

CENTREPORT CANADA RAIL PARK MANITOBA OPEN

ROUND 4 QUOTES

August 25, 2024

JOHN KEEFER (-26)



Q. Johnny, you've obviously been playing some great golf this summer and you've come close. How does it feel to finally get one?

JOHNNY KEEFER: It's incredible. It's been a short time, but it feels like a long time coming. Yeah, no, coming in second place four times doesn't feel maybe quite as good as you'd think. No, it's incredible, it's a relief and really happy to win.

Q. You've been playing some great golf all summer. To get here in your first summer as a pro and have the success you've had, what does a win do to validate just where you feel you're at with your game?

JOHNNY KEEFER: Definitely validates just that good golf is good, it's good enough. I really feel like I can compete day in and day out with really anyone in the world. Maybe not, you know, Scottie at his best yet, but no, it's been great. There's a lot of really great players on this tour. Yeah, really excited and really prepared for what's to come.

Q. What did you learn from your previous finishes where you came close? What did you learn from that and how did that help you seal the deal today?

JOHNNY KEEFER: I think the thing that I learned most is that every shot counts no matter what. I mean, it's the smallest margin from winning to second place and even a top 10. I know how competitive it is out here. You've got to do a lot of things right.

Yeah, this week I really went in with the attitude that no matter what I do, even yesterday I had a tough day, just grind it out and give yourself a chance coming in.

Q. The last couple months have been I'm assuming a little bit of a whirlwind going from college to getting into the PGA TOUR U class of 2024 to now. Just what has that transition been like going from college where you had a strong finish at the National Championships and now to here, just what has that transition been like and how do you feel like you've grown on and off the course in that span?

JOHNNY KEEFER: Yeah, I guess it's been fairly easy. I mean, traveling by myself, that's probably the biggest difference for me. I'm now having to book flights myself and rental cars and planning all that. It can get lonely out here a little bit, but I've gotten to know so many guys and played with some incredible players and people, it's been awesome. It's definitely



been different, though, going low every week. You just have to, there's a lot of birdies out here. So yeah, it's just been kind of a little bit of everything, but all in the right places.

Q. Did you feel it at all this week that this was going to be the week? Was there anything that maybe you felt that this was going to be different, that this would be the week you got it done?

JOHNNY KEEFER: You know, I'd like to say that it was, but I came into this tournament with the same preparation, same attitude. I think week in and week out you really prepare yourself to win. No one prepares themselves for second place over and over and over again.

You know, the course was agreeable to me, it really fit my game, felt like, I mean, you can hit it pretty far out here but you've got to hit it pretty straight as well. Yeah, I feel like it really molded to my game and I felt like I had a good chance going into the week.

Q. You did bogey the first hole. After that, at what point did you feel like you settled in and got in a rhythm and got going for the rest of the round?

JOHNNY KEEFER: Yeah, I'd say probably my third hole. It's never super easy sleeping on the lead or even being close in contention. I didn't really think that I was nervous to start, it was more just maybe a little bit restless, maybe a little bit not quite settled in.

Yeah, no, when I first got the birdie on No. 3 I was pretty relieved, but then I was like, all right, it's go time, we've got to go low. I know that Neal's a great player and I knew it was going to be a battle with him all the way to the end and that he was going to gun for it and he did.

Q. You've said it a couple times, but now the floor is yours to thank anybody who has helped you get to this point.

JOHNNY KEEFER: I'd like to thank my parents for the incredible support that they've showed me. My girlfriend, my coaches, even college coach. There's been a lot of people in my corner, there's a lot of people to thank. It's an incredible feeling.

Q. Speaking of that, Johnny, I understand you have a lot of friends and family coming for next week's tournament. Who's coming, what night are they arriving and what's that celebration going to be like with all of them?

JOHNNY KEEFER: So the only definite plan right now is my dad is definitely coming. Toronto, they're definitely, there's going to be a lot of people. I'm going to have my agent, I'm going to have my parents, just friends kind of all around. They're getting there pretty early in the week and just watching. My coach is heading up. That will be the time to celebrate.

But next week is another week. I've got to go continue to play because I know Matthew Anderson is playing some incredible golf. I looked over at the leaderboard, I was like, of



course. No, I've got to make sure that I solidify where I am and shoot for that No. 1 spot.

Q. (No microphone) kind of preparing for a playoff. What is that relationship like and how important is your dad both on and off the golf course?

JOHNNY KEEFER: I mean, he's an emotional ball. I'll bet you I'm going to call him today and it's going to be a sob-fest. No, he's been such a rock for me. When I've been down or even up right now, he'll bring me back. It will be a cool call. He's been so special, just long nights on the putting green, taking millions of videos of my swing, even (no microphone.) I can't thank him enough.

Q. I know I mentioned the fact that you got in, last guy in that PGA TOUR U program. How important is that PGA TOUR U program in general to collegiate golfers, giving them a place to play, and what role did that kind of play in your career?

JOHNNY KEEFER: Yeah, I'm going to look back on it and it's got to be one of the most (inaudible) times of my career. I finished really well just to skate into that 25 spot. To give me these opportunities that I've had and to take advantage of those opportunities has been absolutely massive.

And it's been a great kickstarter for me not having to stress about Q school, not having to stress about where am I going to play, what am I going to do, what will my schedule be like. It's incredible what they've done. It opens up a big platform for the college golfers to enter professional golf with a little less hassle just because, I mean, there's so many good golfers in college golf, so many. We've seen it like every year. Like you can even see Ludvig, he's killed it since he got on Tour. Obviously we're all trying to chase something like that, but just even to have a schedule, a place to play, PGA TOUR U's done an incredible job.

