

U.S. Senior Amateur Championship

Thursday, September 2, 2021
Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan, USA
Country Club of Detroit

Gene Elliott

Quick Quotes

Q. You finally got the monkey off the back. You've been playing, this is your 36th USGA Championship. You're one of the best players that have not won the USGA title. Now you got it. Tell me what that feeling is like for you personally to get that title?

GENE ELLIOTT: That match was so tough that I am not sure, did I win? I'm not sure. It was so close and I kind of made a boo boo there on 16 and then somehow it turned around.

But that's match play. I guess it just hasn't sank in yet. You know, just so much goes with that USGA title that maybe that's why I haven't won it in the past. It's just so important and so meaningful to win a USGA championship.

I'm relieved. I'm very proud. I didn't do it by myself. I had a lot of help from a lot of different people, so it is a team win really. It's a team win. My wife puts on Facebook #TeamElliott. That's for my swing guide, my putting guide, my friends and things.

So it's a Team Elliott win.

Q. I know would you friend Mike McCoy. He got his eight years ago and how special it was for him. I'm sure you guys talked about that since he won it.

GENE ELLIOTT: And you know, he got to play in the Masters and made the Walker Cup team, and that's all so wonderful and deserving.

And to play in the Us Senior Open, you know, I played in one, but now I get to play in another. I'm already looking forward to it.

Q. Going to have a pretty special pairing next year, Jim Furyk and Stephen Dodd, Senior British Open champion.

GENE ELLIOTT: Yeah, and I met Furyk and Fluff. His clubs didn't come all Sunnydale, so they were walking the



course during our practice round and I talked to them and they stood on 18 tee with us. Fluff went to college in Iowa.

Q. Really?

GENE ELLIOTT: Yeah, and I said, How in the -- because he's from Maine. I said, How in the heck did you get to Oskaloosa, Iowa, William Penn College? Anyhow, we did spend some time with them so that was fun.

Q. Talk about the match today. Neither one of you -- you never led until the 18th hole. He only had a 1-up lead.

GENE ELLIOTT: Right, right. You know, when he made that, I don't know, 15-footer on 1 for par, I thought, oh, boy we're in for a tough match.

You know, he got one up and you just after the front nine you just knew it was going to be a battle. Whoever blinked was -- it just was one of those matches.

Both played well. Both should hang their heads high. I said to him earlier, I said, whether I won or lost I was probably going to cry, so for the same reasons. Just honored to be in the final.

Q. To get to the final you went through a gauntlet. First round maybe not so much, but Mike, you were one putt away from walking out of here on Tuesday.

GENE ELLIOTT: Yeah.

Q. You beat him in extra holes. Beat Doug Hanson, No. 1 senior amateur player in the WAGR. Beat Craig Davis.

GENE ELLIOTT: And Tom Gieselmann, local guy. Too many local guys.

Q. You went through a gauntlet. You earned this.

GENE ELLIOTT: It was tough, but match play is a tough format, I think. Doesn't matter who you're playing of you can shoot 75 and win and shoot 67 and lose. Like I said before, I just try to keep doing the things I been doing that I've had some success with.



I don't know how it worked out, but somehow it did.

Q. When you look back on the week, is that 18-footer you made against Mike going to stick out as one of the greatest moments your golf career?

GENE ELLIOTT: That I will not forget, and that along with the second shot on the first playoff hole to a foot. That together. I am remembering those together. Because I thought Mike had me, and when we went to extra holes I went, Wow, new life.

To hit it a foot, you know, kind of put the heat on him right there.

Q. Have you heard from Mike?

GENE ELLIOTT: Actually he emailed me last night. He brought tears to my eyes. He said the night before his championship match in Birmingham, somebody sent him the miracle Herb Brooks speech to the USA Team in 1980 Olympic hockey.

Q. Against Finland, no against Russia.

GENE ELLIOTT: Against Russia.

Q. Okay.

GENE ELLIOTT: And he said this inspired him. I've seen the movie a couple times and heard the speech a couple times. But I emailed him back, I said, Mike, just you sending this brings tears to my eyes. It was very kind of him and he's a true friend.

Q. Well you're going to be -- you got 10 more years in the Senior Amateur. Get two U.S. Amateur spots the next two years.

GENE ELLIOTT: I didn't even think of that.

Q. You get exemption out of local qualifying for the U.S. Open next year. In the next two mid-ams, so a lot of things coming.

GENE ELLIOTT: I didn't even think about the Amateur. I got to play against the kids? Oh, God. (Laughter.) Oh, jeez.

Q. Have you played Ridgewood? That's where the Am is next year?

GENE ELLIOTT: No, I haven't. All right. We'll be there.

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