

VISIT KNOXVILLE OPEN
ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
May 14, 2022



CARL YUAN (-15)

Q. Carl, once again finding yourself atop the leaderboard. Walk me through your day and then that 29 there on the back.

CARL YUAN: Yeah, it was an awesome day. Hit the ball really well. Hit 17 greens, made some good putts on the back nine for sure. I think today I just played really smart, it was really solid.

Something I want to say, a big shout-out to my wife. After Thursday, my game had been struggling the last couple weeks and Friday morning she sent me an article about Jon Rahm, that he was struggling with his game for a little bit. He was focusing so much on technique and really losing the feel or flow of the game. So last two days I really remind myself why I've got to be me when I'm playing golf. So that's what I did the last two days and it worked out great. So looking forward to keep that going.

Q. I'm not sure you know this, but today, 62, that's your career-low round on any PGA Tour-sanctioned event. Everything just kind of clicked for you out there. What does that mean to you to get that number today?

CARL YUAN: I wasn't really thinking about it through the round obviously. Really my caddie kept me in good rhythm to try to focus on shot by shot, not getting ahead of myself, so that was great just hitting shots with 100 percent focus, not really worried about where I'm at on the leaderboard on the round. I think that was the key for sure. Yeah, being able to shoot low out here is crucial. The competition is so hard out there and I have to put up a good round somewhere in a week to have a chance at winning a tournament.

Q. Some guys I think at No. 1 would kind of take a deep breath and sit back, but for you it's like you're still fighting as if you weren't. Can you attest to that? I mean, just how you grind week in and week out.

CARL YUAN: Yeah, 100 percent. I know I'm going to be on the PGA Tour next year, but when I come to the course every week, everybody starts from even par, so I have no advantage over anybody. I've still got to come out here, play good golf, shoot low scores, try to win the tournament. I think that's my mentality coming every week. You make the cut, play good or play bad, it's a week of golf. It doesn't really matter where I'm at on the points. I think the mentality really keep me going. Not backing off, not backing down, playing safe or anything. Yeah, I think that's a good mindset to have for sure.

Q. I'm sure you're asked this a lot, but you've made five cuts. Out of those, four

top-10s, you've placed really well when you do make the cut. What would you say like the reason for that is? Like you either miss it or you're up there, there's no in between.

CARL YUAN: Obviously I'm not trying to miss the cut. I can definitely put better golf together, not missing the cut. Something I'm working on. Yeah, when I make the cut I'm excited to play the weekend, trying to go up the leaderboard as high as I can. Yeah, just have a good mindset trying to win a tournament.

Q. Walk me through your favorite shot today, favorite hole, what was it?

CARL YUAN: Favorite hole?

Q. Something you're just really proud of out there.

CARL YUAN: I'd say probably No. 11. It's a tough par-3 with a front pin, with how firm the greens are today. I had a great number, just hit an awesome 9-iron pin high, went like 10 feet past the hole. It was a really quick putt, but yeah, I saw the line, really trusted it, put on a good stroke and the ball went in. So that was a great feeling to have playing golf, for sure. You saw the line, you execute it exactly how you want it and the result came out great.

Q. How would you define being comfortable at the top of the leaderboard? You seem to be comfortable up there. Like some guys don't really like it, but how do you define being comfortable and why are you?

CARL YUAN: I think I'm in the position often enough that I know if you want to do great things winning tournaments, this is exactly where I need to be. Being uncomfortable at first, it's a good test. I put myself through more situations like this, almost force myself to be comfortable because this is where I need to be to win a golf tournament.

Q. And will you be able to draw on Lafayette or is that different because you were so far behind whereas tomorrow you're going to be in the final pairing?

CARL YUAN: Probably a little different. I was a little more behind in Lafayette, but tomorrow I think same mindset, go out attacking. And I shot 62 today, so who knows who's going to put up the best score again tomorrow. So I've still got to have the offensive mindset to play the course, not trying to play defensive golf. That never works out great.