

## ASTARA GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

### ROUND 4 QUOTES

February 11, 2024



### KEVIN VELO ( -22, won 1st playoff hole)

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**Q. Kevin, congrats. We talked about it yesterday, you said the goal coming into this year was to win. You won. How does it feel?**

**KEVIN VELO:** I guess we have to change up our goals now for the rest of the year. No, it feels awesome. We've worked so hard for this. Me and my caddie, we've grinded it out for weeks and weeks and weeks, so this feels unbelievable and ready to get another one.

**Q. You came in today three strokes back. What was just the game plan coming into today?**

**KEVIN VELO:** I was trying to stay as patient as possible, like I told you guys yesterday. We did a really good job of that. We made a pretty bad bogey on No. 10 and we didn't let it faze us, we kind of just kept pushing. We knew if we got to 22 that we would have a chance and ended up being in playoff. We had to birdie 17, 18 to do it, but we got it done.

**Q. When you were out there, did you catch yourself looking at the scoreboard or know where you were at during the day?**

**KEVIN VELO:** So on No. 9 I believe I saw that Brian was kind of going off a little bit. I think he was at 23 or 22 early and we were at 19, so I knew I had to kind of make a little bit of a push. We were just kind of keeping track of him all day.

I think he made a mistake on 17 and that's what kind of let us back into it. So we had five feet for birdie on 17 and we had eight feet for birdie here in regulation, so we kind of knew we had to make both of those.

**Q. Can you walk us through on 18 there, that last hole in regulation?**

**KEVIN VELO:** Yeah, I hit a great drive down the middle. I actually kind of chunked the 6-iron a little bit left and short of that bunker and hit a pretty decent chip shot to about eight and a half feet. I was talking to my caddie kind of over the putt and right before I hit the putt I told him we were built for this kind of moment. Ended up hooping that and the rest is history.

**Q. Did you feel any nerves there on 18 with that testy chip and the putt?**

**KEVIN VELO:** Absolutely. I mean, I don't know if you could catch it on camera, but I was shaking the whole time.



**Q. Can you talk us through the playoff there?**

**KEVIN VELO:** Yeah. I hit a really hard drive, the first one I hit all week on 18, actually got through to the other golf course. And then my caddie talked me into hooking an 8-iron onto the green. I was thinking cut and he was thinking hook and I ended up hooking it and we hit it to about 45 feet and two-putted that.

**Q. You mentioned you and Brian are good friends. What was it like facing him in a playoff?**

**KEVIN VELO:** Yeah, it's tough, you don't want to beat your friends in a playoff. He's a great player and a great champion. It's tough to beat him obviously because I want to see him succeed as well. I know this is a great start to the season for him also. Hopefully we can have a lot more battles like this down the stretch.

**Q. Isaiah won last week and you guys are friends. What's that like for you guys to go back-to-back like that?**

**KEVIN VELO:** It's pretty crazy. I had a call with my coach on Wednesday afternoon after I was hitting balls and I told him I'm ready to do what Isaiah did. We're super competitive that if I didn't have enough motivation, that fired me up even more. So I'm really happy for him, but I'm glad I got him.

**Q. Winning down here, you won in Argentina before and winning again in South America, what's it mean to you for that?**

**KEVIN VELO:** It means everything. The people in these countries that we come down and play, they rally around these big events. The crowds today were unbelievable. We're not local. They want to come down and just see good golf. I'm glad that we were able to give them a show. It's the fans and the volunteers that really make these events good. I could not thank them more.

**Q. And we talked about goals yesterday. The other one's a PGA TOUR card. What does this win do for you in reaching that goal down the road?**

**KEVIN VELO:** Yeah, I think I had 51 points leading into this week, so 550 and I would love to get to that 1,000-point threshold. So another win would be great and hopefully that will get me on Tour.

**Q. You seemed super comfortable on 18 in the playoff. Were you as comfortable as you looked?**

**KEVIN VELO:** No, no. Once I hit the shot I was actually able to take a deep breath, I mean, having 50 feet to two-putt pretty much. Brian had 20ish feet and I kind of knew if I two-putted



I would have a good chance.

The first putt I was actually pretty comfortable over, the little two-footer I was not comfortable over at all. I think the putter was shaking in my hand.

**Q. Who did you have out here watching you today?**

**KEVIN VELO:** My girlfriend, Bella. She's just an unbelievable support system. She's been there through all the ups and downs of last year and I could not be happier that she's here with me this week.

**Q. How special was it to just to have --**

**KEVIN VELO:** Well, it was a last-minute trip. She told me and her also told me that if she's going to come down that I have to win, so I guess it worked out.

**Q. You FaceTimed immediately after winning. Who did you FaceTime and what was the conversation?**

**KEVIN VELO:** I called my mom. She was in the car with my dad and that's a pretty emotional call. She's been the biggest support system. She didn't know what golf was when I first started it and she's been there ever since. It's a pretty amazing phone call and I can't wait to have many more of those.

**Q. How are you going to celebrate tonight?**

**KEVIN VELO:** Watching the 49ers win the Super Bowl.

