

U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship

Press Conference Tuesday September 25, 2018



Kyler Sauer

Q. Into the quarterfinals. First thoughts on the match.

KYLER SAUER: Well, this is my third-ever match play round I've ever played.

Q. Okay.

KYLER SAUER: I'm enjoying match play so far. It was really, really tough. He looked like a great player from the get-go. I knew I was going to have to make some putts.

I mean, right off the start he was making birdies. Luckily I made a few birdies and some good putts to start, too, to keep up with him.

I knew he was pretty intense for most of the day, so I knew I had to kind of stay focused and hit some good shots throughout the entire round.

Which, I mean, it lasted 18 holes, so we were pretty head-to-head or neck-to-neck the whole time.

Q. 7 and 9 were big holes. You got a couple back.

KYLER SAUER: Uh-.

Q. Just talk about those.

KYLER SAUER: Got to go back and think about No. 7.

Q. 7 was a birdie, par-5.

KYLER SAUER: 7, the par-5. Gosh, I can't even think of the -- sorry.

Q. No, you're good.

KYLER SAUER: Oh, yeah, 7. Yeah, well my game plan this whole week is just hit the fairway on that hole. I've struggled on that hole, so I hit the fairway today.

It's been play safely, hit to my comfortable yardage, which I did that. I had two small victories to start on the hole, and then hit it close enough to make the putt there.

Then 9 I struggled. That's another hole that I've tried to hit the fairway. Missed it today in the second round and -- or in both rounds -- but the second round I, again, played it safe and fortunately -- I mean, he hit a poor shot, so just had to take advantage of that.

Tried to take advantage of that best I could at that time. Yeah, it's all still a blur. Sorry. I'm trying to think back.

Q. And then you got the match to all square on 12 with par.

KYLER SAUER: Yes. On 12, yeah, so that was a rough one. Definitely could have played it differently for my approach. Got a little aggressive with my second shot.

But it's kind of like the mental game of match play where you kind of want to put that intimidation factor on a little bit.

But probably should have stuck to the game plan and played it safe, just played to my comfortable yardage and gone in from there.

But, yeah.

Q. And then walking to 18 tee 1-up, what's going through your mind?

KYLER SAUER: Well, I did it in the first match today, so, again, just focus on the first shot, hit the fairway, which I did; it was a great tee shot.

And then just from there on I knew I already had the advantage so didn't have to press too hard. Played comfortably. I left my birdie putt way too short, and thankfully -- and he's been great out of the bunker all day, so he was up for par easy.

Thankfully I made a good putt to close it out. That was a stressful way to finish it for sure. 36 holes is enough. I didn't want to have to go back out there and play a few more playoff holes.

Q. Like you said, 36 is a lot in one day. How hard is it to keep mentally tough?

KYLER SAUER: It's tough. I caught myself a few times through the match kind of wavering a little bit off.

But like I said earlier, it's small victories. You got to really try to hone in on each shot individually. Obviously pay attention to everything that's going on, but then also recognize those small victories.

Hit the fairways, hit the greens, because those are huge in match play, especially out here. Long course,

not a lot of birdie opportunities out here, so 4s can be a really good score on a lot of these holes.

Q. Coming into this week having never played match play could you have ever imagined you would be in the quarterfinals?

KYLER SAUER: No. No, my goal was to make it through stroke play, which even to qualify for this event was huge.

Then make it through stroke play, that was awesome for my confidence.

And then to see some success with match play has been just amazing. All these guys are so good out here. I've been having a lot of fun. I know a lot of these guys are taking it pretty serious. It's a pretty cool thing that we get to take time away from our lives and come out and play a beautiful golf course with family and friends around.

It's been a blessing, absolutely. Awesome experience. Win or lose, I'm stoked to have made it this far.

Q. Being a quarterfinalist you're exempt into next year's Mid-Am.

KYLER SAUER: No way. No.

Q. How does that make you feel?

KYLER SAUER: I didn't even know that. Well, that's awesome. It's if Colorado, right?

Q. Uh-huh.

KYLER SAUER: We've always wanted to go to Colorado so we'll make a little vacation out of it.

Q. Uh-huh.

KYLER SAUER: I had no idea that was part of it. That's so great. That's the cool thing. We've been making vacations out of these golf trips. I saw some success in 2013 and we took a trip to the U.S. Am in Boston and made a great family trip.

And then to be out here and make another vacation out of it, it's just been great. If I play great golf then that's awesome. If I don't, we turn it into a vacation. So that's awesome.

Thanks for letting me know.

Q. Yeah. You mentioned you have a bunch family out here. Who is out here with you this week?

KYLER SAUER: My grandpa, Gary Preston, and then my dad and mom. My mom has a bad foot and my grandpa is getting a little old, so they've got their motor cars following me around, which is awesome.

Q. And heading into tomorrow, keep the same game plan?

KYLER SAUER: Absolutely, yeah. Like I said, there is not whole lot of birdie holes out here, so hitting fairways and greens is going to be huge.

The greens have been pretty firm and fast this whole week. Assume going to see some of the same tomorrow. Same game plan: be aggressive, be confident and hopefully I roll the putter as good as I did today on the front nine.

Q. Last question: What do you feel like the best part of your game is right now?

KYLER SAUER: Best part of my game has probably been the wedge anywhere from 100 in. I've felt really good and I know I can get it within a 15-foot circle, so that's -- you know, playing to that 100- to 70-yard rage has been really important for me because I know I can be really aggressive at these flags, even though some of are some pretty tucked areas on some ridges.

Not the short game, but the short long game a little bit.