

WM Phoenix Open

Saturday, February 10, 2024

Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

TPC Scottsdale

Jim Knous

Quick Quotes



Q. Such a cool story that has unfolded. To make the cut, what does this mean knowing that with the situation here you have two more rounds here?

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, it was really important to me. I wanted to make the cut, have a good showing. I know my game is still right there. Felt really good this week. Hitting the ball really well, putting well.

Yeah, just wanted to play the weekend. Last time I was here in 2017 missed the cut. I want to see what that Saturday Colosseum vibe is like on No. 16. I want to hear them roar. I need to get in there and hit a good shot so I can hear them roar.

Q. You came here as a fan in college.

JIM KNOUS: Yeah.

Q. What was that experience like? Did you get here early?

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, yeah.

Q. How early did you get here?

JIM KNOUS: I think back in the day we didn't have to get here quite as early. At the gates 6:00 a.m. Me and my friends, there were probably 12 of us or so. We did it two or three years in a row. Come down from college. We would like either drive down or fly down and stay just at friend's houses, people who have graduated. We were like sleeping on the floor and stuff.

Wake up really early, get there at 6:00 a.m., and we were of those yahoos running over to the 16th hole, grab a seat, there all day, just having fun, cheering on people. Saw a couple aces throughout the years. Edoardo -- Francesco Molinari if I remember right.

Trying to think of another one. It was just a blast. It's always fun. Try to hype up the crowd when I'm playing in there, because that's what they want to see.

Q. So you were part of the runners?

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, like I said, I think back in the day it wasn't as crazy as it is now. Yeah, we were running. We were running.

Q. And I know you touched on it a couple times, but to go through the decision to go a different direction in your career...

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, like I said, played out this last -- 2023 season on the Korn Ferry TOUR. I played poorly. I had some back injuries at the end of the season. Me and my wife sat down and had that discussion, you know, is it time to give it up. I have three kids, you know, and a lot going on in my life and I wanted to be around.

When we did our accounting in 2022, I was gone 197 nights. That just wears on you as a person, as a dad. So we made the decision to try to look for other opportunities.

We asked everybody I know, all the contacts I made through the years. Everyone at Ping has been family to me for 12 plus years and they've just been awesome. I know so many people there, and they decided to take a chance on me, which I'm super grateful for. Yeah, I start on February 26th. I got a cubicle. Let's go.

Q. What will the role be?

JIM KNOUS: Fitting and education engineer. Working with the fitters, design engineers, R&D. A broad scope position so I can branch out later once I maybe find out what I'm good at or what I like to do there.

Very excited to learn as much as I can and just get to know everybody there.

Q. And then the decision to try this Monday, what was that decision like in the context of you know you're going to start a new career?

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, it's been a fun timeline. I met with John K, the CEO from Ping -- thank you, John K -- in early



January. I got to like an offer couple weeks later. Went to play the Farmer's Monday qualifier because, well, I don't have a job so I'll just go play some Mondays.

Game still felt pretty good. Played well there. Didn't play well enough. I figured this would be my last Monday qualifier of the year since I signed on the dotted line, so I said -- and we set that start date later in February.

I said this is probably going to be the last Monday qualifier. I love Phoenix, love the area. I have family here, too. So, yeah, signed up to play and here we are.

Q. Did that give you a tiny bit maybe more freedom at all on the course knowing that you are going into that and, I guess how did that...

JIM KNOUS: That's a good question. I think it probably did, yeah. Subconsciously probably freed me up a little bit. I said, well, you know, let's swing for the fences here. If not, go to work in a month.

No, but Monday I just was feeling it. I was flagging it everywhere and making every putt. It was one of those days. It was awesome.

Q. And you were 2-over through 5 in the first round. Not a great start. Did you get down on yourself at that point or were you able to stay positive?

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, 2-over through 5 I was like, well, this isn't very good. Not playing very well. I was bummed. I said there is a lot of golf to play and knew I was swinging William. Let's get on a rally here. Yesterday's rally there were four birdies in a row. That was pretty awesome.

Climbed back into it a little bit. I was a little bit nervous this morning coming out having to play four hard holes in the rain and the cold and stuff. A little nervous about that if I'm being honest.

Luckily played it 1-under coming in. I was pretty excited.

Q. And big picture question: What does this mean, 12 years as a pro, played the mini tours, Korn Ferry, just kind of gone through a lot of the ark of the journey as a pro golfer. What has that collective 12 years meant to you in your life?

JIM KNOUS: It's been a long 12 years, Kev. That's for sure. It's flown by fast. Yeah, mini tours golf, Korn Ferry TOUR. I was on the Web.com TOUR. The first event I played was the Nationwide TOUR. I was on the Web.com TOUR TOUR, Korn Ferry tour again, now nothing. PGA TOUR, Waste Management Phoenix Open.

I'm so grateful for everything that's happened. It's been a hard road. It's been fun at times. I'm just very blessed to have gone through what I've gone through.

Q. Do you think in a sense you fulfilled a lot of your childhood dream of being a pro golfer?

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, I definitely fulfilled some of my dreams. Obviously getting to the PGA TOUR was one of my childhood dreams, a lot of people's childhood dreams. Winning on the PGA TOUR, winning majors, that was obviously a dream of mine. Obviously that's not going to happen unless we get on a heater this weekend.

But, yeah, I'm super proud and happy with what I've accomplished.

Q. What is the support, your wife and your parents and Team Hard K in general?

JIM KNOUS: Team Hard K, they're always rallying for me. The support of my wife is incredible. She's backed me for these 12 years as a professional golfer. That's hard to do. I mean, that's a lot of stuff she's given up.

I can't thank her enough, and all my family, parents, grand parents, in laws, you name it. I can't even run down the list. There are so many people I need to thank, and it's been an incredible journey.

They've been with me here and there traveling to events, you know, watching my kids while we're out of town, all sorts of stuff. Yes, thank you. Thank you Team Hard K.

Q. If you had a message to Heidi, what would that be?

JIM KNOUS: Oh, just be that I love her. I love you, Heidi. I can't thank her enough for like I said for everything she's done for me for my career. Now it's time to -- one last hurrah and put the sticks -- not aside, because I'm still going to play. We are not going to give up the gig. But be there as a dad, full-time, come home every night. That's the plan. That's what I want to do for her and for my kids.

Q. Playing pro golf, it's a tough journey. Where did that come from that made you decided to it, go through it and chase the dream?

JIM KNOUS: That's a good question. I mean, first -- the first fuel I had was from my dad. He's an avid golfer. Probably loves the game more than I do, to be honest.

And then growing up watching Tiger and Ernie and Vijay, those guys battle it out. David Duvall and Sergio. That

was great times. I loved watching golf. Those guys made me want to be out here. Those guys made me want to live the dream and swing it like Ernie. Just that big silky smooth swing that he has. Always loved his swing.

Anyway, long winded way to answer your question. That's why I wanted to be out here.

Q. The feeling of getting your card back, what was that moment like?

JIM KNOUS: That was incredible to get my PGA TOUR card. Atlantic Beach is beautiful place. I wish the TOUR went back there. I don't think I celebrated enough to be honest. I was saying, okay, now we made it. Now I want to get out there and win. I want to do well. Which is the right attitude to have.

But looking back I wish I maybe would've brought the whole family together and celebrated. We did have a party and stuff, but I wish I was a little more joyous instead of just grind, grind, grind, grind.

But it was awesome. Atlantic Beach Country Club was beautiful. It was stressful on this line, as you remember. We got it done and had a great year. That was fun.

Q. What's been the best part of the journey?

JIM KNOUS: Best part of the journey? Maybe my hole-in-one at Torrey Pines, No. 3.

No, just kidding. Having the family and friends at every event. That's what does it for me. I love looking over -- making a birdie and looking over and they're fist pumping and hooting and hollering. That's my favorite part of being a professional golfer.

Q. 18 yesterday, what was that shot, the bunker shot on 18...

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, bunker shot on 18 yesterday, that was sick. I honestly looked at it and I said, I can make this shot from the bunker because it was a nice lie. I mean, a little bit of a sidehill stance, but it was laying really well and it was just uphill kind of.

I knew if I hit my spot it's going to trickle right toward the hole, and clipped it just perfectly and went in and I just said, yeah, baby, let's go. I was super psyched.

Q. (Video shown.)

JIM KNOUS: Oh, it was drippy, a little drippy. High five. Yes. That's pretty good. Okay, what was the No. 1 play.

Can I watch? I didn't get No. 1. I got No. 2. That's pretty good. Pretty amazing. That's any second time on ESPN top to be. Remember the first time, Kevin? Nick Parker got it on ESPN. It was like No. 8 I think.

Q. Way down up and then...

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, on the last hole there.

Q. One final one. What would your message be to a young fan that's maybe not familiar with you or your career, and as they got older come across your story? What will be your message to a fan like that?

JIM KNOUS: Yeah, message to them would be have fun at the game. I see so many players out here starting that are just like I said just grinding, grinding, grinding. You got to practice and play and stuff, but you got to make it fun. That's what it comes down to. Obviously out here at the WM Phoenix Open we're having a lot of fun. As a little kid you got to have fun practicing, playing, get your buddies together, get out there. Golf should be fun.

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