

# U.S. Amateur Championship

Saturday, August 14, 2021  
Oakmont, Pennsylvania, USA  
Oakmont Country Club

## James Piot

### Quick Quotes

(In progress.)

JAMES PIOT: After 8, you know, I had a little momentum going on 7 going into 8. I had an easy up and down and just left a little short. He got that hole.

So it was at that point just we got to find the fairway and stop the momentum going from my direction to his direction.

Unfortunately he caught a bad break hitting in that ditch, so I just knew once I was in the fairway, get this on the green, you're most likely going to win this hole.

10 he just caught a wedge a little fat and had that three-putt, so that gave me a lot of momentum rolling into 11.

Just as soon as I hit that green I had about a 15-footer, but it was one of those things he walked up to it like this is going in before you even read it. Just dropped it in to the front edge, and from there I just knew, hold on, make some pars, and at this course it's tough to get it back with birdies if someone is parring out every hole.

**Q. At that point he said you kind of knew that he was struggling with the putter and probably birdie weren't coming, but maybe you just knew that he (indiscernible).**

JAMES PIOT: Yeah, definitely felt like he just didn't have his best today and it was -- you know, you always want a good battle in golf. It's fun. It definitely felt like there wasn't as much pressure as previous matches where he seemed like he was a little out of sync with the putter and definitely took some stress off my shoulder.

**Q. Talk about kind of the start. I think for both matches, a little bit of a nervy start. Take me through some shots that you would've liked to have back early on.**



JAMES PIOT: Yeah, I mean, definitely that first tee ball. The past three matches I think I've a lost the first hole. Two of the three I actually had good drives down the left side and they just rolled in those left bunkers. Too aggressive of a line.

And today you get in the moment where you see about a couple hundred people watching you play golf and you know what's on the line, so it was definitely a little -- let the lower body release too fast and swing right into that right bunker and that cost me the hole.

After that No. 2 has been good to me. Won that one, bounced back and got a little momentum rolling, and from there just felt like I settled in. The nerves kind of blew away, so it was nice.

**Q. Did you notice a difference last night, kind of this morning leading up to the tee time that the pressure was almost double or triple because of what is on the line?**

JAMES PIOT: Yeah, definitely. I mean, rolling into last night it was a little different feeling. It wasn't as much nerves but I couldn't really feel my legs after walking so much and all the late nights.

But today, yeah, walking and that, knowing what's on the line, a U.S. Open, you know, I felt like this is the biggest match, you know, just getting into that 36 hole final where anything can happen.

Today you just got to have your best game. So it was definitely a little nerve wracking off that first tee. Like I said, settled right in there.

**Q. Casey told me a story about when you were coming into college where you were (indiscernible) Freshman of the Year. For someone who doesn't have confidence, what is your advice on how to get confidence?**

JAMES PIOT: I think I've always kind of had it internally, but first thing I told him was when he said, What are your goals coming to Michigan State? I said, I want to be an All-American. He at first laughed. He goes, How about we just start off at All-Big Ten or something like that. I said,



No, coach, I want to be an All-American.

So it was definitely something in the back of my head. I've always had high goals, and that's been something that has driven me from day one, just going over the top, and they're paying off now.

**Q. Where does that come from?**

JAMES PIOT: Just something internal growing up. No, my dad has been just always there to support me since day one and he's been a guy, too, that's never really let me settle for just mediocre. Obviously he doesn't push me too hard. It's been the perfect support, my mom and my dad. They have just been there for me since day one.

They don't let me make too many excuses and blame it on anything other than me. They say it's all in the work, so it's been paying off.

**Q. This past college season you had a number of Top 10 finishes. Is there something different about your game since, say, a year ago?**

JAMES PIOT: I would definitely say my iron game has got better, a lot more consistent. I've always been what I feel like a great driver of the golf ball as far as hitting fairways. That's been something out here at Oakmont that carries and it's a great advantage, but my irons have been a lot better where my misses have been smaller and short game, just the putter, has been a lot better to me this year as far as just speed control and hitting good putts and being able to keep momentum and good rounds going.

**Q. Is there something in particular you've been doing to work on that? Extra practice on it or anything?**

JAMES PIOT: Just a lot of strength training. You know, it's more than just hitting the ball far, but being able to repeat a motion. I think a lot of people overlook that as far as if I can't hit a good iron if my body doesn't want me to post up on my right side.

So it's been a big factor working with my guy, Graham, and it's been a big help.

**Q. Outside of 1 and maybe the soft chip on 8, you didn't give many holes away. Is that part of your whole thinking at Oakmont?**

JAMES PIOT: Yeah, definitely. When you hit fairways out here, like I said, the place, with how soft it is, it opens up, and that was a big advantage of driving it straight today.

It felt like the driver was -- I was making good swings, and

when you're making good swings out here you just keep the momentum rolling.

**Q. How did you get started playing golf?**

JAMES PIOT: So my dad, when I was about four I used to go to a driving range and just watch him hit until I was old enough to do it myself. And from there my mom used to take me to the course and watch me play when I was a youngster all the way until they felt like I was old enough to drop me off.

Then there I just had a gang of buddies, 10, 12 of us just go out and play every day.

**Q. Where did you play?**

JAMES PIOT: Fox Hills.

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