

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: KEVIN SUTHERLAND**  
**Thursday, May 14, 2015**



**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** Kevin, 33-35 and a 4-under 68 in your first ever official round, I guess, at Shoal Creek.

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** Yeah.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** You didn't play in either of the PGAs here and your first Regions Tradition, Just talk about the day.

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** You know, it was -- obviously I had a very good day for me. I took advantage of a lot of my opportunities that I had. I putted well today, and when I did get myself in trouble, I did make some nice saves. I did drive the ball well. I sprinkled in some -- my iron play was a little erratic, but I did sprinkle in a few, and when I did I made some birdies, so it was nice. I made five birdies today, five birdies today.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** I've got you making six.

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** I had two bogeys, yeah. I had six birdies today. Anytime you make six birdies, I don't care where you're playing, that's a good day.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** Can you just sort of go through the round and maybe talk about your initial impressions when you got here of Shoal Creek and how it played?

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** Well, yeah. I had played here in the U.S. Amateur back in '86, but my recollection -- I really didn't remember much about the course except I did like it. I remember liking it a lot. I remember at 18 a little bit and I remember 13, the par 3, but really besides that I didn't remember much except for the fact that I did like it.

So when I came here, I love the course, it's a fabulous golf course. It makes you really have to think. Some of the par 5s, I reached No. 11 today, but it has to be a good number for you, it's not always just an automatic go. Sometimes like you've got to put the ball in the right spot. Like No. 6, it's a par 5 that unless I had the perfect number, I think no matter what club I had in there, I think I might be just laying up to get an angle on the pin. It's a very good golf course, makes you think where you want to put the ball in the fairway and where you want to put the ball on the green. It's a lot of fun to play.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** Just go through the round, birdies, bogeys and any real key saves you may have had.

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** I bogeyed 2, I hit it in the left bunker, hit a decent bunker shot out about seven, eight feet and didn't make the putt. On the next hole I hit a driver and a 4-iron on the par 5 No. 3 just short of the green. I chipped it up to about six feet and made that for

birdie. And then actually I played pretty solid through there. I played 4 really solid, made a nice par. I hit a 6-iron on 5 to about six feet and made that for birdie. And then in total honesty, I was kind of -- the pin was over the water and I just didn't think I could get 7-iron all the way to the pin so I decided to hit a little 6, and honestly I hit it a little heavy but it turned out good. Having a day like that, I was just trying to hit it past the pin. Wasn't even trying to get anywhere near the hole really, just trying to hit it 20, 30 feet past the hole and I cut it a little heavy and it ended up snuggling up there pretty close and making birdie, so there you go. No. 6 I drove in the fairway bunker and laid up and had about 80 yards and I wedged it to -- hit a lob wedge, 60-degree wedge to 10 feet, made that. No. 8 I hit a 7-iron to seven, eight feet and then made that, hit a really nice shot there into the green. No. 9 I played solid. No. 10 I had a good birdie putt. 11, hit a driver and a hybrid. This is what I was talking about, like we were thinking about maybe laying up but we decided that because the number wasn't good for the pin. But we decided just to hit it past the pin into the middle of the green, and I hit a hybrid to the middle of the green and it was a tough two-putt but I got it down there about five, six feet past the hole and then made it up the hill. It was hard to get it real close to that pin from where I was. No. 12, I hit a 9-iron into 12, made about a 20-some footer, 22, 23 feet probably so that was a nice bonus. It's a tough pin, back right on a little ledge and I hit it to pin-high left and just made it up the hill. 13 I made bogey; I hit a 5-iron, did not hit it very well, hit it left into the bunker, knocked it out of the bunker to maybe 10, 12 feet and probably the weakest putt I hit all day. I did not hit a good putt there, I hit it low and right, it was short and right of the hole, but I made bogey.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** All pars.

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** All pars. I had a decent putt on 14 and didn't make it. Then I was just on the fringe on 16 and two-putted from just off the edge of the green. Then just hit a bad wedge shot on 17 just in the back fringe and two-putted that. And then got a little greedy on 18, hit a nice drive, hit 9-iron into the green and missed it. I hit a good shot but it kicked down to the right, chipped it up to about six feet and made that. So I putted very well obviously and made the saves when I needed to.

**Q.** When you don't have a lot of course experience, what do you have to do approaching it? Obviously you were able to turn it into a good round. Is course knowledge necessarily that important?

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** You know, course knowledge is always nice to have, it's never a bad thing. But I think when you're not 100 percent sure of everything, I think no matter how much course knowledge you have, you've still got to drive the ball in the fairway and still got to make putts, and I drove the ball in the fairway today. And with this Bermuda rough, it's just at that height where you'll have a hard time controlling the ball. So getting the ball in the fairway is really important, but having a little bit of course knowledge always helps. But when you don't have it, I think you just try and play a little bit more keep the ball in front of you, just try to get the ball in the fairway, and if you're not sure, play a more conservative line into the green. Where course knowledge is nice is knowing what putts are fast and slow, and you kind of have to learn that on the fly a little bit when you haven't been here before.

**Q. Given that you mentioned you bogeyed No. 2 not knowing the course, getting an early bogey, how important was it to quickly get that turned around?**

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** I think it's important. I didn't really -- the bogey had a lot more to do with just I hit a really bad second shot. I hit a 9-iron into that green and I tugged it really badly and made bogey. But, you know, getting it back and then I birdied three of the next four, it's always nice to kind of wash away that bogey really fast and be able to move on. Also, I was 2-under par four holes later, so it was like the bogey was a distant memory. If you make another bogey after that bogey, then it becomes a little bit more problematic.

**Q. Going into or finishing the first day with such a good day, do you kind of just have the same philosophy as you get ready to approach tomorrow and the rest of the weekend?**

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** Yeah, it's so early. In fact, I didn't really look at the leaderboard much today at all, just kind of did my own thing. I'll be doing the same thing tomorrow, just getting the ball in the fairway and hitting a lot of greens is kind of key around here. I think that's what you need to be focused on.

**Q. Googling your name, first thing that comes up is you shot a 59 last year.**

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** Yeah.

**Q. That's obviously a great thing to be known for, but I know you probably want to win a tournament also. What is that like even a year later that's something you're most known for and probably always will be very well known for obviously?**

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** Yeah, it was a great day. The crowds there were amazing. They way I was treated by the crowds coming up 18 was fantastic. It was just an amazing day. Everything seemed to go right. It was like I made comments many times before that it had a video golf feel to it, like you're playing Nintendo or -- that's dating myself, isn't it? Xbox. You always feel like you're 15-under after 16 holes or something like that, it had that feel to it. You feel like you should be birdieing every hole. Those birdies started getting contagious, I kept wanting to make more of them, and I did that day and it was a lot of fun.

**Q. Do days like this kind of put all that into a little bit of perspective in a sense that I know you felt like you had a good round today; you would have been nine shots off the pace?**

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** Yeah, I mean, it does. It's funny because you have to -- you shoot that 59 and all of a sudden you're like, God, 69's still a good score, that's 10 strokes higher. You have to kind of put that in perspective. That was a round I just totally ran out of control. I was 9-under after eight holes and at that point -- I remember at that point, I'm not probably supposed to do this, but I said, you know, if I make four more birdies I shoot 59. I remember

thinking, man, shooting 59 is really hard if you have to make four more after being 9 after 8. So it was a lot of the fun. It was a funny round, though, because the day before I played very poorly, I didn't play well at all. It just kind of goes to show you get a little momentum and anything can happen.

**Q. Kevin, you mentioned course experience and we're going to Del Paso for the U.S. Senior Open. How much are you anticipating that event because you're from the area?**

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** I'm looking forward to it, you know, because it's a course that I play a lot. It's funny, you can compare like this course and that course, you guys don't know it but this course has a lot more course knowledge in it because there's a lot of more subtleties to it. Del Paso's a little bit more strait in front of you. It's nice to know which greens break and which ones don't. But from tee to green there's not as much course knowledge as there would be like for a place like this where being in the right place around the greens, a little more undulation. I'm looking forward to it, it's going to be a great week. I know their ticket sales have been doing really well and they're expecting a lot of people. It's a small piece of property, so it should be a great atmosphere and it's going to be a tremendous week.

**PHIL STAMBAUGH:** We'll let you go. Good luck tomorrow.

**KEVIN SUTHERLAND:** Thanks.