Production Transcript for REWIND\_23VTO\_CONNERS.mp3

[00:00:29] >> The PGA Tour is proud to bring you the season-long race for the FedEx Cup. Now, coverage of the 2023 Valero Texas Open.

[00:00:41] >> 20 miles north of downtown San Antonio in the hill country of South Central Texas, the PGA Tour's sixth oldest event continues on the Oaks Course. Been some on and off light rain most of the day, but it was the fog delays that shrouded the course earlier this morning. Causing at first a 48-minute delay and then there was an additional 2-hour and 38-minute delay. So the field playing catch-up. And for the second straight week, England's Matt Wallace playing catch me if you can. The winner of the Corrales Punta Cana PGA Tour event last week with a birdie there at the 12th. After starting on the back, heating up here on this second nine. This was his eighth hole of the day, second at the 17th. Another birdie for Wallace there. 4-under through the first 12 holes for the winner last week. And by the way, his French caddie back at it again this week. 51-year-old Padraig Harrington got in on a sponsor's exemption. Three-time major champion filling it up at the turn there with a birdie at the 1st. Padraig is 2-under through his first 11 holes, taking advantage of his invite. Jimmy Walker, the 2015 champion here at the Valero. Local favorite, lives right down the road. Long birdie drops there at the 17th. Jimmy Walker, 3-under through his first 10 holes. Just one back as well. Nick Taylor, two-time PGA Tour winner for birdie at the 2nd. And Nick Taylor bringing it to 4-under as well. At the 11th, Tyler Duncan from behind the green with his third shot.

[00:02:24] >> This looks good. Yes, of course. We're going to see some very nice chip shots this week from around the green.

[00:02:34] >> And the par-4 12th, 422 yards today. This is Brendan Todd hitting his second. Nice drive right in the middle of the fairway. Just a wedge in there. Oh, taking advantage. Brendan Todd.

[00:02:49] >> He would make birdie.

[00:02:51] >> To the 5th, this is Thomas Detry in his birdie attempt. He's at even par, as you see there.

[00:03:01] >> Good looking.

[00:03:02] >> Wow, he's hit some nice putts in already. A chip in.

[00:03:10] >> Matt Kuchar, positioned nicely at another Valero Texas Open. Just two off the lead.

[00:03:22] >> That's a wheelhouse yardage for Kuch. Just right in the perfect gap wedge zone. Maybe downwind, a hard sand wedge.

[00:03:33] >> That's a birdie for Kuchar.

[00:03:39] >> To 16.

[00:03:39] >> And there's the bunker with that hole location up on that back left tier.

[00:03:43] >> This hole is only about a yard past the bunker. If you go at the bunker and hit it exactly hole high, you'll barely clear it. Most of the guys will land short, Dan. And it's real narrow in there.

[00:03:56] >> Sam Ryder is up.

[00:03:58] >> It's 192 yards downwind. It's not a long club. Oh, good shot. Oh!

[00:04:06] >> Remember the ace he made in Phoenix?

[00:04:08] >> Ryder would settle for par.

[00:04:12] >> Roberto Diaz at the 9th at 1-under, from Mexico. Not a PGA Tour member. But worthy of that highlight today. What a shot by Diaz.

[00:04:36] >> The only player in the group not in the bunker here is Sepp Straka using a wedge. And look at that! Bracing it in.

[00:04:50] >> This is at 17. This is Garrick Higgo. It's his second shot. And it's a beauty.

[00:05:01] >> He would knock that in.

[00:05:03] >> Over at the par-5 14th, fourth shot for Peter Quest, a 24-year-old Monday qualifier. Trying to make the most of his week.

[00:05:13] >> What a dream start for him.

[00:05:15] >> And how about that? 2-under. Ben Griffin in the bunker here at the 3rd. Just getting his round started. And that's a way to get it started with a kick start.

[00:05:39] >> Oh, that's Ricky Fowler, Dan, scooting that one into the hole.

[00:05:45] >> Back here at the 3rd. And Hideki Matsuyama way over this third green. Oh, man. Impressive. His short game has been really good this season. Here's Wu over at the 15th.

[00:06:03] >> Yeah, Brandon from just off the green. And down it goes. Another one holed out from off the green.

[00:06:16] >> Duffy for eagle at the last.

[00:06:23] >> How about that? So he goes birdie, eagle to tie for the lead.

[00:06:30] >> What a feeling that is.

[00:06:36] >> 2019 Valero Texas Open champion Corey Connors holds the round one lead after a stunning 64. Padraig Harrington tied sixth and four back. Round two is next.

[00:06:55] >> Welcome back to the sixth oldest event on the PGA Tour. They first played this tournament in 1922. All 92 tournaments here in San Antonio. The oldest to be held in the same city. It's the 13th edition here on the Oaks Course at TPC San Antonio, where it will be a full day of golf today as the field continues to play catch up from yesterday's weather delays due to fog. As we take a look at the leaderboard, Rodgers in with his 67, 11-under. Connors posting that 64 in the first round, finishing up his second round right now, four back. You've got Michael Thompson, Chris Kirk, and Eric Cole, the combatants in the playoff at the Honda Classic won by Kirk. Corey Connors finishing up his second round this morning with a 64. That's a birdie at 15, a part of it. He was the first round leader by two over this guy. Patrick Rodgers, we're in his second round, and he was finishing with a flurry of birdies. This was his tee shot at the par-3 16, that back right hole location. Rodgers just fires it in there. Another birdie there at the par-3. He heads to the short par-4 17th, two holes left. Birdie there. At that point, he's made four birdies in his last five holes. Can he make it five out of six at the par-5 18th? His second from 243 yards. Rodgers has been out here on tour for a while now. In fact, this is his 235th PGA Tour start. Using the slope nicely, and by the time that finally comes to rest, it'll be two putts for another birdie. Five birdies in his last six holes, so he follows up the first round 66, with a 67 today to post 11-under. He's four shots clear of Connors, who still has a few holes left.

[00:09:02] And now the 2013 champion here, Martin Laird, coming home. With not a good score, but a very good finish to his two days.

[00:09:22] >> Kodaira is now ready to go. And it takes all you can do to get it back there. Let's see if he can get it over that ridge. Oh, look at this. He would make birdie.

[00:09:40] >> Si-woo Kim.

[00:09:47] >> Perfect tee shot right in the fairway there, and he can go at it.

[00:09:50] >> Oh, man.

[00:09:52] >> That's a birdie for Kim.

[00:09:56] >> Marty Dou. Another bucket hat. Long range across the green for birdie. That's like a putt for Dou. Back to 2. Echevarria. Oh, yeah. Just drips it over the front edge. Nicely done there by Nico.

[00:11:13] >> Back here at the 3rd hole, the par-3, and that's Paddy Harrington and his tee shot. Playing a little cut in there. This could be good.

[00:11:30] >> That leads to birdie for Harrington.

[00:11:34] >> And over at the 5th, Nick Taylor and his second.

[00:11:44] >> Taylor would make birdie.

[00:11:49] >> 9th from well right of the green, James Hahn with his third. And you see he's across 11, so you had an idea that was going to happen.

[00:11:59] >> Yeah.

[00:12:12] >> Nick Taylor is on the tee. Looking to do this week what Corey Connors did and become a Canadian winner here of the Valero Texas Open. Ooh, look at this. What a beauty. As good as we've seen all day.

[00:12:29] >> Taylor would settle for par.

[00:12:30] >> 13. Check in with MJ Duffy. Here at this 13th hole, 199 yards, so it's up a bit today.

[00:12:38] >> Yep, always one of the more difficult par-3s out here.

[00:12:41] >> He would make that.

[00:12:48] >> To 9. Thomas Detry and his second shot. He's 2-under.

[00:12:52] >> Just a short shot into 9, playing straight downwind.

[00:12:55] >> Detry had a good week last week. And a good shot there. He had a tie for eighth.

[00:13:00] >> That's a birdie for Detry.

[00:13:03] >> Let's go to 17.

[00:13:05] >> Brendan Todd's second shot here.

[00:13:15] >> Good shot here at 17. This is Harry Higgs over at the 13th. And the big rig drops it in. 4-under for Harry. Yeah, toss the putter casually. He's seven back. We've got a lot of golf left. Not going to finish this second round until deep into tomorrow. This is Detry's birdie attempt at 10. Looking good. Yeah. Detry doing a climb. And that's three in a row. And that's four in the last five. Nico, the last to go here. Looks like he's hitting a little wedge out of here. Boy, he's had a nice short game today.

[00:14:16] >> What a good shot that is. It's nice and level up there to the green. It's not like it's way below you or the green's above you or anything.

[00:14:23] >> Boy, he's had a number of really good shots today from short range.

[00:14:33] >> Patrick Rodgers overtakes Corey Connors with a smooth 67 in round two. Connors now three off the lead. Round three is next. There are long runs for PGA Tour events in a city, and then there is this event in San Antonio, first played in 1922, still here in its 92nd edition in the Lone Star State. No other tour event longer in the same city. 13th year here on the Oaks course at TPC San Antonio, the week before the year's first major. So that adds another part of the story. Earlier in the third round, off the tee at the par-3 3rd, 189 yards, 18 starts here through the years for Kuchar. A runner up twice, never a winner. And you talk about near aces. Tap-in deuce for Kuchar. How in the world did that not go in for a hole-in-one? And then everybody chasing Patrick Rodgers. He began with a string of pars, got that first birdie at the 4th, did pick up a bogey a couple holes later to drop back to 11-under. So the lead was three to start the day. It's now two over Kuchar, three over Todd, Higgs and Connors, who was the 2019 winner here. And Padraig Harrington looking over this short birdie putt here. He's just six feet from the hole, so the chance for him to keep moving forward here and try to get into contention. He said early in the week that he feels like he could still win out here on the right track. Everything came together for him. He's still very much capable of winning, and I think, Paul, a lot of that is because he still hits it well over 300 yards.

[00:16:26] >> Yeah, and you know what, Kurt? When a guy says that, I tend to believe him, especially somebody like Padraig. He knows he's put in the work. Nobody's really going to out-prepare him. That's, in your mind, it's a real strength to feel that way. And you're right, he swings so hard at it, he can keep it up with the big boys.

[00:16:47] >> Boy, good putt there. That little putt had some break in it. Very well done. Up and down. List from the rough, 227 yards out, and this downwind par-5 is very gettable today. Watch this shot. A good one. This is the best of the day right here. It almost goes in the hole for an albatross. 13, S.H. Kim, this for a birdie to get to 7-under and join that big pack in a tie for fifth.

[00:17:19] >> Oh, nice birdie on 13.

[00:17:26] >> To 15.

[00:17:27] >> And Lee Hodges, his fourth here at the par-4. And how about it? There you go.

[00:17:42] >> And over at the 7th, where we check in again with Steve Sands over there at the par-3.

[00:17:45] >> All right, Dan, thank you. Aaron Rai. Up the hill on this par 3.

[00:17:50] >> That looks like a pose finish.

[00:17:55] >> Rai would make birdie.

[00:17:56] >> Matt Kuchar has hit 10 of his first 11 greens in regulation in this third round. See if he continues that excellent iron play. Oh, I'd say so.

[00:18:20] >> Trying to make a three at 15. Oh, yeah. You gotta love it. Luke List. Awakening late in this third round.

[00:18:36] >> Up to 12.

[00:18:38] >> Matt Kuchar trying to make another birdie. Back to two back. And he does. The 44-year-old hanging with the youngsters.

[00:18:54] >> Now Connors going through his aim point routine, Smiley.

[00:18:58] >> Yeah, he had a nice wedge shot in there. Underneath the hole, was actually able to put some spin on it. So that was a great place to weave it. And Michael Thompson just put from a very similar spot. So Corey should have a pretty nice idea what this does. But he's 1-over on his round today, saying he needs to get it going.

[00:19:14] >> I was going to say, Smiley, doubled 5. How's he looking since then, in your opinion? I mean, emotionally, he doesn't flinch.

[00:19:20] >> Well, you know, his ball striking is his strength. And he has hit it well, except for that tee shot on 5. Ended up stymied behind a tree. But overall, just hasn't really made any putts yet today.

[00:19:31] >> And that's kind of the story of his play. Back here at the 12th, Roberto Diaz in the bunker. 816th ranked player in the world, a sponsor exemption and taking full advantage. What a shot.

[00:19:55] >> This is S.H. Kim for birdie at the 15th. He's been climbing up the board. Now in that pack. Pretty big log jam and a tie for fourth, four back.

[00:20:07] >> Pour a few of these in and you just go flying up the leaderboard.

[00:20:11] >> There we go. Another one.

[00:20:15] >> Yep.

[00:20:16] >> That's three in the last four.

[00:20:19] >> Back to 12.

[00:20:20] >> Corey Connors, Smiley.

[00:20:24] >> Here he got lucky. This ball ended up back in play. This looks pretty good.

[00:20:28] >> Yes, it does.

[00:20:29] >> Oh, it takes it around the hole.

[00:20:31] >> Connors to 9 under par.

[00:20:38] >> Yeah, Kurt, boy, he judged that lie in the left rough perfectly. That thing looks like a rocket ship and this is exactly where he wanted to leave it. Not much to this. Not a ton of green to work with, but he can spin it like anybody, 64 degrees.

[00:20:51] >> Don't be surprised if this has a chance.

[00:20:58] >> Good shot.

[00:20:59] >> Kuchar moves to 10-under.

[00:21:05] >> And now Rodgers to keep the outright lead. This for par.

[00:21:12] >> Well, seeing this kind of just feels like a putt if he makes, you might even see a little fist pump out of him. His round to this point has been just so-so. But I feel like a putt like this will feel like a birdie or an eagle, even though it's for par.

[00:21:24] >> Yeah, he's made one birdie, one bogey today. Kind of just playing real solid. Solid enough to have a three-shot lead about 30 minutes ago, but it's gone if he doesn't make this putt. It'll be all square. It's only 13 and a half feet. It looks like the grain might be going to the right or something here, Smiley.

[00:21:46] >> From my vantage point, I do think that there's going to be a fraction of left in this putt at the very end. But yeah, the grain showing that way like you're talking about.

[00:21:54] >> So you just put a good speed on this putt. You have to hit this with purpose. Yeah.

[00:22:06] >> Boy, did he ever? That was just no doubt about it. Authoritative stroke. Hayden Buckley at the 16th looking for a deuce. Ben Martin just over the back of the green with his tee shot, but a much more straightforward shot. Yeah. Lee Hodges at the 18th with his fourth. He's already pulled one out earlier. And that's how he ends his day. Yeah. What is that? That is a great finish for Lee Hodges. Boy, after that first round 74, he has really played well. Shot the 66 yesterday, which along with Nico Echeverria was the best round of the day. Shoots a 69 today. This was earlier at the 15th.

[00:23:18] >> Yeah, this was simple compared to the one he just made.

[00:23:23] >> That was a chip in for par at 15. One more look at the birdie chip in, which made it back-to-back birdies to finish off for Lee Hodges. And that is Patrick Rodgers from the fringe. And Smiley, you're down there. What's he looking at? Well, I think most good wag putters, they break their putts down into sections. And this first section of the putt is uphill and it's breaking just slightly. But the last half as well as downhill. And there's a lot to negotiate besides just getting the speed right. But good wag putters are able to kind of break it into two different deals.

[00:23:55] >> Pretty well defined. You can see the change in grain there.

[00:24:00] >> Hit it hard.

[00:24:00] >> Up the hill now. A little down. I'd have to say that's good speed from that range. Really good speed. And Corey Connors for the birdie.

[00:24:14] >> Never fun when you still say, hey, I'm still away, guys. I'll keep going.

[00:24:22] >> Boy, the second putt was a lot better, though. Another birdie for Corey Connors. And that pulls him to within a shot.

[00:24:32] >> To 17 for Nico Echevarria's birdie chance. And the Colombian moves to 6-under.

[00:24:55] >> Now Connors in that bunker right of the fairway.

[00:24:58] >> Yeah, much better break that it ended up in the flat part of this bunker and not on top of the hill where it was there for a minute. But yeah, anything short and right is no good here. This hole location is hiding behind a ridge on the right side of this green. It's well out to the right. Wind is trying to push it right near the hole.

[00:25:19] >> Look at that. What a shot from Corey Connors.

[00:25:28] >> Yep, the guys that are on the green are waving up the next group. So they're trying to help him out and keep play going a little bit, John.

[00:25:36] >> Yeah, some nice etiquette there. It's got to be. I think this is a pretty good number for Kuch right now, with driver to be honest with you, Kurt. Let's land something short and try and get the right bounce. Trying to get the cut. It's at the edge of that bunker. They're trying to get it, talk it into it.

[00:25:58] >> He got it. Now will it stop? Oh, this could be really good. It will wander away. There's another ridge right there, a subtle one that takes the ball over there. But that's a great tee shot.

[00:26:17] >> And here is Kirk at 17.

[00:26:18] >> He's got this quick downhiller for eagle.

[00:26:26] >> What a putt. What a putt.

[00:26:36] >> Over here, 15. Corey Connors, Smiley, trying for his fourth birdie on this backside.

[00:26:42] >> That fairway bunker shot he hit, Steve, was A-plus to get it to right here. This hole location is not easy to get to.

[00:26:50] >> There you go. The 2019 champion is on the move.

[00:26:56] >> And Matt Kuchar going to take a good look at this putt for eagle here at 17. And check this out. In 772 holes played at TPC San Antonio, he's yet to make an eagle. He's been a runner up here a couple times in this tournament, most recently last year to J.J. Spahn.

[00:27:16] >> This is his 18th start, Kirk.

[00:27:18] >> It's incredible that he hasn't made one, you know, holed one out, done something.

[00:27:23] >> Six years -- that is my fault, guys. Up and over the ridge, moving to his left and picking up speed as it gets over about halfway to the hole.

[00:27:38] >> Stay up. Oh, man.

[00:27:42] >> I thought the eagle was finally going to land.

[00:27:44] >> I did too. Had to look awfully good to him. Makes for a pretty easy birdie, though, and it'll pull him within a shot of that lead.

[00:28:06] >> Yeah, Corey Connors is going to be next, Kirk, and I think he's just waiting for Mike Weir to mark his ball. Another awkward one here, though.

[00:28:15] >> Yeah, he even has the awkward stance on top of it.

[00:28:19] >> Yeah, that ridge just either catapults it to the left or if you land on the backside of it, it makes it, you know, you're off the green.

[00:28:26] >> When he won in 2019, he made 29 birdies and an eagle that week.

[00:28:37] >> That's so good.

[00:28:37] >> Boy, that had a good sound to it, didn't it?

[00:28:45] >> Crowd has parted for Kuchar's fourth shot now from 171. Feet on the cart path.

[00:28:52] >> Back into the breeze, right to left. He's got a 7-iron. He's going to hit this pretty hard, I would think. Tough club, because you have to take the water out of play, but long at this green is no good either. This is at the right edge of the green.

[00:29:02] >> And it just clears. There's not a lot in it. I think it depends on how hard he hits this one, obviously.

[00:29:17] >> Could be a two-shot swing with Kuchar up there, needing to get up and down for bogey.

[00:29:38] >> Well, this is the club that will be the difference maker for Corey Connors right here.

[00:29:43] >> He's made a plethora of birdies on this back nine. Coming, trying to bounce back here.

[00:29:48] >> Boy, I like the routine. No messing around. He was positive with that. Good stroke.

[00:29:57] >> And this has been a wild ride for Kuchar up the 18th. Hit it in the prickly pear off the tee. Took it unplayable. So then played his third to the corner of the tent where he got relief. Played his fourth just over the water. And then his fifth to this position right now where he's got a putt for bogey six.

[00:30:23] >> What a shame. Just needed to drive it out to the right somewhere. The only trouble on 18 is left off the tee.

[00:30:34] >> Now Connors. Is he going to make it a 54-hole tie for the lead? To get to 12-under. This is for his 20th birdie of the week, most in the field. We talked about what happened four years ago, last Monday qualifier to win a PGA tour event. We also alluded to it earlier in the week. It was just as crazy as a Monday playoff. You could imagine it was a six-man playoff for that spot. And it's just -- there's too many details to get into to tell you how crazy it was. But suffice to say it was crazy how he even got into the field out of the Monday playoff. And then turned it into a victory.

[00:31:12] >> Yeah, that's one great story. You can almost make a movie out of that whole thing.

[00:31:28] >> But instead, Rodgers will have the lead by himself.

[00:31:42] >> Patrick Rodgers from that celebrated class of 2011. Hope it's finally going to be his day tomorrow.

[00:31:51] >> Patrick Rodgers looks to hold off the pack for his first victory on the PGA tour. But Corey Connors will hope to overcome the one-shot difference for his second career win. The final round is next.

[00:32:06] >> Being inside these ropes is a roller coaster. A constant battle to push yourself harder. And harder. And harder. It's an endless pursuit to be great.

[00:32:23] >> Are you serious?

[00:32:24] >> Inside these ropes, there's no slowing down.

[00:32:28] >> And he's done it.

[00:32:29] >> Because to be the best, you must beat the best.

[00:32:38] >> It's the final round Sunday chase at the Valero Texas Open at TPC San Antonio before the first major of the year. So not only is this one of the oldest PGA tour titles on the line, but we can also see somebody punching the final ticket to this week's Masters. Could it be Patrick Rodgers trying to win for the first time? His fourth 54-hole lead of his PGA tour career. Still hasn't won. But a nice third there at the par-5 second set up of birdies. Playing with Corey Connors, the 2019 champion. Also with a beautiful third shot. Birdie for him to keep pace. And then Chris Kirk who won the first of six straight on our swing here at the Honda Classic has entered the fray as well. Beautiful second for him at the par-4 6th. Birdie for Kirk, giving chase. And then Connors just a little while ago, his second at the par-4 6th. And while Rodgers was scrambling and making bogey, it's a birdie for Connors. So it's a two-shot swing as they came to that hole tied at 12-under. But Connors grabbed the lead over Rodgers. And then just seconds ago from the par-3 7th, greenside bunker, Chris Kirk and his second. Back-to-back birdies for the Honda Classic champion to get to 10-under. And he's giving chase now, just three back of Connors. Rodgers sandwiched right in between.

[00:34:13] >> Back here at the 7th, Dan. Patrick Rodgers, John, Rounds one through three. 12 of 14 scrambling whenever he missed a green hit in regulation. Today, however, he's 0 for 2. And he's going to go 0 for 3 if he doesn't make this putt.

[00:34:27] >> Well, you just feel like this is a really big putt. And I know it's only the 7th hole and a lot of golf left. But got a little bit of reeling going on right now. He needs to stop the bleeding and find a way to get this ball in, put a par up. Next hole is a reachable par-5. Got to tell yourself, just commit, make your best stroke possible here. A lot of golf left.

[00:34:48] >> And on the flip side, if this goes in, perhaps it gives him a little bit of a bounce heading to the 8th. Let's see how he handles it.

[00:35:07] >> Dave.

[00:35:07] >> And the rookie, Sam Stevens, going for this green. You mentioned dead downwind. Nice little cut. This could be a really good shot. And it is. Saw Higgs's beautiful approach. This to get to 8-under. And now Sam Stevens to try to get to 10-under with this eagle putt.

[00:35:40] >> Gosh, Kurt, there's no telling how much confidence he has from his 3rd place finish last week.

[00:35:48] >> Oh, you're right. Showing it off right there, Paul. What a well-played hole that was. And that gets him right there at 10-under. And Chris Kirk for birdie. Smiley Kaufman's down there.

[00:35:59] >> That was a beautiful bunker shot that Chris Kirk just hit. He may have looked entirely too easy. This would be for three birdies in a row. And to continue to try to climb up that leaderboard, making Corey Connors look at something.

[00:36:10] >> I still feel like he's a guy with that win at the Honda just six weeks ago. He's a guy who's sort of playing with house money. He's got nothing to lose, everything to gain. And taking a look at that 8th green and all those bunkers around there. Who's away, John Wood?

[00:36:29] >> Kuch will be away after that 3-wood went over the green. Yeah, this green is kind of separated into three different sections. This hole located in the middle section. A little bit of a down slope here, Kurt. And downhill to the hole, but right back into the wind. If he can just get something rolling down that hill about 30 feet short of the pin, it should settle right in there.

[00:36:49] >> Leads the PGA Tour in scrambling this season. There's the ridge right there. He might have made it. He is phenomenal around the greens.

[00:37:09] >> He would knock that in. Only issue here is this little downhill where he lands it and downwind. Got to get the right spin here.

[00:37:22] >> He really needs an up and down for birdie. And it looks like he's going to have a great shot at it.

[00:37:28] >> Rodgers would make birdie.

[00:37:33] >> And here's the 26-year-old rookie, Sam Stevens. Right there, three back.

[00:37:37] >> Coming off an eagle. This is from 124, so just a flip ledge. Sounded a little chunky. Trying to fly there.

[00:37:48] >> Oh, it's there.

[00:37:49] >> Now up to the green with this group. After three birdies in a row, Kirk trying to save part at the 9th.

[00:37:58] >> Hit three poor shots in a row. And he can't let the putter -- doesn't bail him out.

[00:38:05] >> Only the fourth bogey all week. That is still fewest in the field for Kirk. But he jumps down into that tie for third at 10-under. But here is Sam Stevens, native of Texas. Played most of his golf growing up in the state of Kansas where he and his father and his grandfather are semi-legends out there. So he's got a great pedigree. And this is just his 17th PGA Tour start. And he's right there.

[00:38:39] >> First and only win for Connors four years ago. So he's been waiting a while.

[00:38:43] >> That's for birdie. And he buries another one.

[00:38:47] >> That's big.

[00:38:59] >> Rodgers now for par.

[00:39:07] >> Oh, no. That's the sixth putt he's missed in that three- to seven-foot range.

[00:39:13] >> And these are the kinds of holes and damage that's just so hard to overcome. Zing, you already made those three bogeys in a four-hole stretch. Another one here at the 10th, the 0th, I should say.

[00:39:25] >> Yeah, that hurts him.

[00:39:28] >> He was in the driver's seat. Look at where they were. Kuch and he were off the tee in perfect position with wedges. You would not expect Connors to be the one to make the three here. But what a message he just sent.

[00:39:48] >> At the 15th, M.J. Duffy is looking for some good stuff from long distance. Look at this thing head for home. M.J. with a bonus birdie at 15.

[00:40:07] >> Ryder at 11.

[00:40:26] >> Connors is over here on the left. He's next to play, 300 from the tee. And you look at the green regulation percentage over there on the left drop.

[00:40:34] >> Lie is decent. I think he can get it to the green, just a matter if he can judge it correctly once it's down. Good contact at the center of the green if it's right.

[00:40:44] >> Sounded like it popped out of there really good, John. And he's on and aboard.

[00:40:52] >> 17. Chez Reavie second to here. And good putt for four birdies in a row. So trying to finish off a really good final round. Over at 11, Sam Ryder. Beautiful one in here to this par-4. Trying to pay it off and he's got it. Sam Stevens over at 11. Coming off bogey at 10 from 121.

[00:41:25] >> I like his swing. Beautiful divot. And another nice wedge shot.

[00:41:31] >> Look at this shot.

[00:41:42] >> And just a little par cleanup for Corey Connors. Steady as she goes. No bogeys, out in 3-under. Back here at 17, M.J. Duffy going for an eagle here after driving the green. Looking at rounds one and two, 15% there. This is also great putt there.

[00:42:08] >> Up to 12.

[00:42:08] >> The man who is the closest pursuer to Corey Connors right now, Sam Ryder. Four birdies today. No bogeys. Look at this beauty.

[00:42:16] >> This guy is on fire right now.

[00:42:20] >> This is 16 and Nikolai Hojgaard for birdie. We've been tracking him as he attempts to get to the green. He attempts to get special temporary membership. And he looks to be in pretty good shape right now. He needs to finish in a two-way tie for 46th or better. And right now he's in a tie for 25th. Sam Stevens to get back up there in a tie for second with Ryder. Full steam ahead for Stevens. Three back. And Chez Reavie finishing up a sensational round where he hopes he's going to finish with five straight to end the week. What a run.

[00:43:08] >> Now Connors second into 11.

[00:43:12] >> Well, it sounded good. Slided well. Great line. Oh man.

[00:43:23] >> Up to the green.

[00:43:32] >> He went fast. He got over that and didn't waste any time at all. Not a very good putt.

[00:43:43] >> This is Stevens on the long par-3 13th. He is four back. And that one hops over. Is it going to go down that slope?

[00:43:57] >> That is one of the better shots you'll see.

[00:44:04] >> Up to the green with Stevens.

[00:44:05] >> One of the best looks we've seen at 13, Sam Stevens for birdie.

[00:44:10] >> Downhill, downgrain. Should be smooth as silk.

[00:44:16] >> Yes! Sam Stevens with another one to join Ryder at 11-under.

[00:44:27] >> I'm sure anybody taking a putter from that tee down is happy from where they are.

[00:44:35] >> We talk about the ability to two-putt from these great distances when you're trying to win.

[00:44:48] >> It's going to be a par for Connors. That was a big step. 14.

[00:44:51] >> Speaking of big steps, this is Sam Stevens going for this par-5 in 2 from 285 hole. Settle now. There's slope here. If this stays on the green, which it's going to, that might be the best shot of the day. Best second shot of the day at 14. Sam Stevens, the rookie, looking over an eagle putt here that would pull him to within a shot.

[00:45:17] >> Kurt, how good was that shot into the green? He's already made one eagle on a par-5 on the 8th.

[00:45:22] >> Yep, he birdied number 2. That's the other par-5 on the front.

[00:45:27] >> Just a little bit of left to right in this, Kurt. Not outside the hole.

[00:45:36] >> Oh, man.

[00:45:37] >> He would make birdie.

[00:45:39] >> Sam Ryder on the tee. Three back.

[00:45:43] >> If he could somehow birdie this one.

[00:45:46] >> Well, he's had pretty good luck at par-3 16ths in the past.

[00:45:57] >> Connors to get to 15-under, and didn't like that. Boy, that was poorly struck.

[00:46:03] >> He would settle for par.

[00:46:08] >> Let's see if he can get in the mix here late. Yes, a birdie for Ryder at the 16th.

[00:46:19] >> Now Corey Connors' turn.

[00:46:21] >> Just 120 yards left. Straight downwind. Perfect hole location for his draw. Start this at the right side of the green. Maybe turn it slightly over. No need to get too aggressive. Very low.

[00:46:43] >> Yep.

[00:46:54] >> Oh, he buries another one. Malory cam is all happy outside the ropes. Corey Connors pushes it to 15-under par, catch me if you can.

[00:47:09] >> We go to 17 and Sam Stevens with the driver.

[00:47:12] >> I think he's got the horsepower Kurt, 272 over that right bunker. Back into the breeze.

[00:47:20] >> 290 front 299 hole.

[00:47:22] >> It just needs a fade of yard and it's perfect.

[00:47:26] >> Softly. Oh, what a shot by Sam Stevens. Like they drew it up back at the tee. What a swing that was.

[00:47:37] >> Now up to the green.

[00:47:38] >> Just gotta find a way to get this in the hole though, Kurt.

[00:47:40] >> Yep, he's made 23 birdies. That's this week. That's the most of anyone in the field. This for eagle. Well, the rookie Sam Stevens making this thing interesting. Pushing Corey Connors. This is actually a pretty big putt. You know, maybe gives Corey Connors, if he can make it, gives him a little bit of a cushion there playing 18.

[00:48:15] >> I agree, Kurt. Don't think there's any way he knew that was for eagle for Stevens up in front of him. There's not a scoreboard until this hole. You can't really see it behind the people, so I don't think he has any idea he only leads by one right now.

[00:48:35] >> Yeah, that's a little disappointing to make par there. Huge second here for Stevens now. 245 all the way back to it, but 226 to the front. I think that's gotta be where he's looking coming out of the rough. Don't think he can elevate it a ton. It's just a double crosshead and way left in the crowd.

[00:49:04] >> Way left. You can see it right away.

[00:49:06] >> Yep.

[00:49:08] >> Now Connors has been so good and so steady for the most part, in 3-under in 19 career rounds on this 18th hole.

[00:49:17] >> I think he needs to make a birdie to win the tournament.

[00:49:19] >> Think so?

[00:49:19] >> I feel like Stevens is going to be able to get up and down, the flag's in a low spot. This is important. And just keep this to the right a little bit.

[00:49:29] >> Starting right, turning over up the right side. And this looks really hit.

[00:49:33] >> Boy, this guy. I'll tell you what, he could drive it right through a donut hole. We've seen it all day long.

[00:49:39] >> Well, we'll see if Connors needs to make a birdie. Sam Stevens is going to have a lot to do with that up ahead at the 18th at the Valero Texas Open. Well, here's the up and down you're talking about, Zing. Sam Stevens' third at this par-5.

[00:49:55] >> I'm not trying to minimize the difficulty, but I just think where the hole is, he can do it.

[00:50:02] >> Looks like it landed in a good spot. A really good spot, and he's going to have a great look at a four. And so here he is for a birdie to tie Connors, who's waiting behind him, and we'll hear the noise if this goes down.

[00:50:22] >> From eight feet away, Dan. Sticking to his routine. A little hitch of the pants. He didn't hit it hard enough. It had the line. It reached, but it ran out of gas.

[00:50:49] >> Connors.

[00:50:49] >> This is one of the easiest holes out here today, but there's still been four bogeys and a double. He has to get it left of the stream, guarding the right side of the green. That's it in a nutshell, John.

[00:50:59] >> No question about it. 207 front, 226 total. I would expect this maybe to try and hit it in that back left bunker. At the left of the green.

[00:51:17] >> Bounding into that back bunker. Third shot, needs a par.

[00:51:33] >> Boy, he chomped it big time.

[00:51:35] >> No three-putts this week for Corey Connors, but he is looking to follow Mackenzie Hughes, who won the Sanderson Farms event, and Adam Spencer, one of the RSM Classic as Canadian winners on tour this season. It would be the first time that three different Canadians have won in the same PGA Tour season. Two putts from here. This for another win in San Antonio. And it's in. Valero, Texas Open double. Reese took a little spin there.

[00:52:15] >> He earned it with some quality golf tee green. What a ball striking clinic.

[00:52:25] >> Four-year wait is over for Corey Connors, and Canada has yet another winner on the PGA Tour this season. This concludes the PGA Tour's coverage of the Valero Texas Open from TPC San Antonio, The Oaks course in San Antonio, Texas.