

U.S. Open Championship 2023

Saturday, June 17, 2023

Los Angeles, California, USA

The Los Angeles Country Club

Tom Gardner

LACC Director of Golf

Quick Quotes

Q. Were you coming home when you got the word? Were you refreshing your phone to look at the number?

TOM GARDNER: I was standing in back of the 18th green with a friend, and I was telling them I kind of figured out there was one golfer who was out there who's right on the cut line, and he was going to have to play 16, 17, and 18 in even par in order to stay at an even number.

I'm refreshing my phone, and Gil Hanse comes up, and we start talking, and we're chatting and he's laughing because I keep refreshing my phone and I keep refreshing my phone.

Parred 16, and after what seemed like forever, he birdies 17.

So at that point, I go, I'm out of here. I was meeting my wife up around here for a cocktail party, so I said, I'm out of here.

Said goodbye to my friends, I go to the locker room, I change, I get in my car and I'm driving. I get a text from a member, and he said, "you're in." I immediately called him, I said, no, I'm not. This guy birdied 17. He goes, no, he doubled 18.

All of a sudden I started getting a lot of text messages and a lot of emails and the club sent out an email to the membership. It's fun.

Thank the USGA for giving me the opportunity. It's pretty special to do this in front of your membership on the course that you work at. If you were out here this morning on the first tee, there was a pretty loud roar. Got the juices flowing a bit.

And playing with Ryan, and Ryan is a good buy, hammers the ball, and we just had a good time out there, played pretty quickly. What a day. Hoping to do it all again tomorrow.



Q. What's it like walking around and you don't have to technically keep score?

TOM GARDNER: It's great. It's the best kind of golf. I may have had a couple of members setting over/unders for me, so I was still playing to play golf and play well, and I didn't -- I got out of position too many times for a setup like this, and it's a long setup and the pins are challenging and the rough is very penal right now.

Not having to keep too much score and just enjoy the day, and my wife is out here and her parents were out there, and just having the support was so much fun.

Q. Then you got your coworker to caddie for you today --

TOM GARDNER: Yeah.

Q. What was that like?

TOM GARDNER: So Rory, we were walking the course, and we got to the second hole. This was early last week. Jeff Hall came up to me, and he said, hey, Tom, if we get an odd number, we'd love to have you play as a marker, and I was very honored to be given the opportunity.

Rory immediately was like, "I'm your caddie." So he jumped on it before I could say no. Not that I would. Rory is great. We had such a good time. Members loved seeing both of us out there, so it was fun.

Q. Is it even more special when you've tried to qualify for this championship and then you actually technically get to play in it?

TOM GARDNER: Yeah. Listen, I love competing. I love playing golf, and to be able -- I'm not a competitor, but to be able to say that I got to play a U.S. Open setup on the weekend and see what it's like and see the energy of the crowd and see the pins and the firmness and the rough and everything that goes along with it, it's -- I can't really describe it.



