

# U.S. Amateur Championship

Thursday, August 18, 2022

Paramus, New Jersey, USA

The Ridgewood Country Club

## Derek Hitchner

### Quick Quotes

**Q. First of all, let's talk about making the quarterfinals. Your first three times in the U.S. Amateur you didn't make match play, and now you're going to the quarterfinals. How does that feel?**

DEREK HITCHNER: It feels awesome. I guess it's what I've worked for for a long time, and so it just feels that much better knowing that I've been in this position, in the tournament three times but not able to progress to this round, so it feels pretty incredible.

**Q. Also, you had to come out of that playoff to get to this point, and that doesn't happen all the time for players. What's that say about you?**

DEREK HITCHNER: Yeah, I don't know. With how many players there are and with how kind of bunched the scoring was, I think it's maybe reasonable to expect that someone would emerge from the playoff and kind of keep playing well just because to get into that position you had to play pretty well. I just tried to look at it that way and just have confidence in what I was doing and try to carry that forward.

**Q. The second match today you kind of took control early, and then he came back a little bit and then you kind of edged away a little bit. Tell me about the overall match.**

DEREK HITCHNER: Yeah, Justin is a really solid player. He made it incredibly tough for kind of the middle part of the round just because he was playing really steady golf. I basically felt like I had to make birdies to win any holes, and luckily enough I was able to do that on a couple of them. But yeah, it was a tough match. It was hard fought.

**Q. How did you birdie the 15th hole to go 3-up?**

DEREK HITCHNER: Yeah, just hit a pretty solid 8-iron to a little below the hole, and I just had a very straightforward putt, so just had to trust that and put a good stroke on it.



**Q. How far was it?**

DEREK HITCHNER: Probably four to five feet, somewhere in that range.

**Q. Kind of interesting that you got the birdie there, and that was also your playoff hole to get into match play.**

DEREK HITCHNER: Yeah, yeah. That hole scares me a little bit just because of that moment and that experience. But yeah, it's a pretty comfortable shot, it's just really trusting that, not letting the circumstance overrun me.

**Q. What did you do well overall today in both matches?**

DEREK HITCHNER: Yeah, I felt like I didn't really give a ton of holes. It's almost impossible not to let a few holes slip out here just with how demanding the course is, but I felt like for the most part I limited the bogeys and made a few birdies here and there. Overall it was just solid enough to where my opponent would have to play pretty well, and luckily enough I was able to do that, too.

**Q. As you were approaching the turn, what was your mindset and what were the conversations like?**

DEREK HITCHNER: Yeah, definitely got a little tense just because, like you said, I got off to a pretty good start, but then he started playing really well towards the middle part of the round and I had to kind of match that.

Also, we were maybe a little bit behind pace-of-play wise, so it felt like during that middle stretch we had to maybe rush a little bit. Yeah, I guess I just hit a couple sloppy shots but just really tried to trust that I was able to overcome that, and thankfully I was able to.

**Q. What did you take from last year coming back?**

DEREK HITCHNER: Do you mean last year playing in this tournament? Yeah, every time you get an experience on this kind of stage, I think it adds very valuable experience just in the sense that you kind of know how to handle the nerves and know what the moment demands of you. I feel like I've just been able to really absorb all that and just try to learn from it the best I can.



I'm grateful for the failures just because I feel like I've learned a lot from those.

**Q. What exactly does it mean to be a quarterfinalist? You've had so many long days, I imagine the stamina has been enormous.**

DEREK HITCHNER: Yeah, it's definitely draining, but I would say I'm just fueled by how cool this moment is and this tournament. Yeah, it means the world to me. Like I said earlier, I just have kind of wanted to be in this position. After a lot of times of coming up short, it just means the world to me that I've been able to get to this point.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

