

First-Round Transcripts | Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank | Thursday, August 4, 2022

JEREMY PAUL (-8, Co-Leader)

City Plays From: Heidelberg, Germany | Turned Pro: 2017 | College: University of Colorado Exempt
Status: Reordered With Points Finishers 2-10 & Ties Previous Years QT

On his round today...

"I knew that the scores would be pretty low at this golf course, so my strategy is pretty aggressive. I have a lot of drivers out here and I was driving it really well today, so it set me up for a lot of short wedge shots. I able to hit a lot of good wedge shots to put me in a good position and then I was able to capitalize on a lot of them."

On missing the last two cuts...

"Honestly, I missed both cuts, but I didn't feel like I was playing that bad. I was pretty close to make the cut, but, you know, sometimes in golf even par and seven-under are so close together, just a putt here and a putt there. I didn't really go home and say "wow, I didn't really play well at all." Sometimes in golf things don't really go your way and then you go down a little rabbit hole. I put a lot of work in last week in Arizona because this is the final stretch and they don't really hand out PGA TOUR cards for free, so you got to earn it. This is just the first round, there's a lot of golf left. I know eight-under is not going to win the tournament so I got to keep the keep the birdies coming."

On the last time he held the 18-hole lead at the REX Hospital Open...

"Every tournament is different, obviously, but every time you are at a course where you know it's a low-scoring week, the first round if you play well obviously it's nice, but I'm not really putting too much emphasis on it. I expect someone else is going to come out this afternoon or even the end of the morning wave to post a good score. It's something else if you have the Saturday lead and going into the last day, that's a little different but on the first day there's so much golf left that you can't really put too much value on one round. It's still nice to have a good round, but I'm not putting too much emphasis on just one round."

On his favorite shot in the round...

"There was one shot that was, I wouldn't call it 'make or break,' but I had a good start to the round. I was three-under through five holes and then I hit my drive on the par-5 seventh a little bit to the right and there was a tree in my way. I had a little bit of a gap and I was like, 'Should I lay up?' If it would have been Sunday, I probably would have laid up, but I ended up hitting the perfect shot with a 4-iron over the tree and it landed in the middle of the green, set me up for an easy birdie that was important to just keep the round going because, you know, if you hit a bad shot there, you might make bogey or whatever. It wasn't really a 'key shot,' but it was a really nice shot and it was nice that I pulled it off."

On his only bogey of the day at No. 14...

"I actually was in a good spot. I had like about 40 feet at the par-3 and I hammered the first putt about seven feet by then didn't make the comebacker. There's honestly a point when you just make a couple birdies then give one away like that, but I knew there was still a couple of easy holes coming up and you just have to keep the gas pedal down and make birdies. That was the only flaw really in the round today. You'll always have that. Over 72 holes there are some times when it's not going well. I was proud of the

way I finished the round. It was nice to finish with a birdie and hopefully will keep it going the next couple of days.”

On leaving Germany to play college in Colorado...

“At the beginning, I won't lie, the first half was pretty difficult. It was nice that I had my brother there when I went to college, so that made things a lot easier. When you come over here, culturally, a lot of things are different. I didn't speak the language super well either. Obviously you aren't outgoing if you feel like you're a little insecure about your language barrier. So the first half of year was definitely challenging, but once you adapt to it and you get to know people, you feel more comfortable where you're at and that helped a lot. We had a great college program, a lot of nice teammates and really good coaching that really helped in that process. It was nice to have my brother there. It's nice to go through some struggles, I wouldn't call them 'struggles,' but different times we were able to do that together and that definitely helped a lot.”

On his twin brother, Yannik, Monday qualifying for the Wyndham Championship...

"I think he's super excited and he's really close to getting to the Korn Ferry Tour finals, so to Monday qualify knowing that is huge. Actually, my sister flew in from Germany to caddie for him and she caddied for me on [PGA TOUR Canada] last year. I think both times she caddied for me I finished in the top-ten, so I told my brother late last night, "My sister has a pretty good record. I hope that you're not going to ruin her record." I think he's going to do well. I think he's going to have a great week. He's been playing some really good golf and he really feels like he's mentally ready for it. I expect him to have a really good week."

On if his sister plays golf as well...

"My sister used to play golf. Everybody says she has the best swing of the family, but she pursued other things, but she still plays a couple of times here and there. She actually hits the ball really well also. It's nice for her to just come out for a couple of days and take two flights, it's pretty far from Germany to come for five days. We have a really good sibling bond between all of us and it's nice to when you get to spend time like that. It's awesome."

On two events remaining in the regular season...

"I wouldn't say I'm on the bubble, but I figure I'm in a good spot. I know a good week here and there could help me. It's so tough to think ahead and be like, 'I need that, and I need that.' I'm just trying to go to the tournament and play my best and if it ends up happening, that'll be awesome. I know I'll have five tournaments and a lot of things can happen. With my preparation, I put a lot of emphasis on it and I know I'm in a good spot. I try to work really hard to just give myself the best chance and if it works out, great, if not, you know, I gave my best."

On playing in elevation...

"I was just telling my friends that it's so nice to be on the West Coast. It's just where I feel comfortable with the mountains. This is a really beautiful place and I just like the elevation. I like playing at elevation. I think it's an advantage if you have experience in elevation because just a lot of shot shapes, you need to calculate different distances and stuff. I think experience definitely helps. It doesn't mean that you always play well, but I feel really comfortable here and I like the climate and even when you make a bogey, you look around it's not all that bad."

On being comfortable playing at elevation and using that to his advantage...



"I heard a lot of guys actually go from yards and they go buy a meter (yardage) book because it's roughly 10%, but I'm already in meters, so there's not really anywhere to go for me. You were right with having trust. I think trusting your shots, because sometimes you might hit a high wedge shot and it might even

go more than 10% but if you hit a lower shot, like a low 4-iron, it might almost fly sea level. I think knowing that and then experience comes in, it's easier to trust it when you've been in I've been in that situation a lot of times. I play a lot of golf at altitude and just being able to trust it and that it's definitely the right judgment. It definitely helps."

On his position heading into the final two weeks of the regular season...

"I wouldn't change my strategy because I'm making a strategy to give me the best chance to do well. If you just keep pressing, pressing usually backfires over four rounds. I know that I have to get a couple, at least one really high finish. If I'm in the No. 24 spot going into the last round, I know it still matters and I'll try to do well, but I can be a little more aggressive. Being 25th is not going to help me as much as, but if I can get inside the top-ten, that's really where the points are at, so definitely it frees you up a little bit. I've got not much to lose really all to gain."



ANDREW KOZAN (-8, Co-Leader)

City Plays From: Palm Beach Gardens, Florida | Turned Pro: 2021 | College: Auburn University Exempt
Status: Qualifying Tournament Finishers 2-10 and Ties (thru 2022)

On his career-low round today...

"It was great to get off to a good start. I shot 5-under on the front and missed maybe one or two greens coming down the stretch. It's a pretty simple golf course for the most part, so just keep the ball in front of you and give yourself a lot of birdie opportunities and then play the game of odds to give yourself a good number."

On his rookie season...

"I've had a lot of ups and downs. I got off to a decent start in the beginning but obviously had some struggles the last couple of weeks, and months, but the game hasn't felt that far off. A lot of missed cuts were by one or two shots, so just staying positive through that. I'm coming out with the mindset every week that I belong out here and can still win every week."

On if that's why golf is so great and so aggravating...

"That's why we all play, it's the round that keeps you coming back. It was great today and felt good the last few weeks so I'm not really surprised that I gave myself good opportunities out there today."

On if he could pin his success today on anything in particular...

"I just kept the ball in front of me and gave myself birdie opportunities every chance that I can and you'll make a certain amount of them."

On his favorite shot of the day...

"I holed out from the bunker on No. 17, so that was good."

On finishing his round with a birdie...

"That was great. I had a good number coming in and tried to leave myself below the hole to give myself a good up-hill putt then capitalized on it."

On being T1 at the Panama Championship earlier this season...

"I think the main thing is just to get off to a steady starts and getting in the zone, or flow, and just keep the ball in front of you. I'll just try to not get out of position and just fairways and greens then let the birdies come when they do."

On his golf journey from graduation to now...

"I graduated last May, in 2021, and stayed amateur through the summer. I played the U.S. Open and U.S. Amateur all throughout the summer then went through [Qualifying] School. I won First Stage then made it through Second Stage on the number then lost by one at Finals, got second place at Final Stage to get me out here. "

On how he feels about his rookie season as a whole...

"It's a great learning experience out here. I think there are no negatives that can come from it. If you play poor golf, I think you either win or you learn at this point."



On these final two weeks of regular season...

"There's nothing different. I think if you put more pressure on certain rounds, or certain tournaments, it will never turn out well. If you just have a good game plan going into every round and every week, it's only a matter of time."

On his mindset playing these final two events of regular season...

"I just let it happen. You don't want to put extra pressure on yourself. Me and my coach have a good game plan and he's coming out here every week. It's just a matter of time in my eyes."

On have a week off last week...

"I was kind of getting burned out. I don't think I touched a club the whole week until I got back out here. That's golf, you need a reboot or reset every once in a while so I'm glad we had that."

On his thoughts on the course...

"It's not too challenging but pretty tight off the tee. Once you get it off the tee, there are a lot of wedge opportunities and I really take advantage of the par-5s. I think there's a lot of birdies to be had out there."

BEN SILVERMAN (-8, Co-Leader)

City Plays From: Concord, ON, Canada | Turned Pro: 2010 | College: Florida Atlantic University
Exempt Status: Top 25 From Previous Event

On his round today...

"Right now it feels amazing. It started slow being 1-over through the first two, but I started on the tougher holes on the course, Nos. 10 and 11, probably the two hardest holes out here. I've been playing well coming into this week so I knew it would come together eventually, and it did. It felt good."

On what the biggest difference was for him today...

"I've enhanced my practice a little bit, just turned my practice more into game-like situations. The work that I've done with TrackMan and my coach has really helped. I've been dialing in some of my wedge numbers and short irons, so I just have really good confidence in how far everything is going and I can just be aggressive and know it will go there. It's been like that the last few weeks and it's been good."

On finishing his day strong...

"I wasn't trying to stuff it on No. 8 but I did, to like five feet. The greens were bouncing so I just tried to land something short and predict how much it would bounce, but I made a couple good swings coming in. I went a little too hard with the pitch shot on No. 9 but rolled the putt nicely and was putting really good today."

On how he likes the course...

"I just know it really well. I've played here a lot and I've had good finishes here. I'm used to the firm and fast out here and I know how it plays. I have a lot of good memories from out here and I just have a lot of the course in my head. I know a lot of the green slopes and everything."

On these final two weeks of regular season...

"I haven't had good status for two years really. I've just been focusing on how to improve and the results are starting to come together lately. I'm just going to keep focusing on what I'm doing. If I get ahead of myself, that's when everything falls apart. If you think about results, it's done, so I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing."

On his mindset playing these final two events of regular season...

"I wasn't even in this field until last week, so I've just been trying to play well the whole year. I've been playing well in spots and a lot of success from Monday qualifiers. I played the U.S. Open and played a bunch of PGA TOUR events, so some four round tournaments are starting to come together."