

Valspar Championship

Friday, March 21, 2025

Palm Harbor, Florida, USA

Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead)

Braden Thornberry

Quick Quotes

Q. People talk about cut line anxiety being a thing. Do you feel that and did you feel any of that today down the stretch?

BRADEN THORNBERRY: Oh, absolutely. I mean, this is a weird tournament, because I saw the lead was 5-under and I'm sitting at even, but I'm like, I would like to make some birdies obviously to get up there near the lead, but this course is playing so hard it's hard not to think about that, knowing that the cut's going to be roughly 1-over or even. So, yeah, it was certainly nerve wracking down the stretch, but you kind of just do your best every shot and see where it puts you at the end.

Q. The walking up to 18 green, what's going through your mind at that point? Are you thinking about you might need up-and-down to make the cut?

BRADEN THORNBERRY: Yeah, for sure. I knew I had to get up-and-down to have a chance at the cut. I don't know if it's going to be even or 1 or whatever, depends on this afternoon, but when I'm in the fairway, I'm -- it's kind of a weird thing, because you don't want to take too much risk and go long or hit it short-sided right or something, but also like I would like to make a birdie to kind of be safe for sure. But unfortunately hit probably my worst iron shot of the day over to the left, and got a really hard shot up-and-down. I don't know if it looked hard or not, but the lie and stuff was into the grain. But, yeah, I was very happy to hit that up to about five feet and roll that in just to give myself a chance.

Q. Have you put any pressure on yourself to make a cut at all and get that monkey off your back?

BRADEN THORNBERRY: It's a tough question. I'm just trying to play well. I haven't played -- my game hasn't been terrible, I just haven't been scoring good, it's kind of about been just a weird start to the year. I feel like even on Korn Ferry Tour I've got off to slow starts a lot of times, so that's something I need to figure out for next year for sure. But no, I'm just trying to get better and better, and this is the first week I feel like I've played like high-level golf, even though the scores still not quite there, like the shots I was



seeing I was like executing for the most part, so that's encouraging regardless.

Q. Was there anything early week on the range or anywhere that you got kind of clicked or helped you?

BRADEN THORNBERRY: I actually -- I've been playing the same shafts in all my clubs basically for the last couple years, and I just tried a new driver shaft, and I changed -- same shaft, but I tweaked some stuff with my longer irons, which has been my struggle, and they have been so far way better this week. So hopefully it continues that process. And it just has more like -- they're a little softer, so I feel like I don't have to go at 'em as much, and I can let the club do the work. Instead I was trying to muscle it around too much, so hopefully that keeps going in the right direction.

Q. What's it been like being a PGA TOUR member? You had that amazing final round at KFT Champ to get on and just kind of living out that dream so far.

BRADEN THORNBERRY: It was really cool. To win that and have like three months off whatever was nice to be able to enjoy it a little bit, and then also work on the stuff I needed to work on. But no, it's been -- playing for four, five years whatever it is on the Korn Ferry Tour, like I feel like that does prepare me for this, because I played -- right out of college I played some tour events, I Mondayed into some tour events, but still like the week to week, like back-to-back, the way you prepare, everything, the Korn Ferry Tour I feel like has prepared me as good as possible for this test.

Q. Do you feel like the fact that it took a few years to get out here made you appreciate it a little bit more?

BRADEN THORNBERRY: Absolutely. I think there's a lot of guys that did, were in my position and got out here right away, I think that -- obviously we're all just trying to play well, but I don't think they have -- in the struggle probably they're not enjoying it quite as much, where I can kind of take a step back a little bit and been -- two years ago I had no status and I was struggling money-wise, and all this stuff. And to be on the PGA TOUR now and just have an



opportunity in front of me every week is just very -- a good feeling.

Q. What would it mean to make the cut this week and have two more rounds?

BRADEN THORNBERRY: It would be great. A lot of times when you make the cut on the number you need something crazy to get up in the mix. I mean, I don't know if 5 or 6 is leading right now, but I'm only a couple shots off the lead. So I saw -- like I was saying, I was even par basically the whole back nine for the tournament, and like if I was -- if I made two birdies I would be in 6th or 7th place, and then a couple bogeys you're missing the cut. So it's such a fine line that it would be very nice to make the cut here and then go out and post a good one tomorrow and put myself in the mix.

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