



**Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by MISTRAS
First-Round Transcripts | Thursday, March 17, 2022**

Peter Uihlein (-6, T1)

City Plays From: Jupiter, Florida | Turned Pro: 2011 | College: Oklahoma State University
Exempt Status: PGA TOUR – Top 50 from 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour (thru 2021-22)

On playing well at this course last year and again today...

"I do like this course. I like that it's firm. It was pretty soft on Tuesday, so it's nice to see it firmer today. Hopefully the rain's not too bad tomorrow and keeps it firm."

On the fog delay in the first round...

"It's fine. It is what it is. It happens. You just kind of stand around, hit a couple of extra balls, you couldn't really see anything warming up anyway so it was nice to have a little bit of a delay to start seeing the ball again, seeing the green and seeing how it rolls. It was fine."

On playing well at Zurich Classic of New Orleans and playing well here last year...

"I had a good partner there in Richie (Werenski). We complement each other's game very well. I like it, I like both courses, I think both of them set up really well for me."

On where he played his best golf today...

"The par 5s. That was my goal, to play the par 5s better. I hadn't been playing par 5s really well on (the PGA) TOUR this year, so my goal was to try to play them. The goal really was to play them 2-under and I think I played them five today, so that helps."

On his eagle on the 553-yard par-5 fifth...

"Driver right rough, hit a nice 3-iron about 25 feet past the hole and poured it in. It was nice. I missed some pretty good looks on three and four, so it was kind of nice to see that one go in."

On how he feels about his game right now...

"I feel like I've been playing great, my results aren't there and that's kind of why I wanted to play (here). I didn't want to take two weeks off with THE PLAYERS and (Valspar), because I feel like my game's been very good, I just haven't had the scores to show it. I had a couple of good days at Honda, Puerto Rico, (LECOM Suncoast Classic), but just hadn't really put anything together. That's why I came, it helps I played here last year, but it's also a good golf course. I hit a lot of different shots around the course which I like, you can hit a lot of draws, lot of fades, high, low, so that style of golf I enjoy."

On being near the top of the leaderboard after finishing solo second last year...

"I guess it could help, talk to me on Sunday and I'll let you know."

On playing both PGA TOUR and Korn Ferry Tour events this season...

"This is only my second one (on the Korn Ferry Tour) this season, I've been getting into most of the events out there. The Florida swing's trickier, just not getting into them. I'll play next week, San Antonio, then there's a reshuffle for Augusta and after that I should get in the majority of events. I feel like you play courses out here, you've got to make birdies, that's kind of how I feel when I play here, maybe not this course in general, it's usually not one you go too low, but I guess it kind of gets your confidence up, to come out here and make a bunch of birdies and try and bring it out to the big tour."

Shad Tuten (-6, T1)

City Plays From: Aiken, South Carolina | Turned Pro: 2016 | College: Armstrong State University
Exempt Status: Top 75 in 2020-21 Regular Season Standings (thru 2022)

On his birdies on Nos. 11-13 (after teeing off on No. 10)...

“Yeah, It was fun. It’s always fun to get started with that kind of stretch. I made a good one on No. 11, that got me settled in and made me feel pretty good this morning.”

On his first-round performance and what was working well...

“I really didn’t do anything bad. I kind of kept the ball in play, there’s not really much rough so you can kind of be aggressive in spots you wouldn’t normally have to, especially with the rough. I’ve been putting it great at home, and it just hasn’t shown out here, but today it did.”

On international events and how he played...

“Honestly, I’m hitting the ball great and I have all year ever since January 1. I changed a couple of things and it’s really been working for me with the irons. I just had to get the putter going, that’s the way it was.”

On the greens today...

“I grew up on Bermuda grass, so this is sort of home. It’s a little different, but they’re really good and this is the best I’ve seen them.”

On three weeks off before this tournament...

“I’d be lying if I said I didn’t take eight days off and put my feet up and enjoyed a beer or two, but I got to work and I kind of reset some things with the putter, and it’s working.”

On scoring well on the back nine...

“I made a sloppy bogey on (No. 14), and I just told my caddie that we just got to be patient, there’s a lot of birdie opportunities on the front and I know that. We stayed patient but aggressive and took aggressive lines and made a few putts.”

On how many times he’s played in this event...

“This is my third year (on the Korn Ferry Tour). A lot of bad golf, to be completely honest. I’ve never really had much success here. I’ve always liked the course. Last year was really bad weather and I got a bad draw, but I really like the course. I love the greens and I’m looking forward to the rest of the week for sure.”

On the best thing he did in eight days off...

“I went fishing a lot. I got to hang out with my dad and he’s had COVID for a while, so it was nice to be able to hang out with him.”

On if the putter was difference than previous time he played here...

“Yeah, I would say that, and just being more aggressive out here. I played a lot of conservative golf the last time that I was here, and I hit a lot of drivers today.”

Mark Hubbard (-6, T1)

City Plays From: Denver, Colorado | Turned Pro: 2012 | College: San Jose State University
Exempt Status: PGA TOUR – 126-150 in 2020-21 FedExCup standings (thru 2021-22)

On what was working well for him today in a bogey-free round...

“Yeah, a little bit of everything. I’ve been playing pretty well lately. Any time you go bogey-free, you got to be pretty disciplined. I just did a good job of missing it in the right spots today and giving myself easy up and downs.”

On birdieing three of his first four holes played...

“I got lucky on four, I had a good lie around the green which you don’t always get out here, able to chip it in. I let a few go on the par 5s after that, but, all in all, good.”

On his performances on par 5s today...

“I kind of came up short on No. 5. I didn’t hit a very good pitch shot, and then I got a little bit unlucky on No. 7, I hit a pretty good drive and it ended up too far, so I kind of had to hook it around a tree and I was just playing it safe so I didn’t go through into the water. I made due on the other couple.”

On what went into his decision to play here this week...

“I was 17 out of the Valspar. I think most of the year, I’m going to be primarily playing on the PGA Tour. I think I will get somewhere between 15 and 20 events, but to have a full season, I need to play out here too. I’m coming out here and trying to win and getting into that (top) 25 because that’s a way to get your (PGA TOUR) card, but also using them as kind of a warmup for the PGA TOUR events.”

On his overall game right now...

“The game’s coming around. I feel like more than anything I have a clear head on my shoulders right now, just playing and not worrying about too much and that’s always a nice place to be.”

On how sharing the lead after the first round affects his mindset entering Friday...

“It doesn’t at all. Really any tournament a share of the lead after Thursday doesn’t really mean much, but especially out on this Tour, everyone’s so good and takes it so deep that you’ve just got to try to make as many birdies as you can for all 72 holes.”

On having spectators at the event...

“It’s great to have people back. Obviously there’s a little more out at some of the PGA (TOUR) events than out here, but it’s nice to have a few people walking around and cheering you on for good shots.”

On how he feels about where his game is right now...

“It’s trending. you could say. I had two tournaments back to back that I played 63 really good holes and had nine holes get away from me, so just looking to put a whole tournament together.”

On if he used the snail putting grip today...

“No, no. I’m getting too old. I’ve got a one-year-old. Picking her up, my back’s sore. I can’t get that low anymore.”

On staying motivated when playing in Korn Ferry Tour events...

“You’re still trying to win, you’re still trying to finish in The 25. That’s just as good of a way of getting your PGA TOUR card as finishing in the (top) 125 (of FedExCup standings). I got off to a good start in

(LECOM Suncoast Classic), so I'm right where I need to be. You don't treat it any differently. I enjoy having the crowds, but I don't necessarily find motivation from that. My motivation comes from within, and just want to be the best that I can be, so that doesn't really affect me too much. But it is nice to have some people out here cheering on No. 18."

On being a Denver Broncos fan...

"I am, yeah. I'm feeling good about a lot of our moves, Russell (Wilson) is going to be great, our offense is young and fast, and I think we're going to be good. We're putting some pieces together on defense, picked up two defensive linemen last week that are going to be great, so I'm very hopeful. We're also trending, much like my game."

Braden Thornberry (-6, T1)

City Plays From: Olive Branch, Mississippi | Turned Pro: 2018 | College: University of Mississippi
Exempt Status: Top 75 in 2020-21 Regular Season Standings (thru 2022)

On playing well at this course recently...

“Like I was saying yesterday, it’s very much kind of what I grew up on, and I feel comfortable. What I’ve noticed out here, people talk about horses for courses a little bit, there’s some courses it seems like when you play well you’re toward the top of the leaderboard, and sometimes you’re fighting to make the cut. This is one of those places I feel like if I play my game and really clicking, I’m looking good on the leaderboard.”

On his impressive start today...

“On the first hole, the par 5, I didn’t make birdie, but you had to do it in stretches today because of the wind. You get some into-the-wind stretches and some downwind stretches. Those into-the-wind holes on the back are tough. It was nice to get off to a nice start on the first nine, get your flow going on those downwind holes and just kept it going, really started hitting some good shots coming in, didn’t quite make a few of the putts which could have been even better, but very happy with it overall.”

On his birdie on the 17th hole...

“Three or four holes before that I was hitting some really nice shots, just barely rolling it on the edge, so I was trying to get it going a little. I had it going early with the putter, I was hitting a lot of good putts and it was nice to knock that 6-footer in there for birdie. Overall a solid day, it was pretty stress free overall, you could kind of try to make the birdie putt and go to the next hole and try to make the birdie putt, so that’s always a good feeling.”

On the break from tournaments over the last three weeks...

“It was really nice. I actually had some weird... I’ve never had really any issues with injuries, but I kind of had some minor stuff throughout the early part of the year. I know it sounds dumb, but I had this hangnail that was really affecting me, not so much on the course but practicing. I was trying to be a little easy on it right before Abaco, and then I had some back and neck issues that came out of nowhere. Those three weeks I was able to kind of rest for a week and get my body right. After that I was able to actually practice and get ready for this week, so 100 percent it was helpful.”

On if he did anything not related to golf over the last three weeks...

“I went to a supercross race in Dallas. That was fun. I used to ride when I was little. I stopped when I was like 11 years old. I hadn’t been keeping up with it, but since then I’ve been watching every weekend. It’s nice to get back and do something that’s sport-related but not golf.”

On his expectations to do well...

“I was telling myself all day to don’t worry about score, just play my best and outplay the field, if that makes sense. I was listening to a podcast and actually heard Collin (Morikawa) say that, that he was thinking about it didn’t matter one break here and there, he was more talking about (being) better than the rest of the field. I had that mindset today when a couple of shots didn’t go my way, I was just trying to stay patient and keep hitting good shots and just keep putting pressure on, making birdies.”

On barely missing out on earning his PGA TOUR card during the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Finals...

“During the season I wasn’t quite there. I finished No. 57 on the points list. Finals I had a great chance there at the end, was making a run, I looked on No. 18 and I was 26th, and I was thinking a birdie

probably gets it done. Hit a great shot in there to probably 12 feet and just missed the putt, which, at the time, would probably miss by one. [He eventually found out he missed by two strokes.] Maybe it was better in the long run that I didn't make it, because that would have really hurt. It's definitely motivating to know it's right there in my grasp and it's not far off."

On if he ever thinks back to that moment...

"Not really. It ended up being two, even if I would have made it. That was the most pressure I've ever felt in my life. People talk about it, trying to win a tournament is a different type of pressure because it's not sending you to the next level. I thought that 12-footer was to get my PGA TOUR card, so I was very nervous. I hit a good putt, it just happened to barely miss. It's like anything, whether you succeed or fail, you feel like you can draw from it in the future.

On his interest in video games...

"Last season I was playing that (PGA TOUR) 2K game a lot. I go in circles on all the sports games and I kind of play a lot. I'm actually staying with Tee-K Kelly this week and they had a little Rocket League. They're in a league and they were playing against each other yesterday, so that was kind of cool. I did not jump in. I've only played once and I was not very good. This week I might try it. We'll see."

Roberto Díaz (-2, T37 – Defending Champion)

City Plays From: Veracruz, Mexico | Turned Pro: 2009 | College: University of South Carolina-Aiken
Exempt Status: Tournament Winner (thru 2022)

On his memories from last year...

“A lot of memories from the first round. I remember I started on the other side, but it was the same kind of round. I shot 2-under last year, too. It was very similar. A lot of good shots that didn’t pay off, my putter started getting good toward the end same as last year. I remember last year I started off the second round 5- or 6-under after seven, so a lot of memories. I like the golf course. It played very different than last year, different winds, the weather was different, but we played a lot of pins that we did in the last round last year, the pin on Nos. 13, 16, 18. A lot of memories, a lot of good stuff, I’m very happy with the way I played today.”

On whether the round could have been better...

“I’m very happy. I struggled a lot after I won last year. It’s no secret, I should have gotten my (PGA TOUR) card last year. I played awful at the end of the year. I left a lot of shots, but there’s a lot of good in today’s round. The ball striking is coming along very nicely. I’ve worked very hard the last couple of weeks. I’m working on new stuff and I think I’m about to turn the corner.”

On having more confidence after last year...

“This place, before last year I was not a big fan. It’s starting to grow on me. I like it, I like the way it plays, I like how the fairways are rough, I like that you have to strike it well, you have to chip it very well. The short game is very important. I’m hoping to get hot tomorrow.”

On the three-week break...

“The first week, we went on a trip for my wife’s birthday; we went to the beach and we enjoyed the beach, and then the second week I went to San Antonio, had to go to Atlanta for a friend. I didn’t practice much that week. Last week I just grinded pretty hard, it was two weeks off and then one good grind week. The trip for my wife’s birthday was pretty fun. We had fun.”

On his hopes for this year...

“I just want to go back and play the way I used to. I want to get back to playing solid golf. I’ve been grinding a lot, I put a lot of work Monday through Wednesday every week because I felt lost on my swing and I felt lost on my ball striking. I’m slowly making changes to get back to where I was, and as soon as I start playing solid I think I can take care of the rest. I’m not scared of anything.”

On any flashbacks on the 18th green...

“No, I just wanted to two-putt. I’m pretty hungry. I want to go eat and go to bed. No flashbacks. I hit it almost the same spot as I did on my second shot on the last day last year, a couple of yards short today, but it’s only the first day and there’s a lot of people playing well. It’s no coincidence, I was looking at the leader board and I noticed the same guys that were up there last year are up this year, (Peter) Uihlein, (Braden) Thornberry, (Tom) Whitney. It’s no coincidence. This is a golf course that exposes your weaknesses. If your strengths are short game, you can get away with it because chipping around here is very difficult. It’s no coincidence that Uihlein, I said it last year, he probably has the best short game in the world, it’s no coincidence that he’s up there. He’s not going to make a lot of bogeys out here, he drives it a long ways and he can get the par 5s, and he’s a magician around the greens. So there’s no coincidence that he’s on the top of the leaderboard today.”

Luke Haskew (E, T73 – Open Qualifier)

City Plays From: Baton Rouge, Louisiana | Turned Pro: n/a | Louisiana State University Laboratory School
Age: 18 | Year in High School: Senior | College Commitment: Louisiana State University

On his round today...

“Yeah, it was pretty steady, nothing exhilarating, I did have a hiccup on (No. 12), where I had a penalty shot, and then three-putted for triple (bogey). Besides that hole, I played pretty well for 17 holes.”

On his feelings on the first tee...

“It was pretty cool. I was a little nervous but more excited, all those people watching, I knew a few of them so I wanted to hit a good tee shot for them.”

On bogeying his first hole...

“I mean, you’ve got 17 more holes of golf left, making a bogey is not the end of the world.”

On the birdies at Nos. 7, 10, and 11...

“No. 10 was a really good birdie. I was actually in the fairway bunker from about 70 yards, which is usually a very hard shot, but I actually stuck it to about 12 feet and made the putt. No. 11 was a pretty routine birdie, hitting it to mid-range and making another putt. Tomorrow I’m looking forward to making more mid-range putts.”

On the triple bogey at No. 12...

“I just missed it. I hit my lay-up in the water. Actually hit an errant tee shot. I had a little gap and actually hit through it nicely but I put too much draw on it. That draw spin was also in a draw wind, so it amplified it and made it go into the water. Then the next shot was also a mistake. I misjudged the wind and came up short in the bunker, and I made another mistake on the green three-putting, so that was about as bad as it could have gotten. The rest of the 17 holes were pretty good.”

On parring in from No. 13 and the birdie at No. 17...

“Hopefully it’ll shoot me into a good position for tomorrow and playing a good round.”

On how it felt to play in a professional event...

“It’s pretty cool, this structure (around No. 18) is a lot different, putting in a stadium almost. It’s pretty cool, getting some cheers when I made a little five-footer, it’s nice. A bunch of people watching me that I don’t know, it’s kind of different, but I like it. Hopefully it’s my future life.”

On whether he knew he needed a 5-footer at No. 18 for an even-par round...

“I usually know where I stand every round I play. Actually, my first putt I read very well, just misjudged the uphill.”

On what people are saying about him on social media...

“I’ve had a bunch of different messages, from my friends, they think it’s pretty cool being posted on a forum that large, but they’re all telling me to still play well, represent where I’m from and where I’m going, just play well for myself.”

On what the Korn Ferry Tour represents to him...

"It's about the best of the best, right? It's one stage below the PGA TOUR, which is the best players in the world, so getting to compete here means a lot to me. Out of the blue decided to go to that Monday qualifier because it's close to home. I'm glad I get to play this early, give me something to learn from."

On whether he will try to Monday qualify again...

I guess so. I guess I'm one for one right now, so I guess I'll give it another shot. I don't know, maybe a PGA TOUR one, that would be fun.

On the ramifications of a top-25 here...

"I wouldn't have to qualify if I do that."

On his overall performance today...

"I'm pretty satisfied. It was pretty windy out there, the greens are actually kind of fast with the winds drying them out, but I'm pretty satisfied with the way I played except for that one hole."

On the atmosphere...

"It's fun, there's people here that I don't know, but they know who I am because of where I'm from. It's fun playing at home, I usually play pretty well here so I always love playing here."