdied two of the last three holes to get in at 6-under 66 and you're right now the first-round leader in the event. Just talk us through the day.

**GENE SAUERS:** Well, right now I think there's still some good players out there, aren't there? I drove the ball really, really great today. I might have missed one fairway, but I hit a lot of fairways, which gave me opportunities to kind of fire at the pin. You know, that's all I concentrated on today was fairways and greens and give yourself opportunities. I did that and it worked out today, just hopefully it will keep going for two more days.

Anyway, you want to talk about my birdies? No. 2, I hit a sand wedge in there about 15 feet, maybe less than that. Then the par 5, hit 3-wood in there, it was probably about 12, 15 feet. Lipped out for eagle there. And 8 and 9, I hit 3-wood over the green just off the back and chipped it up about six, seven feet. And 9, I hit a pitching wedge in there, I was probably three feet, two, three feet. Then 13 was a driver, 9-iron that was just left of the hole. Had a big breaker left to right, that was probably 12 feet. And 16, I hit sand wedge in there just below the hole, that was probably six feet. And 17, hit 7-iron just left of the hole, had another big left-to-righter and that was probably another 10-, 12-footer. So overall I putted pretty good. That kind of takes all the pressure off everything else.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** What did you do at 7, the par 3?

**GENE SAUERS:** Oh, yeah, the par 3. I hit it left in the bunker and had a downhill lie. Didn't hit a great bunker shot and had probably an 18-footer for par, just ran it by the lip there. Just a bad swing off the tee.

Overall it was a great day. You can't complain. I've always had trouble putting the ball, that's probably the worst part of my game, but now it's going to be my best part of the game. Putting really good. I got a putting lesson from a friend of mine back home, so we'll see if it just holds up.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** You tied for fourth here two years ago. You obviously like En-Joie?

**GENE SAUERS:** Yeah, I do. Like I say, it's tight, tree lined, and like I say, I drive the ball fairly straight so it's a good golf course for me.

**Q. How were the conditions today?**

**GENE SAUERS:** Conditions are great. You're getting a lot of roll out of the fairways. They've got a lot of grass in the fairways so you're getting good lies. The greens are receptive. They're a little on the firm side, but they hold a shot. Might just have to watch it a little bit if the pin's in the back or something, you don't want to fire all the way back there because you'll bounce over the back of it, so you've got to protect yourself a little bit there.

But actually the greens might be a little on the slow side. I'm used to these greens being a little speedy and they're a little on the slow side, I think, this year. Of course, they might speed up the weekend. Of course, me saying this, they'll probably yeah, we're going to double cut 'em now.

**Q. Last year we had a 59. Do you see that happening again?**

**GENE SAUERS:** Yeah, like I said, I played with him, Kevin Sutherland, sure did. That was something to see there. I remember on No. 11, the pin was in the back right and he hit it on the back left. I don't know if you know No. 11 green, it's got that big hill. I said I think this is going to be his first par. Nope. Boom, he made that one. I said, God almighty. And then he didn't birdie the next hole, the par 5, which is an easy kind of birdie. Got to hit a good drive, but he didn't birdie that one there. But that was a sight to see. It was pretty awesome.

**Q. You hit 16 of 18 greens today. Can you talk about that?**

**GENE SAUERS:** Me, 16 of 18 greens?

**Q. Yeah.**

**GENE SAUERS:** Like I say, that's kind of my strategy every time I go out and play. Fairways and greens, just try not to make stupid mistakes. Well, that was a stupid mistake on that par 3, but other than that I played great. Like I say, I've been struggling a little bit with my iron game. You know, I could talk about it, but I mean it's just sometimes when I look down, the angles are a little off. I feel like that clubface is shut. I think that's why I hit it left on that par 3 there. I've been struggling with that lately. I've been hitting some left shots in the fairways with my irons. I'm working on that. If I could straighten that out, I'd be tough to beat.

**Q. Just talk about being in the lead, or as far as we know in the lead. Has it been a while since you've been in this position?**

**GENE SAUERS:** I've had a good couple years out here. I haven't won. I lost in a couple playoffs. I lost in the U.S. Open and I lost in Houston in a couple playoffs. But other than that I've played pretty solid, I just haven't got the job done yet. I'm just going to keep fighting until I do.

**Q. Were you surprised at all that the scores have been good today? A lot of guys are under par, but do you feel like there was a 64 or 63 out there or something like that out there today?**

**GENE SAUERS:** You know, these guys are capable of shooting some low numbers. I've seen it and watched it. I think this is going to be -- there's going to be a low one out there before the week's out.

**Q. When you were with last year's 59 and you saw that, what were you thinking about when you're coming on the second nine today, you know that that was a feasible type of a round, did that help you a little bit, you know you can shoot really, really well coming in on the last nine?**

**GENE SAUERS:** I didn't really think about Kevin's round at all out there playing. I'm in my own zone. I don't want to sit here and wander off, that's when you start making mistakes. There is always low rounds out there. Like I say, you've just got to give yourself opportunities. It was tough to really judge the speed of the greens because I'm used to them being pretty fast and I wasn't sure how hard to hit it. Sometimes you hit it hard and it goes way up, or you hit it too easy, so it was really tough to judge the speed today on the greens. But I putted good, I can't complain.