

U.S. Open Championship 2026

Saturday, June 20, 2026

Southampton, New York, USA

Shinnecock Hills Golf Club

Sahith Theegala

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Sahith Theegala, even par-70. Pretty U.S. Open looking scorecard there: one birdie, one bogey, a bunch of pars. Can just talk us through the grind today?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, it was a grind. Man, I hit it really, really well today. I don't even know. I might have missed one or two fairways, honestly, and only one or two greens. Hit it kind of right where I was looking almost all day. Just middle of the green, a lot of putts from 12 to 30 feet that just could not buy one. Couldn't get one to fall.

The only two putts I made were for bogey and for par, funny enough, and then my birdie on the last was a tap-in. Yeah, it was a real, real test of patience because it's so easy to get frustrated with how well I hit it and not having anything to show for it kind of.

But yeah, very happy with how today went. It's as cliché as it gets, but this was one of the biggest tests of patience I've ever had in a single round in my life.

Q. What were your expectations coming into this week? I know you dealt with some injuries last year. You found a little bit of form earlier this year. What were the honest expectations?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, honestly I was just hoping I would get into the tournament. Honestly bummed I missed a couple majors last year with injury and started this year with pretty poor status, honestly. I wasn't in any of the elevateds or majors.

The goal was just to get here. I love U.S. Opens. I don't know if they necessarily fit my game, but I just love really, really hard golf courses.

So I knew if I just got in the field and played my game -- I played a lot of golf this year, but it's nice to get into a major and kind of -- the mindset shifts a little bit. The energy is a little bit different.

I think I've played -- I might have played the most rounds on TOUR so far this year, but it was nice. This is kind of a change of pace. I felt the same way at the PGA.

Yeah, I really didn't have too much expectations, other than to just really enjoy the week and embrace the challenge, and it's worked out really well so far.

Q. You're sitting T2 right now. You're going to be a few strokes back probably of Wyndham. What's the mindset knowing that you're going to have to go chase tomorrow on a golf course this tough?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I think the first, I don't know, 9 to 12 holes, I can't even worry about what Wyndham is doing it. It just requires so much mental energy to play each and every hole out there.

So I think just focus on the same things I've been doing the last three days. Just plot your way around, try to hit it in the right spots, and hope the putts topple in.

The goal is to put yourself in position come back nine on Sunday, and then that's when you can start leaderboard watching and kind of see what the lead is at.

Yeah, it's really hard to push at a golf course this difficult, but the beauty of this place is you can -- it does allow you to push. There's a lot of danger involved in pushing it a little bit, but you do have opportunities to kind of make a push at the end there.

So hopefully just within reach once I get to that back nine and then kind of go from there. But, yeah, I think just sticking to the same game plan that I've had the first three days.

Q. With the conditions being a little bit drier today, how drastic would you say the course changed from today versus the first two days, and what can you expect tomorrow in terms of the conditioning of the course?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, it was awesome today. I think this was probably how the viewers and all golf fans want to see the course play. It still wasn't crazy firm out there. It was still soft enough to where pins are accessible,



and you weren't worried about one-hopping too many balls over the green.

But it put a lot more emphasis on the strike of your approach shot. I think that's something that's pretty underrated. The fairways are pretty dry now, and the lies are a lot thinner, so you catch some of these iron shots a groove or two low on the face. They come out a little bit lower with a little bit less spin, so that first bounce gets really big. It got progressively firmer as the round went on.

The first five, six, seven greens were pretty soft still, and then I don't know what happened, but it just got a lot firmer.

But, again, I think they could go even firmer tomorrow. It wouldn't be an issue. Yeah, made the course play definitely a lot tougher, I think.

In some ways, it was nice to not worry about the spin, so it made hitting to the middle of the greens a lot easier, I thought, because the into-the-wind wedge shots you have, you have quite a few of those out here, I wasn't worried about ripping it off the false edges. It was more like, okay, can I put enough spin to not get it going down the other side of the green?

So in a weird way, it made it a little easier on those shots, but yeah, I can't wait to see what the conditions are going to be like tomorrow. Honestly I hope they just bake this place out, especially with the wind forecast tomorrow is not very high. I'm excited to see how it goes.

Q. You talked about embracing the challenge, and you had the birdie on the 18th. Does that strong finish for you help you to bring momentum into tomorrow's final 18?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, it was such a test of patience today. I literally holed nothing, and then on 17 I hit a really poor first putt from the back of the green and had a 9-footer again. I just missed all of those today.

To hole that one was so, so big. I was fist-pumping internally. I don't know if I did anything externally. Gave me a lot of momentum.

With the wind direction today on 18, the first two days I played it into the wind. Today was downwind. We knew it was a birdie hole, especially with that pin. It's kind of the most benign pin on that green.

So hit probably my best two shots of the day, and it was really nice not having to putt on the last hole. It was a very stress-free birdie to have a kick-in there. It was very rewarding because I really played awesome today, and it's

nice to at least have one birdie to show for it.

Q. With a late tee time tomorrow, what's the routine looking like tonight and going into tomorrow while you wait around for your tee time?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I don't know if I've ever had a tee time this late in my life in the U.S. I had 3:01 p.m., and there was five, six groups behind me today. So it was pretty wild getting ready for today. I just tried to sleep in as much as I can. It is nice having a late tee time today for tomorrow.

By the time I get -- I'm going to go practice a little bit. By the time I get physio, order dinner, kind of wind down, it's already 10:00, 10:30. I'll make an effort to try and stay up until midnight, 12:30, so I can get up around 9:00. That's kind of the sweet spot for these afternoon tee times, I feel like.

Once I get up, it just moves really fast in these afternoon tee times, especially when you're in contention. It's like breakfast, coffee, get in the gym. All of a sudden it's two hours before your tee time.

I think I'm a little weird. I'm pretty good at controlling when I can sleep. I can kind of sleep whenever and wake up whenever. Yeah, nothing too different.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.