

U.S. Amateur Championship

Friday, August 19, 2022
Paramus, New Jersey, USA
The Ridgewood Country Club

Sam Bennett

Quick Quotes

Q. You're moving on to the semis. What's the initial reaction, and are you looking forward to it?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, I'm excited. Job is not near done yet. I knocked one off the board this morning, but we've got two more to go. Me and Coach got to do a little work on the range. Swing wasn't quite there today. But I was able to put enough balls in the fairway and leave myself in good positions.

The putter has continued to stay hot. I'm feeling confident on the greens. I'm liking where I'm at.

Q. You've had a pretty tough road to get to the semis here. What does that say about your game being able to dispatch all these other great players?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, they're great players, but I'm a better player. No. 3 in the rankings, and I feel like I'm the best player -- I'm the dog in this race. I've been playing the best golf leading up to here. Yesterday I think I was 10-under through 29. Today I didn't quite have it, but I got the job done. I think I got Menante tomorrow. Obviously he's playing good, another tough opponent. I think it's going to be a good match.

Q. We heard you say this type of golf really fits your game. Can you expand on that a little bit?

SAM BENNETT: I mean, fairways and greens. I know it's cliché and everybody says it, but out here it's really important. You can't score from the rough. You've got to put the ball in play, and I didn't do a great job of that today but I hit enough where I was able to get a lead and keep putting some pressure on Stew. It's just your classic northeast championship, USGA style golf where pars are good.

Q. How about playing Stew out there and the crowds? It was a pretty electric atmosphere.



SAM BENNETT: Yeah, for sure. That's why we play. That's why we tee it up. Trying to win golf tournaments, trying to win matches, that's why we do what we do. It's fun. You've got to enjoy it. You've got to embrace it. That's what I try to tell our guys on the team is you've got to want to be there. If you get nervous, so what, that's why we do it. You should enjoy the moment.

I made the cut at the U.S. Open, so I played the weekend there, and there was plenty of more people out there, so this ain't nothing new for me.

Q. What kind of stood out as the moment in this match or maybe a particular shot where you really feel like the momentum shifted?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, for sure. I mean, obviously I kind of hit a bad wedge shot on the par-5. Is it 13? I got lucky and hit the pin, and it came down, and I halved that hole. The next hole Stew had a makeable birdie putt about 15 feet, and I was just inside him about 12 feet, and he missed it low and then I kind of jammed it in there. I think that kind of sealed the deal.

Then the next hole, I don't cut that ball that much but it was 135 and I kind of sliced a wedge in there to a couple week and then Stew topped me. There's never a point where it's over. Closing out a match is hard even if you're dormie, just trying that hole or do whatever, it's tough to do, especially on a stage like this.

Q. You were pretty animated after that putt on 14; is that just all the emotions of the week?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, it's a long week. It's a physical battle as well as a mental battle. I played other sports growing up, basketball, tennis. I was a pretty stud athlete, not going to lie. I think that brings out the competitiveness in me. I like to win. I think I like to win a little bit more than others do.

Q. You're playing Dylan; have you played with him at all?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, I've played with him.

Q. Do you know how fast he plays?



SAM BENNETT: Yeah, he plays fast.

Q. What's the game plan tomorrow to slow him down a little bit?

SAM BENNETT: I mean, yeah, I can slow him down but he's going to walk ahead and kind of do what he wants. I might slow down. I think I'm a pretty slow player, but I don't know, we'll see. Yeah, I could maybe slow him down. I don't know, it's not going to matter that much.

Q. He's also a pretty confident player --

SAM BENNETT: Oh, for sure. We have similar games, and he can putt. He rolls the rock really good. We definitely have similar games. Should be a good one.

Our side, me and Stew were talking about someone from our side needs to win because our side of the bracket has had a pretty tough draw, not just me, some other people.

Q. Remind me of the collarbone thing. That was 2020?

SAM BENNETT: That was my sophomore year.

Q. You weren't out very long, right?

SAM BENNETT: Just two tournaments, the last two tournaments of the fall.

Q. You got hurt playing IM football, but what was the play?

SAM BENNETT: I was running a fade. It was a little play action. I was on the outside and I was just running as fast as I can and he kind of over through me a little bit, but I laid out. Coach, he doesn't really care if we play the intramurals. He doesn't like it, but we're playing basketball this fall and it's going to be fun. But it's hard for me not to go hard. If I see a ball that I think I can get, I'm going to lay out.

Q. Any other injuries from sports over the years? Sprained ankles or anything like that?

SAM BENNETT: I've broken a few bones when I was younger. I'm tiny, so it can happen pretty easy.

Q. Do you have a highlight from basketball?

SAM BENNETT: A highlight? You're a shooter?

SAM BENNETT: Yeah, I'm a shooter. I had 21 in a quarter one time.

Q. IM or --

SAM BENNETT: No, high school.

Q. What did you play?

SAM BENNETT: I averaged 18 a game. Shooting guard.

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