

## THE PANAMA CHAMPIONSHIP

### ROUND 2 QUOTES

February 2, 2024



### RYAN GERARD

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**Q. Great round. I mean, just sort of walk us through some of the highlights that have you tied for the lead.**

**RYAN GERARD:** Yeah, I played really solid all day, hit a lot of really good shots. Happened to hole out for eagle on 12 to kind of a funnel pin in the front there with a lob wedge. When you can always do that, might be going your way.

Just tried to stay patient out there, it got pretty windy, it got pretty firm as the round went on. Just really tried to keep putting myself in good spots, and when I put myself kind of behind the 8 ball, I took the smart play and didn't try to do anything too heroic. Just really kept it in front of me, felt like I played solid all day long.

**Q. You played PGA TOUR last year, you played here. How does this course compare in terms of difficulty not just to the courses out here but some of the courses on the PGA TOUR?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Yeah, this course is brutal. The greens are just so dicey when you get putts downhill, just kind of a lot going on with grain and slope and sand and all sorts of stuff going on, so you've just got to be really careful.

And that just kind of goes back to the tee, so you've got to hit it in the fairway and the fairways are pretty tight. When you're in the fairway, you have to leave it on the proper side of the hole. So then you factor in wind to the mix, it's everything you could want in a championship golf course and it's why you see the scores here every year pretty high compared to the rest of the season.

**Q. Did everything feel like it happened super fast last year? You know, coming out here with a top-10 and then all of a sudden you're on the PGA TOUR pretty much?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Yeah, I mean, it was great, I'm not gonna lie.

No, stuff happened fast last year and I played pretty well last year. I had a couple top-5s on Tour, a couple top-5s out here. I feel like my game was solid all year, finished inside 150 on the points list. It's just one of those things where, yeah, you never know when you're going to have to go play somewhere and tee it up. So you have to treat every opportunity as it's equal to something out there. Yeah, looking forward to teeing it up this weekend.



**Q. What would you say is the biggest thing that you might have taken away from the experience last year, like the biggest positive thing that you learned?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Just patience, patience and trusting it. You never know when you're going to play well, you never know when you might play well and then all of a sudden you have a PGA TOUR card. You've just got to really stay patient, trust that your game is good enough.

I feel like I'm very confident in what I've been doing and continue to do. And my team around me has done a really good job of helping me kind of build that confidence and build it to the point where I feel like I can play out here, I feel like I can play on the PGA TOUR. Just really a lot of trust, a lot of confidence and just staying patient in the moment.

**Q. Do you have to make any big adjustments after playing the courses that are just set up very different on the PGA TOUR when you come back to the Korn Ferry Tour this year now?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Yeah, a lot of it is just equipment, some of it is just the way you go about doing your business. Out here you don't see it in the first two weeks as much, but when you get to the summer when things are a little softer and you're probably going to be going at a lot more flagsticks. I switched golf balls two weeks in the Bahamas to a golf ball that I wouldn't play on the PGA TOUR just to kind of keep it under the wind that into soft greens could be receptive. But out here today, this week, next week, switch back to a golf ball that I would play on the PGA TOUR just for a little bit more spin, a little bit more control when you're landing on firmer surfaces.

So a couple things like that. I'll never play a 3-iron on the PGA TOUR. Playing a 3-iron this week, played a 3-iron the last two weeks. Usually go to more of a 7-wood, something like that. Just small incremental tweaks to kind of mindset like going (indiscernible) and then just what you physically put in your bag to get ready for the week. It makes a small difference, but every little bit counts.

**Q. Have you been able to take even a couple weeks off maybe since --**

**RYAN GERARD:** No, no. I played -- starting Exuma last year, I played almost 30ish weeks, 32 weeks. A couple Monday qualifiers sprinkled in there, so I was on the road for almost 38 weeks last year. Then I played Q-School and then I had like three weeks off for Christmas and then we were right back at Exuma again.

So it's been a whirlwind, it's been a grind, but I'm young so I can handle it. It's one of those things where I love playing golf, it's my job, so you've just kind of got to show up when you're supposed to. I'd be playing golf at home anyway if I wasn't playing a tournament, so there's worse things I could be doing.

**Q. Were you playing and practicing all Christmas week, too?**



**RYAN GERARD:** I took about a week off at Christmas, teed it up like the day after with some buddies back home, shot like 65. So I was like, oh, this is great, like what's practicing? But then got back to Florida after that and just kind of hung out, did some quality work for eight or 9 days before going to Exuma and it's been nonstop since.

