

# U.S. Senior Open Championship

Sunday, July 11, 2021

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Omaha Country Club

## William Mitchell

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Joined here in the interview room by William Mitchell, who just finished as the low amateur of the 41st U.S. Senior Open. William, let's start with today's round. Took advantage of a few of those par-5s, just walk us through your card.

WILLIAM MITCHELL: Yeah, today was a really brutal start. I was 4-over after five and kind of just was very unsettled, the wind was swirling everywhere, really didn't hit too many poor quality shots, got a little unfortunate on the first hole, but made a really nice birdie on I believe 6 and that kind of got me settled. I had a really difficult 2-putt, big arcer down the hill and was able to navigate that. And then made bogey on 8. And then just kind of tried to feel my way around the back nine. 10's a brutal hole. I know that over par is going to be the norm there, probably a stroke average like 4.6 or 4.7, I think I looked at the stats. Made five there. But I felt like if I could get through 11 and 12 there was some opportunities. I didn't hit it really good on the back nine, made some really spectacular up-and-downs, really great up-and-down on 13, or excuse me, 14. Long bunker shot. Hit a very poor shot in and made some putts coming down the stretch. Hit the worst shot of the day that worked out on 16. So just kind of -- today was just a grind, the wind was going 19 different ways it felt like. So guessed wrong half of them. But it was a good walk.

#### **Q. As the leaders are teeing off now, what can they expect in the afternoon in terms of course conditions?**

WILLIAM MITCHELL: Some of the pin placements I just felt like they were really on edge if it dry us out. Fortunately the greens were soft, we have had a lot of rain here, it's amazing what the staff has done here to get the course prepared with the event that we had on Friday night. I don't really see 65 out there today. I don't. I feel like under par, three or four could win this tournament pretty easily. The wind is very difficult, but I'm an amateur so my level of perception of -- I played with Mark O'Meara today which was unbelievable to play with a major winner



my first senior major. So I think you get 4-, 5-, 6-under, I think you win.

#### **Q. As you just said your first senior, your first U.S. Senior Open and lot of amateurs came here to start the week and you're the one that ended up on top. What does that mean to you and what were the takeaways of the week?**

WILLIAM MITCHELL: Oh, my gosh, it's our national championship. It's a lot. It's a lot. I feel a little emotional about it. A lot of people helped me get here. Rusty, Allen, Tom, Jerry, just -- Craig Hulbert -- just some really good -- the texts that I received this week, just, it's very special.

#### **Q. Can you talk some of the players you work with on in your real job and have you spoken to them either before you came here or during the week about what to expect?**

WILLIAM MITCHELL: Well it's funny, I received a lot of texts from people that don't play and the guys that I train I haven't received very many. So that's kind of how we do it. You just, we don't talk much. Stewart Cink is a personal friend and I worked with Stewart for a number of years and I called him before I texted him and he just said, Look, here's the deal, you go do what you do. Don't try to do anything else. You are who you are. If you hit it in the rough, get it out of the rough. And this is the worst rough I've ever played in. It was juicy and it was wet and it was deep. So I only went rough to rough twice this week, one time I made double doing that. So we have kind of stayed out of the way. I've received -- like I said, a kid named Billy Kennerly -- he calls me Old William, I call him Young William -- it's been fun to a degree for them to watch that I can actually play. It helps my business a little bit. My rates are going up, I promise you that. So it's been a lot of fun.

#### **Q. What kind of emotion do you think you'll have when you're standing there later in the prize ceremony and you're awarded the medal?**

WILLIAM MITCHELL: Look, at the end of the day, it will be overwhelming. Unfortunately my coach and confident, John, who helped me get here has to leave.

#### **Q. What did you learn about yourself and your golf game this week going through this whole process?**



WILLIAM MITCHELL: That it's better than I thought under really difficult conditions. And that I know how to grind. I'm not a player -- I'm not afraid to play from behind. That's kind of what I do. And that is just head down and keep moving forward. I watched the really good players, nothing really seems to phase them too much, it's on to the next. We had a lovely fire drill at 3:00 in the morning where everybody had to evacuate, so that kind of set the morning that, you know, stuff's going to happen and you just have to adapt to when this stuff happens it's unexpected, not get overwhelmed or get all crazy.

**Q. I know that you got pretty far in match play a couple years in the Senior Amateur, is there a point here in this second phase of your golfing life that you say, you know, I belong here, I can play with these guys?**

WILLIAM MITCHELL: Well, I think the good thing about playing with good players like Stu and Billy and Mariah Stackhouse and Amanda Doherty, some of the kids that I train, Drew Weaver, I know I'm not horrible, right? And then it's just a different level of excellence in on the Champions Tour. So to come out here -- Billy Andrade was kind enough to set up a practice round with Bernhard Langer, somebody I've admired for a long time. I played with Harry Arnold who just bombs it. I think he's leading the week in driving distance. But you know what, we all compete. Mark O'Meara, Hall of Famer. You just try to play the golf course and not really get sucked into am I better than this guy or do I belong. I was comfortable out here all week for the most part. So I don't know, I don't know what the next step is. I think I'm not playing again until the U.S. Senior Amateur in Detroit. This was not even on my radar with my goals this year. It just kind of happened. So I'll just prepare, I'll take a couple weeks off and work like I do, train clients, it's going to be really weird to get back in the gym and not be overwhelmed with all kind of the noise in the background that is a major event.

**Q. Do you think your clients might listen to you a little better now that they know that you proved to them that you can do it?**

WILLIAM MITCHELL: No. (Laughing) No. They won't. They will still be mad at me for doing stuff that none of them like the assault bike, none of them like the stair masters, none of them like the rower, we'll be doing all those things and -- but I got a little emotional, that's probably going to give them a little mileage with me for the next week or so. So we're all real happy. It's a team event.

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