

## VISIT KNOXVILLE OPEN

### ROUND 1 QUOTES

May 23, 2024



### RYAN GERARD (-6)

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**Q. Ryan, nice round today, 6 under. What was working well with your game today?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Just felt like I was hitting it really solid today. Rolled in a few putts, especially one or two kind of bonuses on 4 and then on I guess it would have been 11, so we'll take those when you get the chance. Yeah, just felt like I hit it really solid all day, managed my game well and just kind of fought hard through the rain delays.

**Q. How many holes were you through when the rain delay --**

**RYAN GERARD:** I played like 11-and-a-half holes, so almost got through just about two-thirds of the round, but tried to just kind of focus and keep doing what I was doing.

**Q. Just what was kind of your preparation then after you kind of stopped for a break a little bit and ramping back up to go back out there?**

**RYAN GERARD:** A lot of it was just kind of making sure -- I had a weird little pitch shot, so I went and hit a couple -- probably the one time that you're lucky enough to practice the shot that you're about to hit, so kind of took advantage of that. Had this weird little pitch shot that I went and tried to recreate on the chipping green over there. Felt pretty good about it and then hit it to like a foot. I'd say that kind of helped.

But when you get in those rain delays, a lot of it's trying to not overthink or not overdo it. You don't have as much time as you normally would to warm up, so you're just trying to go out there, keep the body loose, not try and pull any muscles or anything and just go out there and do what you need to do.

**Q. What have you thought about the course so far?**

**RYAN GERARD:** This course is awesome. This course has a pretty cool just layout and history and it's got a special place in my heart because I've been taking lessons out here from a guy for a long time. A little bit of a sentimental place and I always love coming out here. It's a great, great golf course, but you've got to keep it underneath the hole.

**Q. We're through 10 events, we're on to the 11th now. What have you thought about your game up to this point in the season?**

**RYAN GERARD:** I feel like I'm close. I feel like I've played a lot of solid golf. I haven't



capitalized on a couple of the good rounds that I've had in certain weeks. I feel like a lot of it has been very positive, but obviously looking to stack better finishes, better wins.

I feel like one thing out here is the leaderboards are very bunched. I mean, there could be 25, 30 spots is the difference between two shots on Sunday. So just really trying to kind of keep putting myself in good spots, good positions, sticking to what I know works and going from there.

**Q. What have you thought about this week in Knoxville? Have you been able to do anything around here?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Yeah, I love Knoxville, it's a cool little spot. There's a little bit too much orange for my taste, but I've just been hanging out. Got my mom here this week, so that's been cool. Eating some good food, playing a lot of golf and just ready to get after it.

**Q. Is your mom staying through the whole week?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Yeah, she'll be here this week and next week.

**Q. How long have you been taking lessons out here?**

**RYAN GERARD:** So I started working with a guy named Carl Lohren in 2014ish and he was -- he's a member here actually, and his son-in-law is the director of golf, Chris. So I've known these guys for forever. They've been nice enough to let me come out here and play their golf course and practice on the range from time to time whenever I'm in town off and on for almost a decade, so it's been pretty special.

**Q. Does it almost feel like a home course at that point?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Yeah. Technically Raleigh next week is my home event, but I haven't played Raleigh Country Club since they redid it honestly. So this feels a little bit more like home because I've played here a bunch in practice rounds. It's always nice, you don't have to do as much detailed mapping, take quite as many notes off the tee. You just kind of get up there, you feel really confident with where you want to hit it.

**Q. And how cool is it to have your mom out here this week?**

**RYAN GERARD:** Oh, it's awesome, she's the best. She used to hide behind trees because she was scared of me seeing her when I was out there. So she's kind of gotten a little bit more, I don't want to say -- she's not hiding behind trees anymore, which is nice. No, it's great. Great having -- my parents have done so much for me just trying to support me and make it so I can play this game for a living. Yeah, just to have them whenever either of them can come out, it's pretty special because I know they enjoy it.

