

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Thursday, September 17, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Cole Hammer

Flash Interview



Q. Cole, just walk us through your round a bit.

COLE HAMMER: Yeah, I got off to a really tough start, three-putted the first hole and then bogeyed 3, doubled 4 with another three-putt and then bogeyed 6. I was 5-over through 6 and it was getting away from me. Luckily I birdied 9 and 10 and thought I may get some momentum from that, but kind of lost it on the next one, on 11, after I plugged in the bunker and made bogey.

I could not get anything going today. Made another good birdie on 13. But after that, I made a few bogeys coming in. All in all, it was just a brutal, tough day.

Q. What have been your reactions to the course so far this week?

COLE HAMMER: My gosh, this place is unbelievable. It's in absolutely pristine shape. It's hard. I think I only hit five fairways today, and if you're not hitting fairways, it's a total guessing game and you're out of position from the get-go, and I think I can attribute a lot of my bogeys to that. This golf course is amazing, and it's in great shape for sure.

Q. How does this experience compare to 2015 at Chambers Bay?

COLE HAMMER: I would say it's a lot different because back then I really had absolutely no idea what I was doing. I was 15. It almost felt like a circus, and it almost felt like I wasn't playing golf. But this was different. I played in the Houston Open last year and got a good experience there, and I thought it would kind of help me today. I was pretty nervous on the first hole, but nothing crazy. I usually am at every tournament.

But I think 2015 helped me for sure. It was just disappointing to not see the results pay off.

Q. Obviously a weird year for everyone; where did you feel your game was coming into this week?

COLE HAMMER: I had a pretty decent stretch this

summer in amateur golf, just didn't quite finish, I would say. It wasn't great. This last year has definitely not been my best golf. But I felt good coming in. I was hitting the ball really well and making a lot of putts, and for some reason just didn't go my way today.

Q. Is this your first time at Winged Foot?

COLE HAMMER: No, I played in the 2016 U.S. Amateur Four-Ball here at Winged Foot, which was a lot of fun. My partner, Walker Lee, and I didn't exactly play great; I think we missed the cut by two. But it was a great experience and it was good to see the course. I know it was before Winged Foot redid the greens, but it was still the same golf course essentially.

Q. How different is the course, though?

COLE HAMMER: It's a lot different now than it was back in 2016. I don't notice too much on the greens other than the fact that they're firmer, faster and probably a little more undulating. The fairways are definitely narrower this week than they were in 2016, and the rough is obviously a lot longer. It was not very penal in 2016 and now it's almost a stroke penalty.

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