

Jeev shares first round lead in PGA Championships

There was an unmistakable feel of satisfaction as Jeev Milkha Singh shared the lead at the Oakland Hills after the first round of the PGA Championships, the fourth and final Major of the season Thursday.

Jeev, who came close to teeing off at the British Open and then missing out, shot a brilliant two-under 68 to share the opening round's lead with Swede Robert Karlsson and Anders Romero, who were also two-under but with two holes still to play as bad light stopped play early.

Among other Indians in the field, Jyoti Randhawa was six over after 15 when play was stopped. Earlier, Daniel Chopra, the Indo-Swede, shot a 74 for tied 62nd place.

Jeev, who has won once each on European and Japanese Tour this season, is carrying an injury. Just as Tiger Woods won the U.S Open on a bad knee and then Pdraig Harrington hit back from a wrist injury to win the British Open Championship at Birkdale, Jeev triumphed in Japan and Austria in the last two months with a bad ankle. And now he is leading the PGA Championships.

Jeev's lead at the end of the day was a lot better than the lead he held after nine holes at the Augusta Masters in 2007. 'That does feel good, coming back in lead. But I am not thinking ahead. There's a lot of golf still left,' said Jeev.

Jeev said he had no expectations coming to Oakland Hills.

'I started with a bogey, but I think I got a jump start on No. 2. I got a good bounce off the left side of the green to about five feet. I holed that for eagle,' said Jeev.

'After that, I just kept plugging away and made a lot of up-and-downs and I think that my putting helped. My short game was sharp. Didn't drive the ball that good, but any time you shoot under par in a Major Championship, I think you got to take it and put it deep down in your pocket and I have done that today.'

On the golf course, Jeev said: 'I think the course played tougher than the practice rounds. Especially, I felt that the greens got quicker and firmer. And the pin positions were tougher than the practice rounds. But I think it's an excellent golf course.'

'I just played nine holes Tuesday and nine yesterday,' he said about practice on eve of the tournament.

'I haven't played any practice rounds for the last seven weeks in the tournaments I've played and it's worked for me pretty good. I won twice -- the Austrian Open and two weeks ago in Japan. Basically, I got an MRI done three weeks ago, the doctor said I need four weeks off.'

'Then I decided if I'm going to play the PGA Championship I'm going to push myself through to this week and next week. After that I'm surely taking two weeks off, maybe I'm going to extend it to four. So it depends how the ankle holds up.'

Asked whether he felt any pain, Jeev said: 'It feels fine, but the more drivers I hit, I feel the pain just

kind of comes back. And you do need to hit a lot of drivers on this golf course.'

Jeev opened with a bogey, but made up quickly as he hit the second shot on the second hole perfectly. It went over a slope and a bunker and came to a stop five feet from the hole. Jeev, who once needed just 98 putts for a full four rounds in Dubai, holed it for an eagle on the 539-yard par-5 hole.

Birdies came on two of the last four holes -- the first a 7-iron to a foot-and-a-half at the 15th and then a 3-iron shot into the 17th. He set up another birdie on the 18th but missed the five-footer.

'But I will take a par every day on that hole,' he said of the hole that troubled many on the first day.

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