

UTAH CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 4 QUOTES

August 4, 2024

KARL VILIPS (-25)



Q. Karl, we talked to you earlier this week about changing expectations coming here. I guess talk us through this last month or so since coming to the Korn Ferry Tour and getting your first victory.

KARL VILIPS: I mean, it's just kind of what you dream of when you qualify in. Four weeks ago you step in, you try to keep playing and in your wildest dreams you imagine winning and shooting up the rankings. Suddenly a lot of stress is relieved and I'm just so happy to see today, kind of all of that kind of be solved.

Q. Has this been kind of a whirlwind for you, just how fast it's taken off for you since you turned pro?

KARL VILIPS: Yeah. I mean, my first start in Colorado was only four weeks ago and it feels like three months ago just going through week to week, continuing to play and put in maximum effort. It's just been such a crazy journey from playing in Canada to being here today.

Q. Six-under 65 today, you knew scores were low on this course this week. What was your mindset coming in today knowing that anyone can really just jump up and take it?

KARL VILIPS: Yeah, I wanted to get to 27 today because that would have meant someone not in my group would have had to shoot 9, which is a dang good round. I was watching the leaderboard most of the day so I knew where I was at. Didn't make any silly decisions or mistakes on the back nine, just tried to keep it as clean as possible so I could walk up the last stress free.

Q. You sat on the lead last night tied with Matt McCarty. Were there any nerves last night or coming into today tied for the lead?

KARL VILIPS: Of course. It's always tough to sleep on the lead. I think I managed to get to sleep before midnight, which was nice. Tried to fall asleep at 9:30. Was definitely just up thinking about this moment right here. Just glad to finally have it come to fruition.

Q. Since you turned professional, has there been other pros or maybe some mentors out there that have helped you along the way out there?



KARL VILIPS: I think starting out, one of my buddies, Isaiah Salinda here showed me the ropes. I talked to a lot of guys, Kevin Velo just teaching me a few things, what it takes to win out here. They've been great mentors. I'm not sure if they realize the role they played in my development out here.

But really my coach, Colin Swanton, and my mental coach, Rick Sessinghaus, have just played a huge role in being able to close out tournaments like this because that's something I struggled with in the past historically.

Q. A lot of talk about your distance off the tee and your power. Just how did that help you out here this week on this course?

KARL VILIPS: You know, it's kind of funny because I don't actually hit it that high so the distance doesn't really change for me when I come out here, maybe 5, 10 yards in the air. I think I would say the accuracy is what I try to lean on a little bit more than the distance itself. Driver wasn't fully there today, I hit a couple loose ones. Being able to hit a long way certainly makes a lot of these holes a little easier.

Q. And we talked about earlier goals again changing. Came in, just wanted Korn Ferry Tour status, now you move up to position yourself to get a PGA TOUR card with a handful of events left. Just what's the mindset going forward now?

KARL VILIPS: We keep doing what we're doing, just getting as far up that points list as I can. A really ambitious goal at this point is to get No. 1 on the points standings, but that would take a few more wins. We're just going to try to win every time we step up on the first tee of a tournament and the expectations now are to get that PGA TOUR card.

Q. And your dad was out here for your first win. What did it mean to have him out here to see this?

KARL VILIPS: It was awesome. The last three days he was just content with sitting in the a/c in the hotel room watching me on TV. I thought he was going to leave today, but to see him stick it out, it's just so hot out here, but to see him stick it out for all 18 holes was just a real special moment for us.

Q. When you played at Stanford, did you ever play here collegiately in this altitude, this elevation at Utah? Did you guys ever come here?

KARL VILIPS: Not really, no. My only experience with altitude was at the U.S. Am last year at Cherry Hills and Colorado (inaudible).

Q. So four weeks ago when you Monday qualified, did you have any idea that you would be standing here with basically two top-10s, a -- two top 50s?

KARL VILIPS: I mean, no, not really. We were just trying to top 25 at that point every week.



Securing, or not securing, but moving up the rankings last week, I can't really explain how much it frees you up. Like coming into this week, it was just we're going to go out and make as many birdies as we can, not worry about anything, just try to play our game.

Q. When did you get the call from Jamie that basically invited you to have an exemption? You hadn't finished top 25 last week when this call came, right?

KARL VILIPS: No, it was just before the third round. I was sitting good, I was top 12 after two rounds. That just freed me up to go out and play aggressive. Ended up top 25'ing anyways, but him calling me up and giving me that spot was huge because I think it just allowed me to go play my game.

Q. Ten years from now, what are you going to remember about your first win here as a pro golfer?

KARL VILIPS: I want to just say leaving that five-footer short. I would just say this whole stadium here, the moment of tapping in for a win especially. I feel like typically in the past had to make a long putt, but having it be as stress free as possible at the last is what I go to sleep thinking about last night and to have it happen, just really, really (inaudible).

Q. You mentioned last week, the runner-up finish. What did that -- was that just something, I can win out here, or what did that do for your confidence in knowing you can compete with all these guys at that high of a level to win?

KARL VILIPS: Absolutely. I mean, the first two weeks I finished top 15 but not quite a top 10. I felt like I was there, I was good enough, but I was still six, seven shots away from a win. So Chicago last week really helped to close that gap and see, you know, where the improvement was made. To carry that on to this week, we're out here, we're trying to win teeing it up in the first round and I think it was just huge last week to see I can compete, I can shoot 25, 26 under to win.

Q. Was there anything specific you learned from that week that maybe helped you this week?

KARL VILIPS: I think just the conservative aggressiveness, like you don't have to overpower the course even though there's a lot of opportunities to do so. Just play to your strengths and you can reap the rewards afterwards. I just carried that attitude into this week.

