

# U.S. Amateur Championship

Wednesday, August 17, 2022

Paramus, New Jersey, USA

The Ridgewood Country Club

## Stewart Hagestad

### Quick Quotes

**Q. I'm just wondering, with the format and the number of players, is the U.S. Amateur the most difficult tournament to win?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: It's always been the one that I've put on the pedestal. It's the first big event I qualified for in junior golf, and if you grow up in the United States, it's the pinnacle of amateur golf. If you're in Great Britain and Ireland maybe it's the British Am, but for us it's the pinnacle of amateur golf.

As far as difficulty to win, you kind of know what it is. Two rounds of stroke play on two really hard golf courses, then just about every one you play is really good.

I don't have like good answers, but it is what it is. Yeah, it's a long week and big event. I don't have anything really insightful for you.

**Q. Today you got off to a good start.**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Yeah, I did.

**Q. And then he came back and tied it by the turn. What happened there?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: I had a close one on 1, but he kind of made a mess and then he gave me another hole on 5 or whatever it was, and then I gave him a couple. It wasn't like you threw up on yourself, but it's a hard golf course, and if you make bogey and the other guy makes par, then it's tough to beat. There's a stretch there in the middle of the golf course that's really challenging, and pars will go a long way.

I mean, we both played solid and we both had a great match, and again, I got off to a hot start on the card, but I knew he had plenty of firepower and I knew he was going to hang around, so I knew we had to kind of keep playing well.



**Q. Eventually you figured out a way on the back. What did you start doing well enough to win?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: I just made a couple putts. I missed a couple that maybe I should have made on the front. I just kind of hung tough. I think I played the back nine from holes 10 to 17 like 3-under, and that's going to be pretty good any way you look at it.

All the old adages, played one shot at a time, played one hole at a time, had a long putt go in. Like I said, I'm just thrilled with the win. He's a really, really -- he's a heck of a player.

**Q. Tell me how you won holes 16 and 17?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Hit a great drive on 16, hit a pretty okay wedge to 20, 25 feet and kind of hit one of those putts that if it doesn't go in it might still be rolling, so I'm really happy it went in. Every putt is a straight one if you hit it hard enough kind of deal.

That dropped, and then we both hit nice drives on 17. He hit this awesome 3-wood, like this tall, towering, really pretty, for lack of a better word, 3-wood from like 285 and hit it over -- I thought it was going to be stiff, 10, 15 feet, and that kind of forced my hand and I was fortunate to hit a good one, as well. Lagged it up there about four or five feet, and that was kind of that.

**Q. Do you consider yourself the old man of this championship? Like you're the only one that's played in 13 of these things.**

STEWART HAGESTAD: You know, from an age perspective, for sure. The kids are all the kids, right? Air quotes, "the kids." They're all really good. You look up and down the range at some of these guys, and you're looking at a group of players that are going to play on -- I guess you have to say whatever Tour they decide to at this stage in the game. I say that with hopefully a degree of humor that everyone can laugh about.

These guys are going to play professional golf and play in some big events for a long, long time. Just to kind of be around them, I think it inspires me to kind of raise my game and to rise to the occasion.



I think that there's definitely some experience from the standpoint of having played in the event and allowing myself to kind of prepare the right way and allowing myself to eliminate a lot maybe the distractions. Obviously when you qualified for your first or second, it's a huge deal, and it still is, but you kind of know what to expect. You know what to prepare for, and you know what it's going to feel like flying in, getting there, going to the golf course.

I think, yes, do I feel like the old guy? Of course, but I'd like to think physically I'm okay and I've got enough reps under my belt that I'm at least competitive with them.

**Q. I remember you telling me how you went up and down the range and talked to folks when you were at your first Masters. Do any of these kids come up to you and ask you about the U.S. Amateur?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: You know, it's funny, in practice rounds, more so. I know a few of them, and if any of them come up, I'm happy to kind of chat with them about it. I'm sure it's happened, and it just hasn't really stuck out in my head because I was kind of focused on what I was doing. But when you're on the putting green or you're around kids, college players, whoever it is, it's just -- as I said, I think we all kind of get here and everyone has got a huge degree of respect for everyone else.

I'll continue to beat that adage, like everyone is really good, and they just kind of allow me to raise to their level of talent.

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