

ROUND 2 QUICK QUOTES
April 4, 2025



BEN JAMES (-5)

Q. Ben, 1-under 71 today, just how did you feel out there today?

BEN JAMES: Yeah, no, it was a good day. Started off really good, couple pars to start, but then I got it rolling, a few birdies coming in my front nine, the back nine. But overall it was a great day. Felt really good yesterday, was really proud of myself how comfortable I was out there both days, and to shoot under par today was kind of a battle. Made a sloppy 6 on the fifth hole but made a nice birdie on 8 and finished strong. Very nice day of golf out there.

Q. That was a tough break with that lip-out on the fifth hole there, but again another bounce back on 8. Just take us through that eighth hole and how much that momentum is going to mean to you going forward into the weekend?

BEN JAMES: Yeah, it was a great drive and a great second shot. I think it was 300 yards, hit a 3-wood about 20 feet, just missed the putt, but a tap-in 4's always nice. So good finish, parred the ninth hole. It's a hard par 4 so it's a good finish, and looking forward to the weekend for sure.

Q. You're the No. 3 overall ranked amateur in the world, Luke Clanton and Jackson Koivan at 1 and 2. Luke already has a card (indiscernible) at the end of the year, Jackson is close to one. You have accumulated points as well. Just for you, how exciting and motivating is that to know that with finishes on the PGA TOUR and cuts made on the PGA TOUR you can kind of take chunks out of your own pathway to pro golf?

BEN JAMES: Yeah, you know, no one's the same. I'm just kind of focusing on day to day and my day-to-day work at home. I have a lot of good prep work with my coaches back at home, so it's the most important thing. It's obviously great to come out and play well for two days, but I've got two more days. All the work beforehand and all the rankings and stuff I'm not too concerned about, good golf will just take care of itself.

Q. You're not the only Virginia Cavalier in the field right now, Ben Kohles is one, Denny McCarthy, the runner up last year another. Have you been able to mix it up with those guys at all over the week, any advice?

BEN JAMES: Yeah, no, I know Denny, Ben and Danny very well. Had dinner with Denny and Ben a couple days ago and played my practice round with them, played the U.S. Open same group with both of them, so I'm very familiar with them. They're always there for advice. They're just dudes, we're all here playing golf so it's all fun. They're great guys and they're always there for me for whatever I need.

Q. And you're in good position over the weekend. What is your mentality going into this weekend knowing that you've got the cut made? Does that free you up a little bit to just try and see how much of a dent you can put in that point chase?

BEN JAMES: I'm just so happy to be here like in general. Like it was great to win the college event and get a spot here so I can't thank the whole Valero Texas Open enough for giving me the spot. Just have some fun, that's the key. Never know how many you're going to be playing here on the weekend. So obviously had one at Rocket, so just for another start on the weekend is great. Just very excited.

Q. I just have a couple, Ben. First one is related to golf. What are you learning? What sort of important takeaways are you learning with every start out here?

BEN JAMES: Yeah, I think just for me more the mental side and just feeling comfortable. I told my caddie and my mom this week it's the most comfortable I felt ever. I played pretty good, but you know, just confident in myself, confident in the work I've done beforehand, and it's a solid two days. Just practicing well at home and just having fun, enjoying the moment, enjoying the crowds, enjoying my mom being out here. That's the key.

Q. Related question: What are some of the important or interesting things you're learning about the Tour lifestyle with these starts that you're making?

BEN JAMES: Yeah, no, it's busy, it's a lot going on. Obviously going to have to play a lot of times in a row, like six, seven weeks, so just got to love to travel, love the grind and love to constantly keep working at your craft really.

Q. Had you played in Texas before the Collegiate?

BEN JAMES: I played the Junior -- Simplified Junior AJGA in Texas, I think it was at Carlton Woods maybe, but that was my only experience with golf in Texas. That was a couple years ago. It's good to be back.

Q. What do you like -- this will be my last one. What do you like about Hill Country golf?

BEN JAMES: Yeah, you know, I don't -- I guess it's pretty tight off the tee and I hit it pretty straight, so I've been driving it really good. And my speed's been really good, I had one three-putt so far but my pace has been good and driving it pretty straight so led to a good two days out here so far.