

U.S. Amateur Championship

Sunday, August 21, 2022
Paramus, New Jersey, USA
The Ridgewood Country Club

Ben Carr

Press Conference

Q. Let's start with being 5-down on the 22nd hole. What are you thinking at that point?

BEN CARR: 22nd hole, was that -- what hole is that? 4? Okay, yeah. I was a little nervous, but I was really just trying to find something that got me to the fairway. I knew I had been putting pretty well, so if I just was able to get the ball on or around the greens, I felt like I had a pretty good chance to get myself back in the match, and I was able to do that on 5. Oh, man, 5 and 6.

Q. Lightning in a bottle, those two holes.

BEN CARR: I'll never forget that. I was in a really bad place mentally before No. 5, and just hearing everybody pulling for me, it just gives you so much confidence. It's a feeling you can't really duplicate. Nothing prepares you for it.

But once you feel it, it's just unbelievable.

Q. What did you see in that -- I marked it off, 66-foot putt from you putted from the front of the fringe and up that hill.

BEN CARR: So the putt on 5, I actually had a longer version of that putt this morning and I ran it by like five feet but I hit a really good putt. I figured it was a similar line. I just narrowed my stance a little, put the ball a little back and just swung the putter. To see that go in, I had a really good feeling that was just going to get me back in the match. That put me at 4-down. I wasn't quite in it yet. But I just really thought that was going to get me back in the match, and it definitely did.

Q. And then 6, you chip in for 62 feet. The crowd was electric. You had to feel that charge.

BEN CARR: Yeah, that was unbelievable. Usually I would putt something like that, especially after 5. But it was sitting pretty good, and I hit it a little thin but it wasn't bad,



and it rolled in over the front edge with good speed. At that point I knew I was back in the match.

Q. 10, he got in a little trouble in that bunker, a bad stance, and you won that hole. But 11, then he had a chance to get even closer. Tell me about that birdie putt that you just missed.

BEN CARR: Yeah, I think me and Will had the putt on 11 read right. We had it read left lip. Sometimes the putter head just passes my hands. It's been something I've been working on for a while now. I think that was just one of those. I was okay with it. But he hit a great shot in there, too. I thought after my shot into 11 that I would have a good chance to win that hole, and he had a great 3, as well.

Q. 12, you put the pressure on him again with a great tee shot, but he came up with something almost as good.

BEN CARR: Yeah, he hit a great wedge in there. I could tell by the claps up by the green, he was in there six, seven, eight feet. My ball was sitting kind of weird and I thought I trapped it pretty good with a 60, but it was so low I had a feeling if it flew halfway on top, it was probably just going to skip over, and it did.

I hit a pretty good chip, and it's just another one of those putts, like same thing on 11, it started a little left of where I wanted it to, and that's one I'm going to think about for a long time, that and 13.

Q. You worked on it, though, you got it down to two, and then on 17, talk about getting up-and-down from that bunker.

BEN CARR: 17, yeah, I had been in that bunker in the morning. I was on the up slope in the morning. I hit 56 because there was a little more sand. This afternoon there was a little less sand so I took 60. When I hit it, I thought the match was over when I hit it. I thought it was going to roll back into the rough and I was just going to have a really tough chip. To have it stay up there felt like a gift.

I thought I had a pretty good read on it, and it was the best putt I've hit all week. Just poured in dead center. Stuff like that, just putts like that is going to allow me to just sleep a



little better tonight.

Q. And then 18, you got into the rough, it was a tough situation. Tell me what you saw there.

BEN CARR: Yeah, being 1-down with one to play on 18, out here you've got to hit the fairway. It's just something you've got to do. If you miss it, good chance your opponent is going to hit it and probably put it on the green and then you're forced to make birdie to win the hole. I just didn't put the pressure on him off the tee.

I mean, I was still in an okay spot, so more power to him for just lacing a five-yard fade down there. I could watch him hit that shot all day. He just clears his hips and goes after it and it just goes exactly where he's looking.

I still thought I was going to be able to run one up on the green and be able to get a look, but I had a tough lie in the rough. I shouldn't have hit it there. You're going to get bad lies in the rough out here. I hit an okay chip, it just didn't have the chance to go in.

Q. Talk about your putting. You seemed to have total control of the speed of the greens. This morning you make a 55-footer early, then you made an 18-footer to tie it. It seemed like with your putter you were always going to be there today.

BEN CARR: Yeah, definitely. My putter has been something that's really let me down in the past. I wasn't a very good putter coming into college. Really struggled the fall of my freshman year, and my coach, Coach Collins, had me going cross-handed. That allowed me to keep my hands ahead of the ball a little longer, ahead of the putter head a little longer.

Ever since then I've just been getting slowly better with the putter. I didn't putt it well in stroke play at all. I missed a handful of gimmes. Just every match this week, I started to putt a little better.

I had the putter working today for sure. I just wish I could have two or three putts back.

Q. You gave him your best; what did he do well to survive and win this today?

BEN CARR: He just stayed so poised. I think that's the best way to describe Sam. He's a very confident player. He'll tell you. I like that. I'm close to the same way. When I'm playing well, I like to tell somebody I'm playing well because it just gives you even more confidence.

He's unbelievable.

Some of the shots he hit in the morning, just like, how am I going to beat this guy? He just can't miss a golf shot. And he was rolling in putts and he had a good short game.

But I mean, I started to climb back into the match the second 18, and he didn't play bad. I was playing solid and was able to get a couple holes off of him. But even when it looked like we might eventually go into extra holes, he just looked so calm. I mean, I don't think either of us were honestly too nervous all day. This is the calmest I've been all week, honestly. At this point, after yesterday at least, I think you're kind of used to the crowd here.

But he's a stud.

Q. There's a lot of benefits to getting to this final and one of them is that you get to go to the U.S. Open next year. What's that mean to you?

BEN CARR: It means a lot. It's pretty damn cool. I've never played in a professional event. I don't know if -- whatever this allows me to get into will be my first professional start. To have that be likely, it's just really cool.

I didn't think this was possible. I mean, three or four weeks ago after the Western Am, I came home and sat with my mom and brother and just total meltdown. I just didn't think I was good enough to do something like this. I just remember saying, I can't compete with these guys. Just in that moment I didn't believe it.

Slowly this week, I learned that I can. It just gives me so much confidence. Yeah, it's going to help me a lot moving forward.

Q. I have to ask you this question. Having gone through this whole week, what do you think your father would have said to you, having watched you play this week?

BEN CARR: I think he just would have been really proud of the way I handled myself. He was always -- that was always much more important to him than the outcome of any sporting event was just the way I carried myself and spoke about my competitors and people who support me and just stay humble. That was the biggest thing I learned from him.

Yeah, I just think he'd be really proud, and he would tell me and just give me a big hug.

Q. The support you got today, I'm sure you heard it every time you hit a putt.



BEN CARR: Yeah, I don't know, this is a really special place, a special golf tournament. To have so many friends and family here from Columbus and Statesboro, Virginia, I could go on and on about where they came from. It's just crazy. It's crazy. To have so many locals and members and just whoever just kind of latch on and -- oh, man, they just wanted me to win so bad, maybe even more than I wanted it. I wanted it pretty damn bad, but I was walking up to my ball in the rough on 18, just so many comments from people behind me, it just makes me feel so much better about maybe not winning. Like if I wasn't able to pull the shot off -- it's just so cool.

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