Production Transcript for REWIND\_24MEX\_KNAPP.mp3

[00:00:29] >> The PGA Tour is proud to bring you the season-long race for the FedExCup. Now, coverage of the 2024 Mexico Open at Vidanta.

[00:00:40] >> The Vidanta, Vallarta Course for the third time hosting this Mexico Open. And this resort is quite the spot. And the gondola is a pretty good way to look across the sprawling, gigantic 2,500 acres that it sprawls. Long tradition of golf here in Mexico. This tournament was first played in 1944, but again, just the third time as a PGA Tour event. Let's give you an idea of how Lipsky, Norlander, and Del Solar reached 6-under with their 65s. David Lipsky came in here missing four cuts in four events. This is a 67-foot birdie attempt at the 17th, one of eight birdies that dropped for Lipsky today. You never know, right? He came in here without his game. He's found it. He's won all around the world in various tours, but he's never won on the PGA Tour. Then there's Sweden's Henrik Norlander. He played here last year. He missed the cut. He lost his card last year. All he did today was turn in five birdies and an eagle, including that tee shot at the 9th, which was one of his five birdies. Six-under 65 for Norlander as well. And remember Cristobal Del Solar? He was the guy that, two weeks ago today in the first round of a Korn ferry Tour event, shot 57. That was one of seven birdies today that fell at the 3rd for Del Solar, who's picked up two Top 5s in four Korn Ferry Tour starts. Back at the 9th for van Rooyen, Woody.

[00:02:12] >> Yeah, same look. In fact, when you were on a hitter with the putter, were there ever times when you didn't want to see somebody else's putt? You just felt so comfortable and confident in what you were doing that you didn't even bother?

[00:02:22] >> I think when players get on a hitter or a roll, like you said, it doesn't matter whether they watch or not, that they're so tuned into what they're doing. And we saw his mark down there before Lee putted, and that should really help him.

[00:02:41] >> Boy, van Rooyen has hit every green in regulation today. He's hit most of his approach shots inside 20 feet. In fact, seven of nine.

[00:02:51] >> Now, Baddeley at the 14th. Good touch. And he would knock that in.

[00:03:10] >> Still a quarter of the field is going for it in two. Van Rooyen ended up just short. But he's in a great position here.

[00:03:16] >> Yeah, he is. Just perfect, Fax. You mentioned the hole location. Perched up on the high point of the front of this green, kind of fall offs everywhere. He's put in a perfect spot though. Chipping back up the hill and a lot of green to work with. So he couldn't have put it in a better spot.

[00:03:32] >> Should be able to spin that a little if he chooses to.

[00:03:36] >> Oh, round it goes in town for van Rooyen. The eagle lands.

[00:03:49] >> You see there from back there, the players all rotate through those chip shots. I like to sit wraps around the --

[00:03:58] >> Look at that with a spin. You can see that ball when it hits the cup. It goes all the way around and hits the flagstick.

[00:04:06] >> This was from 70 feet for van Rooyen.

[00:04:12] >> I like how they take it back and through the same length.

[00:04:15][ Applause ]

[00:04:22] >> Erik Barnes is on the tee over at the 9th at 1-under.

[00:04:25] >> He likes to hit a draw. This one saw him on the left side of this tee box.

[00:04:33] >> Began the year with a medical extension.

[00:04:39] >> Barnes would move to 2-under.

[00:04:45] >> Out to the 2nd. MJ Daffue would drive, wind helping from the right and just probably a big sand wedge. Spin. There we go.

[00:04:59] >> Daffue would make birdie.

[00:05:03] >> Coming home. Great story. An amateur, one of eight players from Mexico playing in this tournament.

[00:05:11] >> Really do it in front of the crowd.

[00:05:14] >> Yup.

[00:05:14] >> He moves to 1-under.

[00:05:17] >> C.T. Pan drove it right into trouble at 16. So has this for par at this long par 4.

[00:05:25] >> Looks good.

[00:05:26] >> Oh, yeah.

[00:05:28][ Applause ]

[00:05:41] >> MJ Daffue now from long range. Oh, man. Hits the flagstick. A direct hit.

[00:05:56] >> Second for Matt Wallace. He's got that tree looking at it at 16.

[00:06:03] >> Very similar to Van Rooyen. And good looking shot. That played.

[00:06:10] >> Cut shot in there. Wow.

[00:06:12] >> Wallace makes birdie and moves to 4-under.

[00:06:17] >> Over at the 3rd, Patrick Fishburn had this for birdie. You get the feeling this might go down, Fax.

[00:06:24] >> I kind of think flagstick. And did it get there?

[00:06:30] >> From 46 feet all pars until that drops.

[00:06:36] >> I feel like I'm stepping into my best golf. I had a few injuries the last few years and I'm finally healthy and good golf starting to show up. So, I like to think the best golf is still ahead of me. I told my wife yesterday that, you know, next year, I'm 35. I'm closer to 40 than I am 30. So I'm going to enjoy 34 for now.

[00:06:56] >> Van Rooyen shines in round one with a 63 to top the leaderboard. He holds a one shot lead over Sami Valimaki. Round 2 is next.

[00:07:14] >> Another spectacular day. As we said, not your typical PGA Tour event, as the players take a boat ride across the Ameca River to the practice tee. And once they get here, this place has never looked better. Even though this event has been around since 1944, the first play of the Mexico Open, this just the third year that it's a part of the PGA Tour.

[00:07:34] >> Take a look at the highlights from earlier. Not going to beat this one. From Rafael Campos at the 17th, a 5-iron today, 17, 205 yards. Watch this bounce for Campos, who made an ace in the practice round on Tuesday at 13. This one for real for Rafael Campos. Part of a second round 67. He's at 5-under for the tournament.

[00:08:05] >> Erik van Rooyen was the first round leader after a 63 yesterday. Not quite as hot today, but a second round 69 for the man from South Africa. He posted 10-under at the halfway point. Sami Valimaki, the 25-year-old PGA Tour rookie from Finland, take a name at that 17th hole.

[00:08:24] >> Birdie for him. Part of a second round 67 as he's in at 11-under and tied for the lead.

[00:08:30] >> With Matt Wallace from England. Made six birdies and this eagle at the par-5 6th, Friday, second round of 65 for Wallace. And then, there's Alvaro Ortiz for eagle at the 6th. One of eight players from Mexico in this event. He's in on a sponsor's exemption and taking full advantage of it. He shot 64 today. And Ortiz is a part of the lead at 11-under. The par-5 14th. Curt.

[00:09:03] >> This is Bjork for birdie here.

[00:09:08] >> Long range. Didn't matter. Alexander Bjork gets it to 3-under par.

[00:09:17] >> Back to 8. And Nicolai Hojgaard with his second at the 8th.

[00:09:22] >> From a few yards closer, 182. Another good looking shot just right of the flag, asking for it to sit.

[00:09:29] >> Oh, boy.

[00:09:30] >> Hojgaard would make birdie.

[00:09:36] >> Justin Lower is over at the 3rd with his second.

[00:09:39] >> Kind of a nice dogleg left here. Hole location just on the front left side. And wind is helping the draw.

[00:09:48] >> That'll work.

[00:09:49] >> That's a tap in birdie for Lower.

[00:09:56] >> This is Hojgaard with a difficult pitch.

[00:09:59] >> That he handles nicely.

[00:10:01][ Applause ]

[00:10:05] >> Mark Hubbard on what has been so far the easiest hole here, the par-5 18th. This his third.

[00:10:13][ Applause ]

[00:10:17] >> And over to the 6th.

[00:10:20] >> We saw Jake Knapp come up just short, but this is a very good spot. Trying to make the 6th eagle of the day here at 6.

[00:10:27] >> Did you say 375, Curt?

[00:10:30] >> Three seventy-four. But once you get past about 350, there's another yard matter.

[00:10:42] >> He's done some good work with Dana Dahlquist. Just tightening everything up a little bit.

[00:10:49] >> Back to 7. Cristobal Del Solar at 6-under par. What a story this would be if he can stay up in this leaderboard, and Alvaro Ortiz can stay up on that leaderboard from Mexico. Wow.

[00:11:02] >> Del Solar gets to 7-under.

[00:11:06] >> Jake Knapp's second at the short 7th.

[00:11:11] >> Yeah. Yeah, he's awesome.

[00:11:14] >> Got a great tutorial in front of him as we see.

[00:11:18] >> And two birdie putts coming up.

[00:11:22] >> Now, Knapp for birdie. Right down the middle. Confidence.

[00:11:36] >> This is Henrik Norlander at the 2nd. He got a drop away from the shot length tower there.

[00:11:42] >> Go. Go.

[00:11:44] >> See if he takes advantage of it. And he does.

[00:11:49] >> Boy.

[00:11:49] >> What a shot from the coquina shell.

[00:11:52] >> Norlander would make par.

[00:11:57] >> At the 12th, there's the path of Tony Finau. Took it right over the -- What tree is that again, Fax? The parota.

[00:12:03] >> That's how this sounds like, parota.

[00:12:04] >> I just want to see as many times we can get that in.

[00:12:06] >> I love when you say that.

[00:12:08] >> Got to be makeable here, Brad, don't you think?

[00:12:12] >> Absolutely. It's nice grass to chip off there. Clean lag, kind of on the grain. You can see the lower cut. Oh, he did it.

[00:12:19] >> Yeah.

[00:12:19] >> Good collar bones.

[00:12:21][ Applause ]

[00:12:30][ Applause ]

[00:12:35] >> On the other end of the spectrum is Hughes. But a little something positive.

[00:12:43] >> Something to take home with him.

[00:12:49] >> And Knapp over at 8th for birdie. Also with a chance to get to 8-under. Knapp.

[00:12:58][ Applause ]

[00:13:07] >> Back at the short 7th, Robby Shelton, who made seven birdies in a row yesterday in the first round.

[00:13:13] >> You know, it must be playing much longer than it was yesterday, Dan. We've seen a lot of players 20, 30 yards short.

[00:13:19] >> Shelton goes to 7-under.

[00:13:22] >> Knapp is on the tee at 8-under, just three back.

[00:13:26] >> You look at this leaderboard and all the opportunity here. Someone could have a huge career changing trajectory win here, whether it's a guy like Knapp.

[00:13:38] >> Novak did find that bunker to the right here. He's two for two this week out of the bunkers.

[00:13:47] >> Do it.

[00:13:48] >> Maybe better.

[00:13:49] >> What a great shot. Let's make it three for three.

[00:13:52] >> Over at 11, this is Knapp for birdie.

[00:13:55] >> A lot of buzz about this guy on the tour right now. I was talking to a tournament director here recently, was talking about giving out exemptions into an elevated event. And this guy's name came up. He is impressing a lot of people with his game, his attitude, and showing us a lot this afternoon. Now, here's some tough conditions.

[00:14:14] >> There's a lot of letter writing going on out there these days because these event, to get in an event, you have a good week and then you can run the table, get in a signature event. Up at 16, this is Hojgaard's third here.

[00:14:28] >> I love these shots off past palm for these guys. You can create so much spin facts and be very aggressive.

[00:14:35] >> Hojgaard would save par.

[00:14:38] >> At the 12th. This is Blaine Hale Jr. His third at this monster par 5, which is 662 yards.

[00:14:47] >> That looked like good contact there. Just club slipped right under. Hale, wow.

[00:14:52] >> To Blaine.

[00:14:54] >> Takes the skin away from Finau.

[00:15:02] >> Woody, you're down there. Are we safe or is -- Yeah.

[00:15:05] >> Tony's got plenty of room here to just drift it right over our roof.

[00:15:09] >> I think you are safe, Dan. I'm going to -- I got a hunch he's going to get -- be able to get this airborne.

[00:15:14] >> There we are.

[00:15:16] >> You know, if this had come up 10 yards shorter, he would have had palm tree issues. He would have throw something straight in the air. As it is, he got just far enough past the really tall ones to take it right over the top and he can see the flag from where he is. So all in all, it's a perfect spot to play from. And you get that rare other fairway hit stat that not many people get. It's a huge point, though.

[00:15:38] >> John, I led the tour in that other fairway. Set for play for two spots.

[00:15:42] >> Sometimes there's a hot dog stand over there, too.

[00:15:44] >> They started the other tour -- other fairway hit in the era of shot length.

[00:15:49] >> God, I was Top 10 every year.

[00:15:52] >> Tony setting up well to the left. Almost looks like he's trying to bleed something to the right and cut something back into this breeze and hold it a little bit in that front hole location.

[00:16:00] >> Give you a heads up on us. It's over.

[00:16:02] >> That's exactly what he's doing. Trying to cup, but that wind is so hard right to left, kind of holding it out.

[00:16:11] >> Oh, wow. Tony.

[00:16:13] >> How about that?

[00:16:15] >> And Fax, I would never, never bring this up. But you brought it up, so I feel safe doing it. Your -- Our good friend and great 8-year-old caddie, John Cubbie Burke, one year was playing in a hole and he was working for somebody else, and he hit it in another fairway. And he went to a head in that fairway and the player said, "What are you doing?" He goes, "I work for Fax. I've got this head."

[00:16:34] >> Eagle lands for Finau as Woody drops another caddie tale on Fax. But that is quite the finish for Finau. Went left. You got to wonder if that wasn't all by design.

[00:16:48] >> I absolutely think it was.

[00:16:50] >> Yeah, you would think it is. You know, you have to see what Tony has to say afterward. But boy, just falls in.

[00:16:59] >> Finland's Sami Valimaki moves into a share of the lead at 11-under with England's Matt Wallace, Mexico's Alvaro Ortiz, and the USA's Jake Knapp. It's anyone's ball game. The third round is next.

[00:17:17] >> This resort truly has it all. It's got the first gondola at a beach resort ever. And they've been playing the Mexico Open since the mid-40s. And it has bounced around different venues, different tours. But this is the third straight year that it's been a part of the PGA Tour. Perfect 80-degree day. And it's just about been a perfect day for 29-year-old PGA Tour rookie, Jake Knapp. Part of a four-way tie for the lead at the halfway point of this tournament. This is how he got out of the gates. Stuffs it right in there for an opening birdie to quickly bust out of the pack. He was just getting warmed up. His second at the par-4 2nd, one of the most difficult holes here at Vidanta. Stuffs another one in there. It's a birdie, birdie start for Knapp in just his 9th PGA Tour start. He pars the 3rd hole. He gets to the 4th. He's stuffing it in there and he's rolling them in. And then, at the 5th hole, at the par 3, 208-yard hole. I mean, he's just about unconscious out there. Shot a 64 Friday to kind of set this day up. Tested really for the first time. Just a moment ago, long bunker shot at the par-5 6th and puts himself in position to birdie five of the first six holes in this third round. Three-time winner on the Canadian Tour, got his PGA Tour rookie card through the Korn Ferry Tour, finishing 13th in the standings. And yes, he is in Fuego here at the Mexico Open at Vidanta as we get you out to the short par 4 summit where Knapp is right now, 301 yards. It is drivable. He's got effortless power. Dan Hicks along here with Brad Faxon and Jim "Bones" Mackay watching Knapp just tear it up out here.

[00:19:22] >> And Dan, Knapp has a 2-wood. It's a 13-degree almost -- He calls it his mini driver. And that might get close to the front edge of the green here, Dan.

[00:19:40] >> Second shot.

[00:19:42] >> Saw a number of players hit it over this par 3 yesterday with this wind blowing down wind. None of them hold it out though, Dan.

[00:19:49] >> Let's get a finger snap.

[00:19:51] >> Great shot.

[00:19:58] >> He'll put for the first 15, 20 feet, and then it works downhill towards his right. Wind is moving right to left and it's starting to affect the putts at the end.

[00:20:06] >> To go 7-under through seven.

[00:20:08] >> Two putt here will give him six birdies in the first seven holes.

[00:20:13] >> Yeah. He putted particularly ordinary the first two rounds. Was 70th and 80th in putting and he's having a great day. Made a lot of feet of putts already today. And this one for a birdie to extend his lead to three.

[00:20:30] >> Jake Knapp foot fully on the pedal and not letting up.

[00:20:38] >> Now up to the green.

[00:20:39] >> Yeah, very difficult. It's just -- You can catch flyers even on short shots like this, Bones. And they just release on you.

[00:20:46] >> Yeah. You see the little bio there, Valimaki. This is his very first time in Mexico from Finland.

[00:20:56] >> Taking it very high, trying to stop it with some height. And he's done that beautifully.

[00:20:59] >> Wow, look at this touch.

[00:21:01] >> He would knock that in.

[00:21:03] >> You kind of want to get it closer to the hole with the spin you have when it lands too, Bones, right?

[00:21:10] >> Oh, man.

[00:21:14] >> Knapp would make birdie now.

[00:21:21] >> Now, Grillo with his birdie try at 12th. Absolutely.

[00:21:31] >> As we go up to the par-5 18th. Robert MacIntyre for eagle.

[00:21:39] >> He drove it way left on intentionally today, Dan. He likes that play for a lefty. Had hit in that other fairway.

[00:21:47] >> Gotten a lot of help with his putting from our Brad Faxon.

[00:21:50] >> He didn't putt great today. It was two shots --

[00:21:52] >> Sixty-five.

[00:21:53] >> Not bad.

[00:21:57] >> This is at 17. Henrik Norlander has a good round going today.

[00:22:03] >> I would be happy to two putt this one. You can see the grain changes there. Maybe not. Norlander from long range.

[00:22:11] >> How about that round he's got going?

[00:22:17] >> Back here at the 10th, Jake Knapp. Penalty stroke. Now, taking the drop. He was trying to decide there between cutting it around those palm trees to get to the green or trying to hit a hook. And I think dropping on the left, it appears, Johnson, that he's going to try to play a cut.

[00:22:32] >> As well as this guy's play today. If he can find a way to make five here, it might be one of the best holes he's played all day. If -- You know, if we can forget the tee shot here, this is a big moment for him. Escaping here with bogey would make him feel fantastic going to 11 that.

[00:22:49] >> Five would be a miracle, Bones.

[00:23:00] >> Nicked a little bit of the palm tree on the way through, but it's on a good line. Needs to get up a bit.

[00:23:07] >> Probably took off just enough there. Easiest pitch shot from down there. Another look coming from the other angle.

[00:23:20] >> Yeah. Just clipped that palm front.

[00:23:24] >> Final pair still to the 9th. Wallace could use this one.

[00:23:34] >> OK.

[00:23:34] >> Finally.

[00:23:34] >> Yup.

[00:23:39] >> For a bogey. In my mind, a pretty big putt here. A lot of golf to be played, but keep that momentum going. He'd like to see this go in.

[00:23:49] >> I think this bogey would feel just about as good as any of the birdies he's made. Uphill, right to left. Curt, he has been putting these with pace all day long. They've really been hammering the back of the hole. Needs to do that here. It's no time to cozy one.

[00:24:04] >> Good job.

[00:24:09] >> Ten.

[00:24:09] >> Matt Wallace has a chance at birdie here from stop that left edge. Up the hill. Oh my gosh.

[00:24:20] >> And it's Knapp's turn at 11.

[00:24:29] >> Well, Fax, he keeps putting himself in just the absolutely perfect spot. Putting up the hill again, slightly left to right. The wind may move it a touch more, but I've got this read as a perfect split left edge.

[00:24:41] >> Seven one putts through 10 holes.

[00:24:45] >> That was a huge save for Knapp with the bogey at the last.

[00:24:49] >> You know, you never really want to validate a bogey, but this sure would after that bogey putt he made on 10. What a save. And if he can get on top of this one with a birdie and get back to three shot lead.

[00:25:02] >> His process has been the same on every single putt.

[00:25:07] >> As for his 8th birdie in the first 11 holes.

[00:25:11] >> Beautiful address for a putter. Just nice and balanced. Continuous motion.

[00:25:17] >> Add another one. Another one putt and another birdie for Knapp. The lead is back up to three. Just when you thought could be going the other way at 10.

[00:25:26] >> And up at 18 for birdie is Lower. And that caps off a 66. A pair of 66 last couple of days for Lower, who's moved it to 11-under. The 12th, this is Novak looking for birdie.

[00:25:51] >> Dan, we mentioned how important every shot is for players like Novak to get up this leaderboard to get themselves a chance to get in the next events.

[00:26:00] >> Erik van Rooyen over at the 13th for birdie. Hit a beautiful tee shot in here, so he pays it off.

[00:26:09] >> And a nice looking putting stroke there from Erik.

[00:26:12] >> Knapp's got designs on here. I'm pushing it to at least 19-under.

[00:26:16] >> I kind of thought he'd at least entertain the putter from here. Does not have too much fringe to go with, but he grabbed the wedge and looked very confident. Got to be careful not to run it by. It'll get away from him quickly.

[00:26:37] >> After that poor pitch at 10, you get the feeling, he said to himself there, "I'm not leaving this one short like I did a couple of holes ago." So he won't be very happy with that result.

[00:26:44] >> Johnson, he hasn't missed a putt inside 12 feet today. He's nine of nine.

[00:26:54] >> That's pretty strong.

[00:27:05] >> Make it 10 of 10. Incredible stuff by Knapp.

[00:27:10] >> What a rebound from that tee shot off 10. Getting his composure together.

[00:27:16] >> Thirty-three-year-old rookie on the PGA Tour, Chan Kim out of ASU, Arizona State. He's been playing most of his golf over in Japan. He's an eight-time winner on the Japanese Tour.

[00:27:29] >> Erik van Rooyen for eagle. Little uphill. Chance to make his third eagle of the week. Oh, man.

[00:27:39] >> Wow.

[00:27:40] >> He going to be upset with himself on that one, Bones.

[00:27:42] >> Yeah, that one wasn't even close in terms of pace. You can see he just fell in love with the line there.

[00:27:51] >> Valimaki.

[00:28:05] >> Starting just right of the flagstick. Turning over. See if he picked the right one because it's on a gorgeous line.

[00:28:11] >> Is it ever.

[00:28:12] >> Good shot.

[00:28:15][ Applause ]

[00:28:19] >> Wu for birdie at 17. Perfect.

[00:28:29] >> He made his first trip to the United States just a few years ago at the 2020 US Open at Winged Foot. That was his first major championship.

[00:28:42] >> Woody, with the pin on something of a crown here, I assume this is one up the hill he can take a swing at.

[00:28:46] >> Definitely. If you see any breaking that, you definitely can take some out if you want to be very aggressive with it.

[00:28:53] >> There we go. Curls it in the right edge. Valamaki gets a little closer within four. Gunned it by. And, boy, this is a test right here to save par on this pretty easy hole.

[00:29:07] >> Yeah. Especially considering he's got the much tougher 15th and 16th to follow.

[00:29:14] >> He's made them all today inside 12 feet.

[00:29:31] >> Check in with Wallace over at 15 for birdie.

[00:29:37] >> Bounce back birdie --

[00:29:38] >> In the hole.

[00:29:39] >> -- after the bogey at 14. There we go.

[00:29:42] >> Great job, Matt.

[00:29:42] >> Yup.

[00:29:43][ Applause ]

[00:29:48] >> On the green, Knapp going through his routine.

[00:29:50] >> This putt --

[00:29:51] >> Or par.

[00:29:52] >> This putt is fast as well, Dan. Downhill, left to right. Not one you want to get too aggressive with. It could get run away from you in a hurry. He put --

[00:30:05] >> And is two bogeys in the last three holes for Knapp.

[00:30:10] >> We go to 17 with Knapp on the team.

[00:30:17] >> It's 5-under on the par 3s so far in the tournament.

[00:30:30] >> This on a nice line, too. More towards the center of the green, but trying to turn back.

[00:30:35] >> Boy, that's really well done right there.

[00:30:38] >> Up to the green.

[00:30:44] >> Curt, he has an absolute beautiful look here. Slightly right to left. Pretty level putt. Just about a ball and a half outside the right.

[00:30:53] >> Another one. Walking another one in. Jake Knapp up by four. Love it. He's bogeyed two out of his last three until that right there. And he was walking it in. What? He has showed some good stuff out there today.

[00:31:07] >> And now, Novak for birdie to try to finish off at 10-under. He's kind of been stuck in neutral for the better portion of this third round. But another guy that's getting used to the limelight on the weekend on the PGA Tour. This is a huge chance to put an exclamation point on this round. We didn't mention the bounce back after the two bogeys and three hole span with the birdie at 17. Here's the 54-hole scoring record, 19-under set by Tony Finau on his way to victory last year. Birdie will match it.

[00:31:49] >> Two twenty-two, trying to land it right at 217.

[00:31:57] >> Very high, just left of the hole, drawing towards the middle.

[00:32:01] >> Just another one of those syrupy swings.

[00:32:08] >> We go up to the green with Knapp.

[00:32:11] >> The shadow of the grandstand is about 4 feet short of the cuff. So depth perception is a little bit off here.

[00:32:21] >> This is for a 62.

[00:32:32] >> Did he hit it?

[00:32:35][ Applause ]

[00:32:47] >> Just his 10th PGA Tour start, Alvaro Ortiz.

[00:32:55] >> Now, one last birdie for Knapp. Yup. Again, Knapp, just his ninth PGA Tour start. He has not led after any round so far, and it's very early in his career. He never led after any round in 58 career starts on the Korn Ferry Tour.

[00:33:15] >> A sensational 63 powers Knapp to a four shot lead through 54 holes. Fellow PTA Tour rookie Sami Valimaki will look to close the gap. The final round is next.

[00:33:32] >> If they didn't have the skill, they wouldn't be here, in the thick of the greatest golf on earth. But who has the grit? What it's going to take week in and out to scratch their way to the top of a field of anomalies. The stakes are higher, the play always better, the risk always real, and no one is getting what they want, only what they've earned.

[00:34:05] >> It is definitely a vibe here in Mexico. What a gorgeous view down the Pacific Coast near Puerto Vallarta, where the third straight year this Vidanta Course will be hosting this PGA Tour event. You've had a couple of big time winners the first two years. It's been Jon Rahm and Tony Finau the last two years. Someone's going to break through with a huge win today. That is going to mean a heck of a lot. Twenty-nine-year-old PGA Tour rookie Jake Knapp had been in cruise control for three days heading into the final round of this Mexico Open at Vidanta, taking the boat over from the hotel to the practice area. A four shot lead in search of his very first PGA Tour win. But it has been a shaky start, to say the least. Bad drives at one and two, had a bogey at the 1st. This one in the water at the 3rd resulted in another bogey. Two bogeys in the first three holes for Jake Knapp, who's in just his 9th PGA Tour start. So, they're creeping up on him. No one closer than Finland's 25-year-old PGA Tour rookie Sami Valimaki. When that birdie fell at the 4th, he quickly had moved to within one of Knapp. They're in the final pair. So frustrating times for Knapp. Valamaki pumped up that he's been able to close the gap to just one. And then, just a second ago at the par-5 6th, the third for Valamaki, 1-under through the first five holes, a chance to pick up another birdie at this par 5. And then just a short time ago as well, the 3rd for Knapp. Trying to calm things down here, get back into the groove, which saw him shoot a round of 63 yesterday, 64 before that. That is well short. So it's another big advantage for Valamaki at the 6th.

[00:36:02] >> He birdied seven of his first nine holes yesterday to go out in a course record 28, 7-under. Totally different today.

[00:36:16] >> This is a missed opportunity here at the par-5 6th.

[00:36:23] >> We saw a couple of putts from this angle earlier. Tony Finau thought it was going to go a little more left. He missed on the right side. Saw Novak get it started pretty straight. He missed on the left. So let's see what Valamaki has for a read here.

[00:36:50] >> Drove it short right of this green into the fairway and had a really tough angle. Had a pretty good pitch to get there. This putt's going to go a little right early and has a chance to work back left at the end.

[00:36:59] >> Fax, of these players, seen a leaderboard lately to see what's going on?

[00:37:03] >> There was one right off the 6th green. I think they both took a look.

[00:37:07] >> What a good looking putt.

[00:37:09][ Applause ]

[00:37:14] >> Two ninety-seven total, 280. Front edge, mostly into the players. The wind and a little bit of right to left.

[00:37:23] >> It's a little collection area on the right side. A miss to the right gives you a much more difficult shot than if you're short or just to the left.

[00:37:33] >> Starting out to the right side, turning over. This on a pretty good line. Coming to the right edge of the green as we speak.

[00:37:39] >> That thing pounded. It looked perfect the entire way.

[00:37:43] >> Could go in.

[00:37:44][ Applause ]

[00:37:50] >> He was hitting some bunker shots on the -- before he went out to play and he hit every one past the flag he was aiming at. This is a tough shot. Oh, beautiful. Landed on the downslope and still kept its spin.

[00:38:12] >> It had that sound, right?

[00:38:14] >> Yeah.

[00:38:15][ Applause ]

[00:38:21] >> Got it.

[00:38:22] >> That from just 6 feet, 3 inches. The closest shot to seven all day. And it's an eagle for Valimaki, who's just had his way with this hole.

[00:38:39] >> So it's a nice up and down for birdie for Knapp. But Valimaki's eagle evens it up just through seven holes. He began the day again four back.

[00:38:51] >> This is 15. Birdie attempt for C.T. Pan. He gets it to 13-under within five.

[00:39:01][ Applause ]

[00:39:07] >> Cameron Champ playing his third from just off the green on 14. Perfect touch for Cameron Champ.

[00:39:19] >> The thing he has to realize here is it is a big downslope about halfway to the hole. But you can't be trickling over that downslope. It won't get there. It's got to have some roll to it.

[00:39:35] >> Hands way down on the grip.

[00:39:49] >> I don't think he read that right. It looked like it started well right and it kept going to the right.

[00:39:52] >> Trying to avoid another bogey at the 9th. Silverman on the tee, 184 yards today. Oops.

[00:40:00] >> Oh, boy.

[00:40:00] >> It's left to Kim's.

[00:40:05] >> Yup. And that appears went in the water.

[00:40:15] >> That is a solid.

[00:40:16] >> Wow, that is a huge putt.

[00:40:19] >> Not bad.

[00:40:26] >> Norlander.

[00:40:29] >> We haven't seen many putts for birdie here, Dan.

[00:40:33] >> Well, there's the latest.

[00:40:34] >> And Norlander buries it. So regardless of whether this goes in or not, Knapp and Valamaki are going to be five clear of the rest of the field. So these guys behind Knapp and Valimaki haven't exactly put the full court press on these guys.

[00:40:52] >> They've really done nothing. And this first nine has yielded some of the lowest scores.

[00:40:56] >> I thought it was interesting that the audio caught Valamaki and Knapp having an interesting conversation about their upcoming schedule. It's just a chill moment here. They've got quite the weight. And nice that in a moment as important as what's about to unfold in terms of the back nine, that they can have a little talk.

[00:41:17] >> Good look here at Jake Knapp and what he faces for his third shot.

[00:41:21] >> That's a good lie, Curt. I don't think he can chip around all the way. He's got to carry this over that little slope about halfway and let it go up from there.

[00:41:28] >> Short game has been his real only problem he's had this week.

[00:41:32] >> Chance to get the lead back here as well. Went up and down. Valamaki missed.

[00:41:40] >> Way up.

[00:41:41] >> Took the ridge out of play. And it nearly perfect. What a shot. He pitched it right over the top of that subtle ridge in the green.

[00:41:51] >> Knapp would save par

[00:41:54] >> Now, Sami.

[00:41:56] >> Just to give himself some sort of a par putt was an accomplishment here.

[00:42:09] >> Didn't get it there.

[00:42:11] >> And he had it on line, Brad.

[00:42:13] >> Boy, he sure did. It's a couple. He's left short.

[00:42:16] >> Here's C.T. Pan's third coming home. He's at 13-under and a tie for fourth at the moment. So he's hoping to get up there with Jaeger in that tie for third now.

[00:42:34] >> I don't think 14 can do it. I don't see both the leaders losing that many. But nice plan for C.T. Pan.

[00:42:44] >> Valimaki playing his third shot at 12.

[00:42:47] >> Just a touch over 60 yards. Helping wind will take a little bit of spin off it.

[00:42:56] >> Is that any good?

[00:42:58] >> Oh, that is just superb to hit it up that high down and control the spin in the distance.

[00:43:05] >> He would finish that off. Moving to 18-under.

[00:43:10] >> think when you're nervous, it's hard sometimes to give it that extra pace, too. He's putted him in firmly, though.

[00:43:22] >> And then, wind really kicking up as he steps in.

[00:43:29] >> Boy, that really looked like the putter went outside for the first time. Like he was almost expecting a break to the right.

[00:43:38] >> Knapp and Valamaki go par bogey at 13. We now join the final group on 14.

[00:43:44] >> Knapp up by one here. And a bit of an opening, Woody.

[00:43:48] >> It certainly is, Curt. And he's basically had this shot for the -- this is the third hole in a row. A little longer. Two holes ago, a little shorter, last hole on 13. And this is right in between the two. But a forced carry, good lie, needs a little bit of spin.

[00:44:01] >> Back into that win. Stay aggressive here.

[00:44:03] >> He's got to remind himself to hit this, Curt. Good first kick.

[00:44:10] >> Kind of like that. What a shot. Jake Knapp in there to a couple of feet.

[00:44:17] >> Valimaki has this try to get within one.

[00:44:25] >> Good looking putt. So Jake Knapp is going to go to the 15th hole with a two shot lead. He started the day up by four. Looked like he was just on cruise control. Things got really interesting, but he does look more in control, except for that driver.

[00:44:44] >> Curt, missing the green on the last hole, not getting that up and down. And here, this one really, really was important for him to do to keep up with Knapp.

[00:44:54] >> We skip ahead to 16, where Knapp is just off the green, playing his third.

[00:44:58] >> Even though he hasn't had his best stuff. He's five for seven and scrambling today.

[00:45:12] >> Yup. Well done. That uphill eye helped them to have some spin.

[00:45:20] >> Valamaki for birdie at 16.

[00:45:29] >> Oh, man.

[00:45:30] >> Way off on the read. Way off.

[00:45:34] >> Similar to the putty made in the last hole.

[00:45:36] >> And you know, they're coming out of their seats there on the West Coast.

[00:45:51] >> Knapp on the tee at 17 with a two shot lead.

[00:46:07] >> Out to the right. Not turning look over enough to get to the green, I don't think.

[00:46:16] >> Wow.

[00:46:17] >> That's hard to believe. He's got to go way up if he's hitting 2-iron. He is going way up, right side of the green.

[00:46:28] >> Well, it was the right club.

[00:46:30] >> Yeah, sure was.

[00:46:33] >> Jake Knapp striding down the 71st hole. Up by two, looking for that first ever win.

[00:46:48] >> Not bad, though. Quite a bit of work left.

[00:46:51] >> Yeah. Checked up on him pretty quick, didn't it?

[00:47:08] >> Good effort.

[00:47:10] >> I love that speed.

[00:47:12][ Applause ] All right, Jake Knapp. This is 6 feet, 3inches. Eleven of 13 for the week from 4 to 8 feet.

[00:47:28] >> Cool.

[00:47:29] >> I was holding my breath.

[00:47:33] >> Just didn't look like it was going to make it. I'm sure Coach Ortega was crossing his fingers and his toes there. But what an up and down again.

[00:47:42] >> Big up and downs on this backside. Some great short putting from Jake Knapp as he heads to that final hole.

[00:47:50] >> He's looking left in. He's teed up on the right side. His eyes are looking left at that bunker. That's for sure.

[00:47:57] >> You just cannot miss right.

[00:48:09] >> Yup.

[00:48:10] >> Taking it left. This is headed right for that bunker, though.

[00:48:14] >> A popular spot. And it's not easy from there, depending on where you land. But --

[00:48:20] >> It's just in the front side of the bunker, though.

[00:48:22] >> He's got to be thinking tree all day.

[00:48:27] >> That tree is about 240 out. That's over it. And it's sailing right a little bit.

[00:48:36] >> That wind should help him.

[00:48:37] >> It needs to hold on. It's not getting helped by that wind at all

[00:48:40] >> Valimaki is concerned.

[00:48:41] >> Oh, the card path.

[00:48:43] >> He hits the path. And again, out of bounds over there across that fence.

[00:48:48] >> It has to get on the other side of that fence.

[00:48:50] >> Everybody, hold up.

[00:48:51] >> Sometimes on the bottom of that fence, it could -- the ball can be stopped.

[00:48:55] >> So we indeed have a shot of Valimaki's first tee ball. And that is the out of bounds fence. But it's not out of bounds. It has to be on the other side of the fence to be out of bounds. It does not look like it perched underneath that wire there. That it's playable. But John Wood, I can't imagine he can hit this ball. But you never know.

[00:49:17] >> No, there's no way to hit this ball. Absolutely no way. He's going to have to take an unplayable. And the interesting thing was Knapp came over and took a look at it. That's a very smart thing for a young player to do. So he knows what the situation is going to be. But he's going to have to take an unplayable here. Yeah. And he knows exactly the situation. He came over, asked what was going on, just so he knows.

[00:49:36] >> How's his lie look, Woody?

[00:49:37] >> It's fine.

[00:49:38] >> Yeah. Really he might be sitting down a little bit, but --

[00:49:40] >> Yeah. Especially the fact that he just needs to lay this up somewhere in the fairway.

[00:49:42] >> And it's a really lofty club. No attempt to go with the green here.

[00:49:48] >> Yeah. Valamaki taking an unplayable over there, has really made it a lot easier on Knapp, who just delivers the layup.

[00:50:02] >> Two-o-two, this is 6-iron. Ideally, maybe a touch right of this flagstick.

[00:50:13] >> That's going to be his fourth -- his birdie putt. So he has no problem staying solo second, if that's what he's worried about.

[00:50:23] >> Eighty-five yards.

[00:50:25] >> Woody, he's hit a thousand of these in his life. None more important than this one. Beautiful looking swing.

[00:50:39] >> That's what he needed.

[00:50:44][ Applause ]

[00:50:49] >> And when you're Jake Knapp and you've spent all that time we talked about being a bouncer and wondering if you're ever going to have this opportunity, not only to win on the PGA Tour, but to have the kind of cushion he has right now to go up with his good pal, Mike Stevens, here and enjoy it every step of the way.

[00:51:08] >> Dan, people think it might be easier to have a four shot lead. Sometimes, that's the hardest thing in the world with the expectations. He got off to a slow start. He shined today, this afternoon. Up and downs, chip shots, putts.

[00:51:28] >> So he's going to come up short in his bid to become the first man from Finland to win on the PGA Tour. But Sami Valamaki showed us a lot of game and a lot of heart this week. Now, the stage is reserved served for Jake Knapp. And it is indeed Knapp time in Mexico.

[00:52:05] >> This is going to be a really popular win on the PGA Tour, this win for Jake Knapp. And I think he's going to feel better about himself that he won without his best stuff. He had to dig deep, Dan, and he did it. Gritty up and downs on the back nine.

[00:52:26] >> I saw Jake this morning. He was excited that McKenna flew in from Canada. You never know how that's going to go, right?

[00:52:35] >> Yeah. What a moment for them both.

[00:52:36] >> Most important people in your life.

[00:52:37] >> Living the dream.

[00:52:38] >> Yup. Living the dream, the LTD, at the end of the Knapp time.

[00:52:39] >> This concludes the PGA Tour's coverage of the Mexico Open at Vidanta from Vidanta, Vallarta in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.