

PATTON KIZZIRE (-9)

Q. The back nine was just magical.

PATTON KIZZIRE: Yeah. I've been playing well recently and really all year. Just getting everything to click in the same day is the key. Hit the ball well and then seem to not putt well, and then I'll putt well and seem to not hit it well, but today I put it all together.

Q. Yeah, you missed a few fairways, but I thought they were controlled misses where you still had opportunities.

PATTON KIZZIRE: Yeah. You know, I was keeping it on the correct side trying to give myself some good angles into the pins. Unfortunately, there on 18 I thought I hit a decent one but the wind held it in the bunker. But I had good misses, that's the key out here, good misses and taking advantage of the good opportunities.

Q. You mentioned your recent good play. You played really well at Sanderson. I thought you were a player to watch at Shriners, and you were and just got a bad tee time in the wind on Saturday, backed up a little bit and then brought it home so strong. I was really impressed with your play on Sunday and seemed to have carried over here into Mexico?

PATTON KIZZIRE: Yeah, I played really well, that Friday and Sunday were great. There were a lot of guys with tough tee times last week and you saw that. But like I say, my game feels good and I'm just enjoying today, putting it all together.

Q. Except for the bogey on the last, seemed like a dream opening round for you here at the OHL Classic at Mayakoba. How were you able to take it so low?

PATTON KIZZIRE: It was a good day. I've been feeling good about my game and hitting the ball really well, and the putter's starting to come back. That's the strength of my game is putting and I gave myself a lot of opportunities. Had some really short birdie putts and then rolled in a few good ones. I just kept giving myself good looks at it.

Q. You had six birdies the first eight holes on your back side. What's it like when you get inside the zone?

PATTON KIZZIRE: It's nice, man. I find that zone more at home than I do out here on the Tour, so I just tried to imagine being back home at my own course, Ocean Forest or Sea Island, and just playing with my buddies and trying to make as many birdies as I could.

Q. You had a great finish in Vegas. How much carryover was there to the start of this week?

PATTON KIZZIRE: There's definitely a lot of carryover. I had a few nice rounds in Vegas and a good Sunday to move up pretty good. That always gives you confidence. Seeing the results gives you confidence. You try to build your confidence without the results and it's tough, but whenever you see the birdies go in, it's pretty good.

Q. Just some thoughts on your round today?

PATTON KIZZIRE: I played really well. I got off to a good start. Actually missed a few birdies putts early, but made a few and then was able to hit it really close to the hole. Having the short birdie putts got me that momentum and I was able to convert on some 10-, 15-, even 30- footers. So I had a lot of momentum out there and felt a nice sense of calm and it was all around a good day.

Q. That little stretch there of six birdies in row through the middle of the round, did you have any thoughts of a number below 60?

PATTON KIZZIRE: You know, it crept in there a little bit, but I had a long way to go. I needed a really strong finish to shoot in the 50s. Everybody wants to shoot 59, but I tried to just kind of stay in the moment and get each birdie -- birdie each hole.

Q. Last year you shot a 66 in your first round and as the tournament went on, things didn't happen as in the first round. How are you planning to confront tomorrow, the second round, so that you can continue with this amazing play?

PATTON KIZZIRE: Yeah, I've learned a lot. This is my third year on Tour. I believe you're speaking of my first year, I was here a few years ago. I've got a lot of experience and a lot more confidence and my game is better. So consistency has been something that I've started to build. Consistency is huge and I'll take that confidence into the weekend.

Q. You played with Jason Dufner in New Orleans this year and you guys are both Auburn guys. He has a little more experience than you do. What has that taught you just observing him and maybe chatting with him about how to tackle the Tour?

PATTON KIZZIRE: He's been a good mentor, a good friend. He's taken me under his wing and shown me a few things. We'll play practice rounds together occasionally and just hang out. We'll go to football games together and he's a good one to pick his brain and to play with because he's awfully confident.

Q. Was it fun to watch him win the Memorial and the way he won it?

PATTON KIZZIRE: Oh, yeah. I enjoy watching all my friends win tournaments and he's no different. I have a lot of friends out here fortunately and we're all pulling for each other, but if

it comes to the last few holes on Sunday, we're trying to beat each other up.

Q. Besides Jason, who are your buds out here?

PATTON KIZZIRE: A lot of the guys from Sea Island, a lot of the guys that went to Georgia. You have your Davis Love and your Brian Harman, Hudson Swafford, Harris English, Zach Johnson and a lot of guys that live in Sea Island. We have a nice crew of guys and we're all -- we all play a lot of golf together.

Q. (Inaudible). Is that a motivation for you?

PATTON KIZZIRE: Oh, yeah. I keep saying I'm closer and closer. I've gotten -- I want a trophy, I keep getting closer. So it's nice to have some momentum coming into this week and to put it into the first round and hopefully I can just keep the pedal down and make as many birdies as I can and see where it puts me.