
Q. First group off today, hot start, especially front nine, you mentioned the first 29. Have fun today?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, the first 29. Yeah, it was a lot of fun. I made a couple nice putts early and then I started hitting some shots really close that I didn't really try to, but we had some good numbers and it's just one of those days where the numbers are right and I kind of fired at some pins. Even played well on the back honestly, just hit a couple really loose drives that cost me a couple shots, but yeah, overall really fun day.

Q. What's it like to have one of those days where it kind of just seems like clicking and can't miss?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, yeah, you almost, like you get started during the day and then once you start thinking about it, it's like you've already done a lot of good. So I got to that point probably on 17 or 18 and after that I really didn't think about anything, just kept hitting good shots. And I hit a lot of good shots on the back nine. It's tough to keep scoring like this, especially at a golf course that isn't necessarily giving up a ton of birdies, but I think it's probably playing as easy as it can out here because this is a tough course, but conditions are soft and I thought some of the pins are accessible, so definitely feel like I took advantage.

Q. Went to the range. What certain things are you working on?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I hit a couple drives like 60 yards offline, which I've done this week, but I've driven it well for the most part. But on 4 I hit it like 40 left like on the left side of the lake. Just trying to get the left miss out of the way. Other than that, I've really struck it well. Even the first day I really struck it well, just didn't putt well, so just like get some feels for tomorrow.

Q. Tournament debut here, can you speak to the fans having fun watching you the last couple days on the first tee and the applause as you're walking down, taking it all in?

SAHITH THEEGALA: It's been so awesome, people have been the best part of being out here. Well, along with the food. I'd say people and food are tied.

Yeah, I got to play with a good friend, Kaito. He played a bit in SoCal so he had a lot of fans with him the first two days and I kind of fed off the energy and it was great. Like felt more comfortable being around him.

Yeah, today the fans were awesome again. I was playing right behind the lead group on the back, so I think a couple of them stayed behind to kind of cheer my group on. It was a lot of fun. They're just so nice and they get golf so well and probably some of the most respectful fans ever.

Q. Can you speak more about that relationship with Kaito? Where did that start?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, we played some junior golf. I think he was in Irvine from 12 to 14 and then he went to IMG for high school in Florida and then came back and played college golf at USC and we overlapped a couple years. He's a year younger than me, but yeah, he played at SC, played with him a bunch. Actually not even that much, but just like we were around each other a lot. So we were texting even before I got to this event, we need to hang out, and sure enough we played a practice round and mid practice round we found out that we're paired together, so that was really fun.

Q. (No microphone.)

SAHITH THEEGALA: I don't think -- no, I've never shot 7 under in nine holes, so no. I definitely felt like I had a couple, like I made like a 25-footer on 11 and it felt kind of a bonus. Yeah, I played really well on the front nine. I actually parred, I made like a six-footer for par on the first par 5, so that's a hole that a tone of people are going to have birdie looks at. So if I'm being really picky, I guess I could have gotten one more there, but no, I played incredible that back nine, for sure.

Q. Amazing rookie season last year. Saw you at Sanderson Farms last year, come a long way since then. What's it like being out here now and starting your second season in contention again at another event?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, it's a lot of the same. I still feel the excitement and nerves, which is a good thing. Starting off in Napa felt pretty similarly to the first year, a little more comfortable, a little less nervous.

Yeah, you know, talk to Carl all the time, my caddie. Just can't ever take it for granted and year two still feels super, super fresh. So I'm taking every opportunity as it comes and I'm just thankful for what I can do. The game has been getting better and better and just going to hopefully keep going in that trajectory.

