

# U.S. Senior Open Championship

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Newport, Rhode Island, USA  
Newport Country Club

## Frank Bensele Hagen Bensele Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Please welcome Frank Bensele to the interview room here at the 44th U.S. Senior Open at Newport Country Club. Frank, you've probably accomplished one of golf's most rare feats earlier today, back-to-back holes-in-one. Can you take us through what was going through your mind after acing 4 and then doing it again on the 5th hole?

FRANK BENSEL: Well, I mean, first of all, I've played a lot of golf in my life, and just to see a hole-in-one in a tournament is pretty rare. For me to have that, it was great. I'm out here trying to play well and make the cut, and at the time, it was pretty important for me to do that.

So the first one was great, so that got me under par for the day. And then the second one, I just couldn't believe it. To even think that that could happen was amazing.

Hit the ball kind of in the right place, and then it just started rolling. I was kidding around, and I was like, okay, now let's go for another one, and it happened to go in. Everybody just couldn't believe it. We all went nuts.

I've got a lot of family and friends here and they were all going crazy, and the guys I played with, same thing, they couldn't believe it. It was amazing.

**Q. When you were playing those holes over the practice rounds and yesterday in the first round, did it ever cross your mind that a hole-in-one was possible, seeing some of those pin locations on either of the holes?**

FRANK BENSEL: Not really. The fifth hole, everything just seems to kind of go all the way down the left side, so you needed to have the right distance and then kind of let it die and roll in.

Didn't really think about a hole-in-one unless -- obviously a



lot of luck involved. But no, the answer is no.

**Q. How many holes-in-one is that for you now?**

FRANK BENSEL: 13 and 14.

**Q. All of them in competition or some of them just fun?**

FRANK BENSEL: No, a few in competition, though. Probably fifth one, I think, in competition, fifth or sixth.

**Q. I understand your son asked you about a 7-iron on hole 4 and you talked about it and knocked down 6.**

FRANK BENSEL: Yeah, so on 4, you don't want to be short. I was okay with being a little past the pin. I hit it just hit. It landed on the front of the green and went in.

**Q. You saw it go in?**

FRANK BENSEL: No, we didn't. My nephew, he saw it go in. I think he did at least. He was up by the green. We got the applause, the reaction from the guys who were up by the green.

**Q. Did you see the one go in at 5?**

FRANK BENSEL: 5 yeah, for sure. We saw that. It was rolling the whole time.

**Q. You're supposed to buy everyone a round of drinks. Do you now have to buy everyone two rounds of drinks?**

FRANK BENSEL: No, I think they're all complementary in the players' lounge, thankfully.

**Q. Would you say this is your career highlight?**

FRANK BENSEL: Oh, anytime you play in a major tournament, it's great. This will be remembered obviously forever and ever. This could be the highlight.

**Q. Before this?**

FRANK BENSEL: I think probably playing in the Senior PGA and making the cut a few years back. Had a great



second day, so that's kind of what I thought was going to happen. First round not great, and then second, good round.

So I had a 67 at Southern Hills a couple years ago, so that was kind of exciting. But after these two holes-in-one, I just didn't even know -- it was like an out of body experience. I was more excited than I wanted to be.

**Q. You had some trouble the rest of the round. Do you think you were too geeked up?**

FRANK BENSEL: Maybe at first but not really. My game is a little bit off. It was just a little bit more of the same, and then didn't do anything great except for kind of those shots today. I hit those both really well.

I was hoping that I could have added a lot more good scoring after that to have made the cut, but that didn't happen.

Those two holes are amazing.

**Q. You're a teaching pro up at Century and down in Florida. What do you think the lessons are going to be like now?**

FRANK BENSEL: Oh, yeah, everybody is going to want a lesson now, for sure, on a 6-iron.

**Q. You teach at Century?**

FRANK BENSEL: At Century and Mirasol in Palm Beach Gardens.

**Q. Winter/summer thing?**

FRANK BENSEL: Exactly.

**Q. You grew up in the New York area?**

FRANK BENSEL: In New York, in the met area, for sure.

**Q. Did you play collegiately in the area, too?**

FRANK BENSEL: No, I went to Jacksonville for a year and then University of Maryland and didn't play at Maryland but did go to school there for a few years. Came up to the met area and was there back and forth between there and Florida.

**Q. You say the met area --**

FRANK BENSEL: The met section, that's White Plains, New York. Century is in Purchase, New York.

**Q. Can you talk about your son as a caddie and also why you chose to name him Hagen?**

FRANK BENSEL: He's a great caddie. He loves golf, and we love spending time together. He's a great reader of greens, and his eyes are a lot better than mine right now. I've been able to trust him a lot on the reads.

Whereas a few years ago I wouldn't necessarily listen because I thought maybe I'd read them better, but he can definitely read the putts. He knows my game really well. He's been caddying for me for a while. It's great to just experience things like this with him because he loves being here and we love spending time together.

**Q. And why you chose to name him Hagen?**

FRANK BENSEL: Hagen, well, my wife, she's the daughter of a golf pro. Tony Amaral was the pro at Woodbridge Country Club, and he grew up around here, in Barrington, Rhode Island.

We both have a lot of golf history in our family, and we wanted a unique name. Hagen was from Walter Hagen, and we just thought it was a cool name, and it was kind of significant to us since we had a lot of family history in golf.

**Q. Hagen, if you could step to the mic, what do you know about Walter Hagen?**

HAGEN BENSEL: I don't know much. I don't pay attention to my parents that much, as much as I should (laughter.)

But I know that he was a great golfer, one of the best to ever do it. I know he was like a gambler or something.

**Q. But he doesn't gamble --**

HAGEN BENSEL: Not much.

**Q. What's your golf game like?**

HAGEN BENSEL: It's getting better. I try to practice as much as I can. I usually caddie at Century where he works and then just go play in the afternoon with him, like nine holes or something, practice. But always trying to get better.

**Q. Tell us your age, grade and high school I believe you're in.**

HAGEN BENSEL: I'm 14. I'm going into sophomore year in high school at Cardinal Newman in West Palm.

**Q. How much did you help your dad on club selection on both those holes today?**

HAGEN BENSEL: The first one, as he mentioned, I did tell him to hit a 7-iron. I thought it was a full 7-iron. But obviously it wasn't. I mean, he knows more than me on that part.

But I think I got him on the greens?

**Q. So it was a healthy debate on the club selection?**

HAGEN BENSEL: Yeah, yeah, throughout the round.

**Q. Frank, what's it like to do this with Hagen with you?**

FRANK BENSEL: It's great. Yeah, it's the best. We love spending time together, and we both love golf a lot. He's a great caddie. It's the best.

**Q. You mentioned a nephew. Who else is here for you this week?**

FRANK BENSEL: My sister-in-law, my sister and her husband, some good friends from out of town. Just a lot of other relatives that are on my wife's family's side.

**Q. I believe you played the '07 Open at Oakmont. You've played three PGAs, I believe.**

FRANK BENSEL: Three PGAs, yeah.

**Q. What other senior majors have you played in?**

FRANK BENSEL: At Oak Hill and Southern Hills, and would have played in the COVID year at Benton Harbor. So this is my seventh major.

**Q. How many Senior Opens?**

FRANK BENSEL: First one. Yeah, been close, and then just so happened I haven't made it until now.

**Q. You mentioned all your family that's here. What does the night look like, and what are you going to --**

FRANK BENSEL: Really have no idea. We'll be here, and we'll see who's going to still be around. But we're going to just enjoy it.

The original plan was to get some sleep and get ready for tomorrow, but won't need to do that. We're going to have a good time and kind of lay back.

He wants to play golf somewhere. Anybody know where

he can go play?

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