

Chopra off to a flying start in Buick Open

Daniel Chopra putted like a dream, with 22 putts for 18 holes, as he carded a sensational seven-under 65 to be one shot off the lead after the first round at the Buick Open on Thursday. He was lying fourth with three players sharing the lead.

Corey Pavin, Bo Van Pelt and Dudley Hart shared the opening-round lead at 8-under 64, a shot ahead of Briny Baird and Chopra.

Chopra, born in Stockholm to an Indian father and Swedish mother, said: "It's been the best start and probably the lowest round I've had since then Mercedes Benz championship, though, the golf courses I have played on since then have been extremely difficult. I've kind of picked my events a little bit more this year and chosen some of the more elite events. And in doing that you're playing on extremely difficult golf courses. And it's been a fun year that way."

With Tiger Woods missing out on the event, which he always play in, the focus was also on US Open runner-up Rocco Mediate, who carded a one-under 71.

Chopra, who won the season-opener the Mercedes, had a stunning front nine with five birdies and one bogey. He birdied the first, second, fifth, seventh, eighth and with a bogey on third, he turned in four-under. He then added three more birdies on the 13th, 15th, 18th. He putted beautifully despite not making as many greens in regulation as he would have liked to.

Talking about his season, Chopra said: "Well, I've actually had really good rounds in quite a number of tournaments. Haven't been able to put in consistently sub par rounds around it. I've been finishing around 30th a lot this year, the most I ever have in my life. Seems like almost every week I'm finishing between 30th and 35th which, if you look at it, you're not that far away from good play.

Chopra played in the afternoon, by which time a lot of players had posted scores in the 60s.

"I made a conscious effort to not look at the board too much in the afternoon. When I teed off, the morning guys were just about done. I knew there were going to be some low numbers out there. The experienced players will try not to look at the board because they know deep down inside there will be the 7-under and 8-under, 9-under, maybe 10-under par out there."

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