

# Valspar Championship

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Palm Harbor, Florida, USA

Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead)

## Keith Mitchell

### Quick Quotes

**Q. What was the biggest challenge of this golf course? It feels like a hard one.**

KEITH MITCHELL: The fairways are narrow, wind is tricky. The wind's really tricky around here because you get down in these swales and down the bottom of the hills and it can kind of go one way off the tee and a completely opposite way on the green just because of the way it's kind of swirling down and trying to get low. I would say that's number one, and fairways being very narrow, that's number two.

**Q. Would you have been happy with 67 at the start or is it frustrating given the way you started?**

KEITH MITCHELL: Both. Being 6-under through 10, I felt like I could really crank it up, but I'm lucky to make bogey on 2, really. I had good looks on 3 and 4, and then 3-putted 5 from what I felt like was a decent position, and parred my way in. And pars are never bad scores around here, but bogeys are. Birdies are good. I just didn't make any birdies the last eight holes, didn't capitalize on a few good shots and hit a couple poor ones.

**Q. You 3-putted 5, the par-5?**

KEITH MITCHELL: Um-hmm.

**Q. I'm afraid to ask because it sounds like a bad memory, but was it a 60-footer?**

KEITH MITCHELL: I hit a great drive and was going for it in two and I kind of had to draw it a little bit because I thought the wind was off the left. I just didn't turn it over enough. It went in the short bunker. I hit a great bunker shot, landed right on the collar and just kicked it really far. It probably would have been 10 to 15 feet if it hadn't landed exactly where it landed, 6 inches short or long, which gave me probably, yeah, 40-something, I don't know, 40, 50 feet, and hit it too hard and then hit it left.

**Q. Some of your best ball striking. Pretty good place to find it, isn't it?**



KEITH MITCHELL: It is. This golf course is very demanding tee to green. Greens are small too, so you're going to have some short chances, but you got some undulation in speed. So if you leave yourself in the right place, you can make a lot of putts, but you get out of position here and you're struggling to make par.

**Q. Don't see too many guys bogey-free out there, for sure?**

KEITH MITCHELL: No.

**Q. Did you feel there was an opportunity this morning going out early, knowing the chaos tomorrow with the weather?**

KEITH MITCHELL: It was definitely -- the greens were very receptive and very -- the greens were rolling very good, very well, this morning, just because there wasn't many spike marks on it, and there's not that many people out in front of me on the front. I feel like I could take it at the flag because the ball wasn't going to get away from me. I did that very well and then felt like I wasn't hitting the fairway as much on the front nine, which when you're out of position, you can't do that. You can't take it at the flags.

**Q. We were talking about this yesterday. Have you ever been to a tournament, a PGA TOUR event, where, weather aside, you knew the round wasn't going to get finished that day because there were 155 guys in the field and the last tee time was, like, 3 o'clock?**

KEITH MITCHELL: I don't know, that's a good question. I don't know if I've ever been in the position where I teed off without weather thinking that I wasn't going to finish. I remember in Phoenix my rookie year, we were the last group to finish. We putted out in the dark and there was maybe a group or two behind us, and that didn't have to do with weather. That just had daylight. That's the only really memory I have of that.

**Q. Do you like what they have done for the next few weeks to expand the fields, just to give, make sure guys are getting starts?**



KEITH MITCHELL: I haven't really thought about it. There's just so much going on right now, and field sizes and who is qualified and who is not that, as much as we want to be able to have an opinion and control that, it's more of, right now, mid season playing, like, I know what tournaments I'm in and I'm going to try to play the best I can in those tournaments. I can see how those guys are in a really different boat. When I was a rookie I didn't get into this tournament, I don't think. I know I didn't get into this tournament as a rookie. Just because of the fields. They didn't do it then, they're doing it now, but these guys are getting less -- it's just, it's tough, right. I remember I didn't get in -- I made the cut in every West Coast event and I think I got in maybe one Florida event as a rookie, and I was an alternate and got in the last day or something. I feel for the guys. I was there.

**Q. Are you kind of on that note, are you pretty good at ignoring mindless questions about stuff you don't want to think about?**

KEITH MITCHELL: I would like to think I think about 'em when I'm asked the question, and by the time I get off I don't think about 'em anymore (laughing).

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