

# Catching his second wind

Shiv Kapur set ablaze the Kensville Golf and Country Club with a new course record to lead the field by four strokes

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After Sachin Tendulkar enchanted his crazy fans, it was business as usual at Kensville Golf and Country Club as golf took centre stage and Shiv Kapur hogged the limelight on the penultimate day of The Gujarat Kensville Challenge.

There was unusual quiet at the golf course, but unmindful of the conditions and riding on "positive thoughts", Kapur set the course on fire. The 30-year-old battered the course record to post seven-under for the day, to be comfortably placed at the top – with overnight leader Scotland's Andrew McArthur was four shots behind.

"I don't remember when was the last time, I was in a similar situation," Kapur said reflecting back on his round. "I don't think I have gone into the last day with a big lead in the past two-three years," he said.

For those who followed the career of the talented golfer, the twinkling in the eyes of Kapur is quiet understandable. After making his mark at the amateur level, Kapur announced his arrival at the professional golf by winning the 2005 Volvo Masters of Asia. He also featured in prestigious The Open Championship – the oldest and most prestigious of the four Major championships in professional golf.

However, his inability to win trophies – despite being at the lead on many occasions – set the tongues wagging, questioning his mental ability while going for the kill. Shiv, on many occasions, had denied the pressure, but his eyes belie his composure.

All that appeared to have changed, when Kapur showed his mental toughness in fending off two-time USPGA Tour winner Daniel Chopra to win the Shubhkamna Champions Golf at the Noida Golf Course in the last weeks of December 2012. Incidentally, this was his first win in seven



Shiv Kapur hogged the limelight on the penultimate day of The Gujarat Kensville Challenge as he sizzled to set a new course record

years and only second professional win. "I surely don't like to read too much into the win," he told *Mirror*. "However, there is lot of positive feelings from that win. Surely the pressure is off my back now," he added.

This newfound "positiveness" was evident at The Kensville Golf Challenge, Shiv's first tournament after his win. With rounds of 67 and 71, Shiv remained in contention. Yesterday's round of 65 should only boost his confidence to start the season with another win.

"It surely helps to end a season with a win. I can feel it," he said, adding, "It would be better if I can start the

new season with a win also."

The signs are surely there as he played yet another bogey-free round. The tone was set in the first round itself as he started with a birdie. "The first hole birdie was the best, I should say, because it is tough starting a hole and when you start with a birdie, obviously it gives you some positive momentum for the day," he said.

Kapur went on to hit two back-to-back birdies in the par 4 third and fourth holes, while adding two more in the par 5 sixth and ninth holes. Five-under for the day, Kapur had a comparatively sedate back nine, but the two birdies in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> holes

means he is sitting pretty on the top.

Talking about his day, Kapur said, "I can't complain. I set a course record and so far so great." "I think I got off to a good start today that sort of set the tone for the whole day. I made couple of putts early in my round with three birdies in my first four, and was no looking back after that," he added.

But despite all the positiveness, Kapur remained rooted to the grounded. "I have been in this situation before also. But I want to be in charge of my destiny and not really leave it in the hands of my competitors," he said while talking about his gameplan in the final round. "I will look to just go out there

## LEADERBOARD

- 1) Shiv Kapur (13-under 203)
- 2) Andrew McArthur (9-under 207)
- 3) Phillip Archer (8-under 208)
- 4) Tim Sluiter (7-under 209)
- 5) Daniel Vancsik, José-Filipe Lima, Daniel IM and Agustin Domingo (5-under 211)

and play like the way I have played the last three days. I have found from past experience that if you try to defend the lead you tend to get defensive and get away from your natural gameplan. So the idea is to stay positive and stay aggressive," he signed off.