

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Sunday, September 20, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

John Pak

Flash Interview



Q. 2020 U.S. Open Championship low amateur; how does that kind of validate your game, the only amateur to make the cut? What perspective does that put to where you are in your golf career?

JOHN PAK: You know, it puts a lot of things into perspective. I've never played in anything like this, a golf course this hard, a competition this tough. It just proves that all this hard work that I've done is finally paying off, and it shows that my game is at a point where I can try and compete against the best players in the world.

Q. You are joining a list of illustrious men before you who have won low amateur before at this championship. You're going to be up there on the green today during the trophy presentation. What does that mean to you?

JOHN PAK: That means so much to me. Whoever wins it, they're, I guess, the best player in the world right now. The U.S. Open is the bigger championship in golf, and just to be standing with them there and to be behind some of the other low Ams that have done this previously, that's incredible, and it's a great feeling.

Q. There was a little surprise for you outside of scoring. Can you talk us through that?

JOHN PAK: Oh, yeah. That was nice. I've actually been keeping up with them, been talking to them. I know two of them are playing a tournament right now. They're like my second family. Florida State was one of the best decisions of my life. I love it there, love my teammates, and that was nice to see them there.

Q. Anything special happen this week that stands out? I know the surprise after 18 today was nice, but was there anything else that stood out for you this week?

JOHN PAK: My parents being able to come out today. I had it going pretty good there for a while, so they got to see me play some good golf at some of the toughest

conditions I've ever played, so that was really special to me. They've been my biggest supporters my whole life. For them to get out there and watch it, I felt that was really special.

Q. Was there anything during the week, practice rounds you played with anybody that you wanted to play with, maybe a mentor or an idol?

JOHN PAK: Yeah, so I played with Joaquin Niemann on Monday and we were good friends in junior golf. I always said hi. Seeing him win on the PGA TOUR, that's just such a cool experience, talking to him, seeing what life is like on the PGA TOUR. So that was a lot of fun getting to catch up with him.

Q. What's next for you? Obviously with the COVID, I guess ACC golf is pretty much canceled for the fall. What are you looking forward to, not only the fall but maybe next spring with the Walker Cup being in May in Florida?

JOHN PAK: Yeah, so I'm really looking forward to the spring because we start early, as early as January, I believe, and we've got a really good team. I feel like we have a good shot at winning the national championship this year, so that's something I'm really looking forward to.

Obviously the Walker Cup, I played in it last year, and that was one of the greatest experiences of my life behind this, playing for your country, representing them. That's such a cool feeling. You get a lot of nerves, and to hopefully win it again this year, I've always -- I want to be part of that again.

Q. You've seen the course now, you've played it, the conditions out there today. What's it going to take for these guys at the top, and what are fans at home in for today?

JOHN PAK: The wind is really picking up right now so I got lucky to be off the first group or second group and not have to play in that gust as much. I kind of saw it on the last four holes, and bogeyed the last four coming in, and the wind picked up, the greens firmed up. Yeah, I think people at home are going to be really excited to see Bryson and Matt

dual it out with these tough conditions.

Q. Matt Wolff is obviously about your age; can you imagine shooting a 65 out here and winning the U.S. Open, if he does win, and what's been your personal experience playing with him or against him?

JOHN PAK: Yeah, so I actually played a lot of junior golf with him, and he was -- he's a super nice kid and has a fantastic game. He hits the ball a mile. To see him being that successful, it's very exciting because it just kind of shows me that I have a chance because I competed against him.

I know it must be a great feeling to be him, to be leading the U.S. Open. Yeah, I'm really happy for him.

Q. How old are you?

JOHN PAK: I'm 21, as well.

Q. What was your reaction when you first saw that swing in it's obviously a pretty different trigger move and swing path.

JOHN PAK: Obviously very different, but man, he hits the ball just as good as anyone. I've seen Tiger hit the ball a few times, and man, he really strikes it. It doesn't matter how you swing it, as long as you get the ball in the hole, and that's all you really need to do, and he's been doing that really well.

Q. Did you beat him in junior golf?

JOHN PAK: You know, we were kind of there neck-and-neck most of the time, and then college he kind of -- he started playing really well, and I was just slightly behind him. My goal for the next couple years is to catch up to him. He's a very talented player, so I feel like it's a very good goal.

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