



Tolan takes 2-shot lead into weekend at Colorado Open

Ex-Buff on record pace at Colorado Open

By Gary Baines
Saturday, July 25, 2009

DENVER — Derek Tolan says he sometimes feels like an old man, and though the 23-year-old is joking for the most part, there are plenty of benefits that can come with age and experience, as Tolan well knows.

The former University of Colorado golfer made the best of both his youth and experience on Friday, with the result being that he holds a two-shot lead at the halfway point of the HealthOne Colorado Open.

Tolan was hitting the ball poorly during his warm-up session early Friday morning, so instead of trying to force things during his round, as a more inexperienced player might, he erred on the conservative side. And in the end, he reaped the benefits, shooting a 5-under-par 66 at Green Valley Ranch Golf Club.

"That's something I'm real good at -- putting up a score," the resident of Highlands Ranch said. "I do my best to shoot as low as I can with whatever I have."

Tolan went bogey-free Friday and stands at 11-under-par 131 for two rounds. Considering the 72-hole scoring record for the Colorado Open is 267, the new pro is certainly sitting pretty.

"It doesn't surprise me," said CU golf coach Roy Edwards, who attended the Open on Friday. "Anything he does will not surprise me. It's neat to see him playing well. And he hasn't hit a plateau in the last year."

Tolan, winner of last month's San Juan Open, holds a two-shot advantage over Phoenix pro Chris Kamin, who has made one bogey in two rounds and fired a 67 on Friday. John Douma, like Tolan a former CU golfer, stands three back at 134 after shooting a second-round 66.

Although Tolan's score is on record pace for the Colorado Open, that certainly isn't his focus as he heads into the weekend.

"I'm doing a good job of staying in the present, so whatever the score adds up to, it doesn't really matter," he said.

Should Tolan hold on to win, he'd become one of the youngest champions in Colorado Open history, joining the likes of Brian Guetz (20 in 1994), Kevin Stadler (22 in 2002) and Willie Wood (23 in 1984).

Douma, 35, figures to give Tolan a run on the weekend, if recent Colorado Opens are any indication. In the last four Opens, Douma has finished second, second, first and second.

"This tournament has treated me real well," said the Denver native who now lives in Phoenix. "I have so many good memories here, and it's easy to build off those memories."

Like the two players ahead of him, Douma posted a bogey-free round on Friday to stay within striking distance of Tolan.

"Today I hit the ball well enough to shoot low but I missed a lot of (makeable) putts," said Douma, a recent winner on the Gateway Tour. "But I'm right where I want to be, and I'm playing very consistent right now. So I'll keep playing aggressive on the weekend."

Colorado Open

At Green Valley Ranch GC

7,183 yards, Par 71

Second Round

a-denotes amateur

Derek Tolan, Highlands Ranch 65-66--131

Chris Kamin, Phoenix 66-67--133

John Douma Phoenix 68-66--134

Aaron Goldberg, San Diego 65-71--136

Steve Schneider, Sandy, Utah 71-65--136

Jake Grodzinsky, Cornville, Ariz. 71-65--136

Nathan Lashley, Scottsdale, Ariz. 67-69--136

Clay Ogden, Farmington, Utah 70-66--136

Andrew Landry, Beaumont, Texas 71-66--137

Scott Harrington, Scottsdale, Ariz. 69-68--137

Julien Trudeau, Montreal 70-68--138

Ashdon Woods, Lander, Wyo. 71-67--138

Charlie Soule, Denver 70-68--138

Zen Brown, Arvada 68-70--138

Caine Fitzgerald, Aurora 69-69--138

Steve Saunders, Albuquerque 67-71--138

Brian Kortan, Albuquerque 67-71--138

David Jackson, Scottsdale, Ariz. 68-70--138

Vince Jewell, Las Cruces, N.M. 66-72--138

Also

Matt Schalk, Boulder 70-70--140

a-Tom Gempel, Parker 69-71--140

Ben Portie, Westminster 70-70--140

C.J. Ebel, Niwot 73-70--143

Kenny Coakley, Lakewood 70-73--143

Missed the cut

Travis Williams, Erie 72-72--144

a-Steve Irwin, Golden 73-73--146

a-Steve Ziegler, Broomfield 74-72--146

Pat Grady, Broomfield 75-71--146

a-Luke Symons, Lone Tree 71-76--147

Mike Troyer, Boulder 77-71--148

a-Jon Lindstrom, Broomfield 76-75--151

a-Joseph Schwark, Broomfield 69-82--151

Tray Shehee, Longmont 79-75--154

Scott Sommers, Longmont 76-79--155



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THE DENVER POST

golf: colorado open

Tolan takes control at Colorado Open

Former CU player shoots a 66 despite not having his "A" game.

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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Derek Tolan, who joined the professional ranks this spring, has an 11-under-par 131 after 36 holes of the Colorado Open. (Aaron Montoya, The Denver Post)

Struggling to control his ball flight during warm-ups, Derek Tolan didn't come close to leaving the practice range with his "A" game prior to Friday's second round of the Colorado Open. Five hours and a 5-under-par 66 later, he remained at the head of the class.

A lesson well learned.

"It's something I've gotten good at," said Tolan, who stands 11-under 131 at the midway point of the 72-hole championship at Green Valley Ranch.

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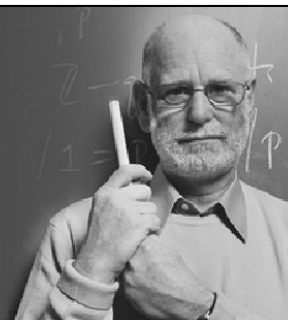


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THE DENVER POST

"The key is putting up a score, not necessarily trying to make the best swing."

Tolan holds a two-stroke lead over Chris Kamin of Phoenix, with 2007 Colorado Open champion John Douma of Scottsdale, Ariz., another shot back at 134. Having turned pro this spring after completing his eligibility at the

Extras

- [View a gallery of photos from the 2009 Colorado Open .](#)

University of Colorado, Tolan had been on the road for most of the past six weeks and said it's good to get some home cooking and be in familiar surroundings.

That proved to be especially helpful Friday, he said, when his warm-up session did not feel especially crisp. Tolan adjusted his on-course strategy accordingly.

"I played with what I had; I didn't force anything," he said.

Rather than try to drive the green on the 346-yard, par-4 14th, Tolan backed off and smoothed a tee shot 100 yards shy of the green. From there, it was an easy wedge to within 4 feet for a routine birdie. As to be expected following an erratic warm-up, Tolan hit some good shots and had to scramble on other holes. He needed a 35-footer for his birdie on No. 7, but knocked an 8-iron to within 3 feet on the next hole.

Making Tolan's second-round 66 even more impressive was the fact he only birdied one of the three par-5s.

"It really is amazing how little (ball striking) matters," he said. "You just try to get it from Point A to Point B. If you take that mind-set, the game is a lot easier. And more fun."

Kamin, 35, is playing in his second Colorado Open, having tied for sixth in 2006. He is among a strong contingent of Gateway Tour regulars in this field because the Gateway schedule has an open week. Kamin said his 67 on Friday could have been lower. He finished bogey-free but missed five putts inside 15 feet.

"I'm happy with where I am," Kamin said. "I'm not saying I played bad today, but I can play better."

Douma, a former CU player, completed a 66 with birdies on his last two holes, Nos. 8 and 9. That came after missing a 2 1/2-foot birdie putt on the 341-yard seventh. He did not make a bogey in the round, thanks to saving par with a 20-foot save on the fifth after a poor bunker shot.

"I'm not leading, but the nice thing about this tournament is it's four days," Douma said. "I'm used to playing three-day tournaments in the Gateway Tour, where you'd better go 7-under every day to have a chance."

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com

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