

U.S. Open Championship 2023

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Los Angeles, California, USA

The Los Angeles Country Club

Sam Bennett

Flash Interview



Q. 2-under 68, just talk a little bit about your play so far this week and what you learned after the Masters experience.

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, it was good. Yesterday was good. Today, same thing. Drove the ball in play and then hit a lot of quality iron shots and got a lot of looks. Made some good saves from par.

I mean, I'm leaving a few out there on the greens, but yeah, I'm just ball-striking this course to death.

Q. There was a lot of talk today about the longer par-3s. Just a few comments on how you played 7 and 11.

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, I hit 3-wood on 11. I should have hit hybrid. I hit 3-wood on 7, too. They're tough. 290. But you're only trying to land it 250 or so. But yeah, you're just trying to make 3.

Q. You're new to the major championship world but you're doing quite well in them. I'm curious, what's the biggest step up compared to what you've been used to in the tournaments you've been playing and the courses you've been playing?

SAM BENNETT: What do you mean the biggest step up?

Q. What's the biggest difference?

SAM BENNETT: I mean, I don't know. It's just golf. Yeah, there's people out here and the courses are tough, but you do the same thing to try to always try to focus on. Just tee it in play, which I tend to drive it well.

I mean, it's tough. It's getting tough out there. The greens are getting a little more bouncy and a little faster, but I just love the challenge.

Q. Are the courses tougher, because you said at the Masters that Ridgewood was tougher than Augusta, and then this course you're obviously not having too much trouble. How do the courses that you've played

in professional golf compare to the ones you've played in amateur golf so far?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, it's the same concept. I don't know. I don't look at courses as being really tough or easy. Just try to make the best score I can possibly make on the hole.

Yeah, amateur golf has prepared me well. When the U.S. Amateur goes is always tough, the Western, Pac Coast, Sunnehanna. Every big time amateur event is a big test, and same with college, too. We don't just play too easy courses.

Q. On Thursday we had two 62s, lowest scoring average in U.S. Open history. I think there was a lot of criticism because a U.S. Open is supposed even par. What are your even par or does it matter?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, I thought that was -- I didn't like what they were saying, how it's too easy. You still had guys shooting way over par. I think that just shows how good of a course this is, how it rewards good golf and bad golf still gets penalized.

But, yeah, 8-under after the first day, but I don't know come Sunday if it's going to get past that.

Q. Hypothetically say you were in charge of setting up the golf course for tomorrow. What's one aspect you would do to crank things up and make a little tougher?

SAM BENNETT: I think it's playing just fine. The ball is still bouncing. You've got to hit good shots. I'm still focused on front edge. I think it's just fine.

The pins were definitely a little tougher today, but yeah, I don't know. However they want to do it.

Q. What was your goal this week?

SAM BENNETT: My goal? I don't know. I didn't really have a goal. I mean, to win. I put myself in a situation, I find myself in a good spot going into the weekend, then I'm really excited to tee it up tomorrow.



Q. Building off of what was said earlier, do you feel like you waited too long to turn pro? Do you regret waiting? You seem like you're ready.

SAM BENNETT: No, I wanted to graduate. I wanted to go on my run at nationals. I wanted to mature a little bit. I got to play the Masters and the Tour events I played in college was a big help for now when I get out here professionally, I was experienced and I kind of didn't get a slow start. I felt comfortable. I still do.

Q. There's a bunch of long waits on tee boxes out there. What do you do during that time?

SAM BENNETT: I don't know. Think. Yeah, I don't know. Nothing.

Q. What do you think about?

SAM BENNETT: My shot.

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