

**Second-Round Transcripts | Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank | Friday, August 5, 2022**

**PONTUS NYHOLM (-13, Leader)**

City Plays From: Gavle, Sweden | Turned Pro: 2021 | College: Campbell University

Exempt Status: Reordered With Points Finishers 2-10 & Ties Previous Years QT

*On his round...*

"It was just a solid day all around. I played really well, hit it good off the tee and putted solid. That was a bit of a hectic end to the round there, trying to beat the darkness on the last couple of holes, but apart from that it was a really solid day."

*On the delays and conditions today...*

"It depends on how much you let it play into your day. I was just trying, there's not really much you can do but just go into the clubhouse and hang out with your friends and have a good time and try to not get affected too much by it. I felt like I did a pretty good job of that today."

*On his game coming together this week...*

"There's no better spot to be than leading after 36 holes, so definitely a lot of fun and looking forward to the weekend."

*On what felt good about his game...*

"I'm just trying to play golf and not play golf swing. I've been battling my swing, not battling, but just working on some stuff for a couple of weeks and this week I'm just trying to see shots and hit shots instead of having a lot of swing thoughts."

*On his position going into Finals...*

"A 10th place finish won't do me much good, so I might as well try and win it. It's not a bad spot to be that's for sure."

*On his professional career...*

"It's definitely a lot more golf than I'm used to. I did four years of school up in North Carolina, graduated last spring and decided to turn professional. I went home to Europe and played a bit of Challenge Tour there over the summer but felt like I wanted to play and live in the United States. I came back for Q-School and got through and I've had a great year on the Korn Ferry [Tour] and I'm loving it."

*On missing the first few cuts of the season...*

"Not a great start for sure but at the end of the day I knew that if I played my game, results were going to come and I'm going to get those good finishes. Yeah, definitely not fun missing a bunch of cuts."

*On if his professional career is what he expected...*

"I've definitely gotten a little further in my career than I thought I would have in just a year. When I graduated in the spring, my dream was to play on the Korn Ferry Tour. I'm here now. I wasn't anticipating it to happen this quickly."

*On when he decided to turn professional...*

"I was about 16, right when I started high school back in Sweden. I had to choose playing ice hockey and playing golf, I went with golf. I moved away from home to go to a boarding school for golf."

*On playing ice hockey...*

"Not too pump my own tires, but I was decent."

*On if he's happy with his decision to play golf...*

"I'm very happy."

*On how he ended up in North Carolina...*

"I went to Campbell [University] which is a really small school in North Carolina, but they had a history of Swedish [players] and one of my best friends from high school was there and he was a junior when I came in as a freshman and at that point going over to the United States was a bit scary, so having a friend there was a huge help. That's why I chose Campbell."

*On what he enjoys to do outside of golf...*

"Playing ice hockey."

*On if he isn't playing sports what he does for fun...*

"Playing video games, maybe."

*On what position he played in ice hockey...*

"A right winger."

*On the similarities between ice hockey and golf...*

"Not to get too technical, but it's definitely a lot of lower body strength and creating force from the ground up in a hockey slap shot, as well as the golf swing. There's also the rotation element to it."

*On who he looks up to...*

"I've had a lot of help from the Swedish National Team. They've been a great help. Growing up in Sweden you can only play golf for six months a year, but they helped me out financially and made sure that myself other kids could travel internationally and play golf in Spain, and that sort of thing over the winters. They helped me a lot in my career."

"All the Swedish players out on TOUR, Alex Noran, definitely [Henrik] Stenson... those are guys you love seeing out on TOUR and you strive to become as good as they are."

*On when he first picked up golf...*

"My dad's the head greens keeper at my home course."

*On what course his dad works at...*

"It's called Le Golf Club. He introduced me as soon as I could walk and from that point on..."

*On if his dad was glad he chose golf over hockey...*

"I don't think he really cares as long as I'm happy but definitely, or hopefully less injuries in golf than hockey so my mom's probably happy about that."

*On how often his family gets to watch him play...*

"Not that often. They actually came over for the first time and watching me play in Springfield, Illinois. Before that it was a couple years ago back in Sweden."

*On if they'll be able to come out anymore this year...*

"We'll see. They're busy working and stuff back home but they will try for sure."

*On his relationship with Vincent Norrman...*

"We're super close. He was on the National Team and we played on the winning European Team Championship together in 2019 for Sweden. We've traveled together quite a lot this year and played practice rounds together. He is great. He's older than me, a great role model and player."

*On having that relationship on Tour...*

"It's great. It's definitely not easy coming over here and trying to create a new life for yourself but having someone in the same boat as you helps out for sure. It's someone you can bounce ideas with and figure out how he's doing things and he can help me and I can help him. It's a massive help for sure."

*On the reason he is 13-under right now...*

"I shaved... No, I don't know. Honestly, I'm not playing golf swing, I'm just trying to play golf and see my shots. I've been doing a good job of visualizing my shots and hitting them and that's the main reason and I'm going to try and keep doing the same over the weekend."

## **MICHAEL KIM (-11, T2)**

City Plays From: Dallas, Texas | Turned Pro: 2013 | College: California-Berkeley

Exempt Status: Former Fully Exempt PGA TOUR Member for at least five consecutive seasons

### *On his round today...*

"Really good. I feel really comfortable with how I've been playing for the last three or fourth months now, and I was able to roll a couple in today. I'm feeling really good about my round."

### *On his birdie putt on No. 12...*

"Jeff [Overton] hit it to about six, seven feet past the hole. I hit a decent shot but it was going a little too fast and it, luckily, hit Jeff's ball and he was even nice enough to give me a read. It was an easy putt from there."

### *On his thoughts on Oakridge Country Club...*

"I think a lot of the important tee shots, like the par-5s, require a draw which is my favorable shot shape, so I feel really comfortable out here. I feel like I have a good handle on how far the ball is going to go with the elevation, so I feel good."

### *On his season...*

"Overall I've been really happy (with my season). I lost my game for a couple of years. This year, I started with a new coach, Sean Foley, and we've seen some good progress. Looking back from where I've started, it's been a really good year so far."

### *On his mentality entering the final two Regular Season events...*

"I have had the mentality of just needing a top finish in these next five tournaments, not just counting these next two because I have the playoffs to get my [PGA TOUR] card there too. I'm trying to not put too much pressure on myself and just go out there and have fun."

### *On his career up to this point...*

"I went to [University of California,] Berkeley with Max Homa and Brandon Hagy. Max is Mr. Popularity these days, Mr. Twitter. We had a great team. My sophomore year we had all five guys in the First- or Second-Team All-American. We were the No. 1 team in the country. I spent two years (on the Korn Ferry Tour) after that and then got my TOUR card. I won the John Deere Classic in 2018, but really ever since then my game went downhill. Luckily I've been able to find it back starting this year."

### *On the main difference in his game this year...*

"It's been a lot of different things. I'm in a much better mental state right now and been working with Sean [Foley] since last October. It's been great ever since."

### *On his confidence now...*

"I think I was trying to do a couple things with my swing that went against my DNA and went against how I grew up swinging. I think the confidence started coming back a little bit starting in Panama, I felt like it was my first good tournament in a really long time and I've been building on that and been really satisfied."



*On how much he draws on his PGA TOUR win...*

"Even during those few years when I was struggling, (my win) is what I always came back to. I know I'm good enough to win on the PGA TOUR, I mean I won by eight when I won. I'll always have that in the back of my mind like, 'Hey, you know you can do it.' Just being able to play and be comfortable out there is a big bonus."

## **KEVIN VELO (-11, T2)**

City Plays From: Danville, California | Turned Pro: 2020 | College: San Jose University  
Exempt Status: Open Qualifying

### *On contending in his Korn Ferry Tour debut...*

"I have nothing to lose this week, so that was my mentality coming in. Even in the Monday [qualifier], I was like 'I have nothing to lose.'" It was the last Monday [qualifier] possible, so I just fired at everything to give it a go. I think I have to solo-third to get into Finals and that's my goal, but right now I'm just enjoying the golf."

### *On his decision to Monday qualify...*

"I just needed the fill my schedule, it's been three weeks since [PGA TOUR Latinoamérica] finished up and I was just looking for something to play in and one of my buddies told me to go play in Utah, so I signed up. I have a couple mini-tour events at the end of the month but this was just a schedule fill. I played awesome [on Monday], the course was pretty easy, so I just beat up the par-5s and had a couple good wedges in."

### *On if that was his first Monday qualifier...*

"I think that was my third, but first to make."

### *On how it feels to keep the momentum going...*

"I've been playing awesome this entire year. I finished the [PGA TOUR Latinoamérica] season really well, so I just kept that momentum and mentality going. There's no secret to it, I just like the way I'm playing and I feel really confident."

### *On his status after finishing No. 4 on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica...*

"It will get my the international starts, so Panama, Bogota and Chile, but Finals is where I'm focused next to see if I can earn more. I'll hopefully win [Qualifying School Finals] and get the whole season. I plan on skipping this next (PGA TOUR Latinoamérica) season, that's the plan."

### *On turning professional...*

"I turned professional in 2020 and was still in my fifth year of school. I finished up that year and then went to [PGA TOUR Canada] Q-School, but that season was canceled. Then I went back to the Dakotas that summer and played some events, but I didn't play any good that year. I played [PGA TOUR Canada Q-School]. Then in 2021 I went to [PGA TOUR Canada] Q-School, played great there but didn't get any starts on my number, so I played one event on [PGA TOUR Canada]. I missed at Second Stage of Korn Ferry Tour Q-School last year and then got my status for Latin and it took off from there."

### *On where else he was playing between status...*

"I was just trying to find anything to play in. There are some really good mini-tour events that are run country wide. I stayed West coast. There's one in Colorado, there's one in New Mexico and just kept the schedule busy."

### *On his decision to go to San Jose State University for college...*

"It was my only D1 offer. I wasn't a highly recruiter guy out of high school and so San Jose was my only offer. The coach, John Kennaday, has been a huge help to my career. I do not regret that decision at all."

*On the greens at Oakridge Country Club...*

"These greens are really pure, they're actually Poa [Annua] I think. I'm really used to that, being from Northern California, I putt on them all the times. That's been a huge help and I can read them really well. They're getting crispy which is nice, I can drop some putts in which has been a huge help."

*On when he decided to turn professional...*

"My junior year (of college) is when I switched my mindset to be able to turn [professional]. I had a really good fall semester my junior year and I felt like I could compete with some of the bigger schools and bigger guys I decided to give it a go. I still didn't really think that I would be any sort of good. I just had to keep my head down and keep grinding."

*On how it feels to contend against the field...*

"It feels really good, but I have it in the back of my head that I know I can do it. That's why I chose to Monday, because right now I know I'm good enough to complete. Might as well get my feet wet here and if I can get out with, even a good finish on the weekend, would be awesome."

*On his favorite shot this week...*

"I made a really good eagle today on No. 15. I hit a drive down there and had a gap wedge into the par-5, hit to about eight feet and rolled it in, so that was a good one. Besides that I've just been hitting the center of greens and beating up the par-5s. I'm just trying to stick to my game plan. If you hit the greens out here there are a lot of opportunities, so that's what I've been focusing on."

*On how it feels going into the weekend being in contention...*

"I don't know yet, honestly, I really don't. I'm excited to see what it brings, I know there will be some challenges for sure. If I just stay present which is what I've been trying to do all week, that's going to help me out."

*On what he learned playing on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica...*

"I learned how to travel better. It's really hard to travel down there. You have to figure out where to eat, where to stay, to trust your Ubers half the time. That was the biggest thing, but when you get the schedule it's back-to-back-to-back. I think that helped me out, to get some momentum building I guess and to realize that I can compete is the main thing that I learned."

*On what he learned about his game on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica...*

"The biggest thing was a big mentality switch of trusting myself and trying to be me, not be anyone else. When I first when out there I missed the first three cuts."