

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Friday, September 18, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

James Sugrue

Flash Interview



Q. James Sugrue, 79, 9-over. James, can you reflect on the week a little bit?

JAMES SUGRUE: Yeah, I suppose I just did not play well. Even kind of leading up to this, I wasn't playing my best. I was here ten days before the tournament started, and I just wasn't really firing.

Out here, like there's very little managing for error. Off the tee, which would usually be my strongest point, I just didn't really know where the ball was going. So, yeah, it's always going to be tough, especially out here with rough like that and narrow fairways. When you don't know where the ball is going, it's going to be an uphill battle.

Q. What did you learn about your game this week?

JAMES SUGRUE: I suppose I just kind of, as bad as I played, I just tried to enjoy it. I know it's hard to enjoy it when you're not playing well and you're not making birdies, but I just tried my best. Yeah, I still had a good week. I still enjoyed myself. I enjoyed my time over here. I'll be sad to be going home on Monday.

Q. What's next?

JAMES SUGRUE: What is next? Good question. In terms of tournament golf, there isn't really a whole lot happening in Ireland. Before the Masters, maybe I might have one amateur tournament at home. Other than that, not a whole lot.

I'm not sure what the amateur scene is like over here at the minute, but in Ireland it kind of got -- coronavirus really hit it hard and kind of more or less everything got cancelled, I think apart from three tournaments.

So, yeah, it's just a lot of practice really.

Q. Lee Westwood suggested you should get an invitation to the Irish Open next week. Would you play?

JAMES SUGRUE: Yeah, definitely. I've never played. Last year it was at Lahinch, which would be pretty close to my house and one of my favorite courses, and I couldn't play because, A, I think it was a Rolex event last year, and also because we had European Team championships, so I couldn't play.

So, yeah, I would love to -- it would be great to get a start in the Irish Open. That would be brilliant. I would definitely take up on that offer if it was possible.

Q. Have you had a conversation at all with the Irish Open or the European Tour?

JAMES SUGRUE: No.

Q. Are you surprised by that?

JAMES SUGRUE: Yeah, a little bit. I thought that I had done enough to warrant an invitation. Obviously, it's not my decision. I don't know whose decision it is or who hands out invitations, but, yeah, I wouldn't dwell on it too much. If I'm in, I'm in. If I'm not, I'm not. It's not the end of the world.

It would be a pretty quick turnaround coming home from here. I'm not too sure what the story is with me coming home and quarantine and stuff like that. It's in the North of Ireland this year, so they have different rules, the Republic, so it's all a little bit messy. If the opportunity came up, I'd definitely play.

Q. And if you didn't have to quarantine and you didn't play, what would you be doing next week?

JAMES SUGRUE: If I didn't have to quarantine and didn't play, probably just practicing. Probably head down to Adare Manor. I've been doing a lot of practice down there. I think it's -- as I was saying in my last interview, it's probably the best place in Ireland to practice and play. Facility-wise, just topnotch. Practice greens and putting greens and stuff is brilliant down there. So that's where you'd probably find me.

Q. One last thing. Have you decided what your future is going to be?

JAMES SUGRUE: Not yet. Obviously, if you had asked me that a year ago, I would be pro by now, but obviously with coronavirus, nobody really knows what's happening and what's around the corner and stuff. Even in Ireland the cases are going up day by day. I think Dublin are on some sort of lockdown at the minute, I'm not too sure, but that's what I'm hearing anyway.

So I suppose the future, it's hard to say.

Q. Does it matter to you, as we keep going along into the year, does it matter to you that the Walker Cup is in May this year versus being in September?

JAMES SUGRUE: Yeah, obviously even last year, we all kind of were thinking that it was only like a year and a bit away as opposed to like two years. Yeah, I'd love to play Walker Cup again. I'd love to play Walker Cup in America. Obviously, last year was in Hoylake, and we didn't get the result we wanted. I would like another bite at the cherry. If it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen. I played already, so it was definitely ticked off the list, but yeah.

Q. How pleased were you to make some birdies today?

JAMES SUGRUE: Yeah. I suppose I was pretty pleased to make a few. Yeah, it was just -- even from the word go on the 1st hole, I hit it left, drew a horrendous lie. Thought I did well to hack it out of that lie into probably a worse lie, and then went long off the green, and that's just dead and just started with a triple just like that.

It's kind of bizarre because I didn't lose a ball the last two days and I shot what I shot, which is kind of mad. I think it's just tough. As I said, I wasn't playing my best, didn't know where the ball was going off the tee, and just can't do that around here.

Q. Do you still see 6 over winning this week?

JAMES SUGRUE: Probably not. I will say yesterday, I suppose, when we played practice rounds, we were playing off the back of every tee box. Like on the 3rd hole, I hit 3 in there one of the days, and I hit 5 iron in there yesterday, I think. So it did play an awful lot different.

With the wind, it's pretty windy today. If it gets up, who knows? I see a couple of lads there that shot good scores yesterday that aren't shooting as good scores today, which I don't think -- unless you guys trickle up a bit, which is very, very doable, which maybe not plus 6.

Q. Course is playing about three shots harder today.

How much do you attribute that to the weather conditions versus course setup?

JAMES SUGRUE: Yeah, it's all -- like it's all weather out there today. Like a lot of holes -- even though coming home you have 16, 17, 18, which are usually pretty tough holes, today they're 3 wood/9 iron, 3 wood/wedge into the last, driver/9 iron on 17. So they're playing easier, but then you have the likes of 14, which is straight into the wind. 13, straight into the wind, driver/4 iron. So, yeah, it does kind of -- they're either playing straight down or straight into it, not many crosswinds.

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