

# U.S. Amateur Championship

Saturday, August 17, 2024

Chaska, Minnesota, USA

Hazeltine National Golf Club

## Noah Kent

### Quick Quotes

**Q. You've got quite a rooting section out there. Do you know any of these people, or are they just fans from Iowa?**

NOAH KENT: So all the guys in the yellow Caitlin Clark shirts, so a couple uncles, and the rest of them are buddies that I know really well from Iowa.

**Q. So they're friends, not relatives?**

NOAH KENT: Three of them are my uncles and stuff.

**Q. Did they just drive up here for it?**

NOAH KENT: They flew up.

**Q. From Iowa City?**

NOAH KENT: Yes.

**Q. A struggle at the start for both of you today. The first birdie wasn't until the 9th hole, and then you both started to make some shots. Was it nerves at the outset or get into it?**

NOAH KENT: I guess trying to get into it. You're in the semifinal of the U.S. Am. It's going to linger in the back of your head what really can happen if you make it to the championship match.

I did a good job of taking advantage of the holes he kind of messed up on early. I messed up too, but I felt like I was a little bit more steady in the beginning, which helped.

**Q. The 15th hole, par-5, seemed like a big one because he makes a nice putt. It was almost like yesterday on that 1st hole with Ethan. You topped him and stayed ahead of the match. How big was that?**

NOAH KENT: He made it. I wasn't really surprised. You've kind of got to expect all the players to pull off all the



shots.

I don't know what it is with me, I love whenever the pressure gets really high. I've been feeling it the whole week. I hit it. It was just like another out-of-body experience to see it go in the hole, and kind of momentum stayed with me.

**Q. Where does that come from? It all seems like that's something you kind of just have. You can't teach that.**

NOAH KENT: I feel like I was just born with it. I played hockey. I'm a really competitive person. Whether that's here or playing a fun game with friends, I kind of bring the same intensity and energy the whole entire day.

**Q. Do you find some sort of comfort in a situation like that? You've done it all week. When someone's hit a big birdie putt, you've responded every time.**

NOAH KENT: It's like a game on moment. You can do it on top of me, I'll show you what I've got too.

**Q. Talk about what comes with today. You've got an exemption into the U.S. Open, likely invitation to the Masters. How do you put that into words?**

NOAH KENT: I started crying before the interview. It means the world. I've had a couple of buddies play in majors, and to see my name and be in Augusta in April and be at Oakmont, you can't really even put it into words.

**Q. You said you had some buddies who played in the majors. Who are they?**

NOAH KENT: Tommy Morrison played in the Open this year, and then I know Aaron Jarvis, who won the Latin American Championship, so yeah.

**Q. You kept the pedal down on the back nine with your club selections. Was that part of your strategy going in or a game-time decision to stay aggressive?**

NOAH KENT: You can't really let him have it. Hit a good drive on 11, made birdie. Hit another good shot on 12, 13, 14, I was 2-up, but I wanted to keep the pedal down, so I ripped it. It wasn't that good and went in the hole.



Birdied 15. 16 has been my hole all week. It just fits my eye. I like to cut it.

**Q. He wins 17. He's had some comebacks this week. I don't know if you were probably aware of that. You hadn't played 18 since stroke play. How does your mind get you ready to play that hole knowing he's had some success coming back?**

NOAH KENT: I saw him on -- he hit his tee ball in the left trap, and that kind of gave me a little bit of comfort, and I stepped up there and hit a really good ball. I was kind of waiting for him to hit his shot, and he hit the lip and went left.

I had really good numbers, and I knocked down 7-iron. Went right at the flag, and I'm like, all right, that was really good.

**Q. How much did you have?**

NOAH KENT: 180.

**Q. How much emotion was it for you once it landed and you heard the crowd? That pretty much wrapped it up.**

NOAH KENT: I knew it was good, but I knew wasn't over yet. I still had a chip for par. Granted it would have taken two putts. But you've got to be in it mentally until it was good.

**Q. Can you describe the emotions? You came in this week 561. I know it's just a number, but you're kind of the outlier against of all these guys who are highly ranked, and then you're in the final. Can you put that in words?**

NOAH KENT: There's not really words for it. It's match play. It's a one-day match, 18 holes. Tomorrow is a little bit more of a marathon, 36 holes.

You can't really think about it too deeply. You don't want to put too much pressure on yourself because that's when you play badly. You kind of got to free ball the whole golf course.

**Q. Caitlin who? Is there a new sensation in town?**

NOAH KENT: Might be. Got a couple of records to break first, though.

**Q. You golf down in Florida at Calusa Pines?**

NOAH KENT: Yeah, Calusa and Naples National.

**Q. Calusa's got tough iron play out there. Has it made you a better ball striker, you think?**

NOAH KENT: For sure, and growing up out there, short game is so hard around there. Even out here the rough is completely different. I'm almost better whenever the shot gets harder. Whenever it's really hard, I feel like I have really soft hands.

I showed it yesterday on 11. I just feel like I can pull off any single golf shot.

**Q. Do you complain to Dana it's so tough out there, or do you thank them?**

NOAH KENT: Whenever you play really good, you're like, oh, I played really good. When it's bad, you're like why did you do it that way?

**Q. You've traveled all over the world basically, Australia, gone to the UK this year. How much are all those experiences now starting to bubble up and say, hey, I've done all this stuff, and now it's kind of prepared me for this week?**

NOAH KENT: I mean, yeah. The British Am, it's the same concept. It's the same, but the conditions are completely different. It was just a really good experience to finally get like a tournament like that. Kind of like gets me ready for here.

Australia is really cool. It's kind of like experiencing different conditions that like happen out there, and you come here. It's just -- I'm very blessed to be where I am today.

**Q. When you think back to the Noah Kent who broke his wrist and missed 11 weeks to the Noah Kent who's a U.S. Amateur finalist, what's been the biggest change in the last 12 months that have allowed you to be in this position?**

NOAH KENT: It's all up here in my heart. I have way more competitiveness. I feel like I have a lot more belief in myself, and I have a lot more drive to want to get where I want to go.

So I just feel like I want it a lot more than I used to.

**Q. Why? What changed?**

NOAH KENT: You're on the sideline from the game you love for 11 weeks, and you see everybody out there hitting golf shots, and you're just sitting on the couch. You can't

even do anything. You get out there, and you're just like I want to do it.

**Q. You didn't get a chance to play the Junior last year. That would have been your first USGA event. Now you've got a little redemption this week?**

NOAH KENT: I talked about it with my friends last year. One of my friends qualified for the one out at Bandon. He's like, if you get in match play, nobody wants to play against you. They're texting me, nobody wants you in match play.

**Q. Who's the buddy who played in Bandon?**

NOAH KENT: Oliver Marshall. He goes to Hinsdale. It's a D-II school in Michigan.

**Q. Talk about your mindset, kind of gleaning some confidence from perhaps beating a certain two-time Big Ten Player of the Year in an inter-squad match last fall?**

NOAH KENT: It was fun. I've seen Jackson before. I knew he played good in Big Tens. I know he's a good player, but at the end of the day, it's a one-day match. It's out for the taking if you want it bad enough, you're going to take it.

I really wanted it, and my caddie reminded me, how bad do you want it?

**Q. I'm actually referring to your teammate Mac last fall. You waxed him pretty good and told Tyler that was the kind of version of yourself you wanted to be.**

NOAH KENT: Yeah, we did an upperclassmen versus lower classmen match, and I got him. Mac, being the big dog on campus is like, all right, I want your spot.

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