

U.S. Amateur Championship

Friday, August 14, 2026
Ardmore, Pennsylvania, USA
Merion Golf Club

Carter Loflin

Quick Quotes

CARTER LOFLIN: I had a horrible start. I was totally shell shocked by the amount of people that were out there, to be brutally honest. I've played in front of people before but not like that. Honestly, it took me a minute to get used the gallery and everything. I looked at Brandon on the first tee and I was like, Dude, I've never seen people four deep like this before. So that was really cool, but it was a little bit nerve-racking trying to get into a rhythm.

Hit some horrible drives, but yeah, the shot on 6 really kind of made the difference. I was over there in the heather and got a good lie and was able to hit it on the green and two-putt. 5 was a big deal, being able to chip in. That kind of flipped the whole momentum of the match.

Probably the coolest thing I've ever done, to be completely honest with you. I can't even remember the last time I chipped in, and that one was like -- that one was pretty good.

Yeah, I knew he had a tough two-putt, so I figured if I can just get it up-and-down, then I can tie the hole. You don't want to be 3-down through the first five holes. That's not what you're looking for because it's so hard to win the holes out there. You've got to hit some great shots when you've got wedges in your hand.

But yeah, then after the chip-in on 5 and being able to hit the shot up on the green on 6 settled me in, and then it was all go from there.

Q. How did you eventually adjust to the crowd after the start? How did you settle in?

CARTER LOFLIN: I don't think there was ever a point where I really settled in. I guess I kind of just started looking down at my feet. I just kind of stopped looking around, which was -- I looked around a little bit. Like I said, I'm not used to playing in front of that many people, so the chip-in on 5 was I think the point where I really settled down because that was the first time I've heard a roar like



that for myself. But I got used to it after that, I would say.

Q. What wedge did you chip in, and what was around the distance of it?

CARTER LOFLIN: I don't know, it was probably like 25 yards. I duffed a wedge shot to get there. I snap-hooked my drive left of the creek, chipped it out, duffed my wedge, so I was kind of behind the 8-ball. I hit a 58-degree, and my caddie Jack gave me a great line to land it on. I knew exactly how deep I wanted to land it. It was pretty simple -- I wouldn't say simple, but I knew what I had to do. You've got to hit it in the slope with some check. I struck it really well, and it just so happened to check up perfectly.

I knew once it got above the hole that it wasn't going to stay up there. That green pitches so hard right to left. Luckily it went in the hole.

Q. On 6 you missed your drive right?

CARTER LOFLIN: 6 I missed my driveway left again. I had back-to-back duck hooks pretty much. It was rough. I got up there in the heather -- I don't know, maybe I'm over there again tomorrow, who knows. It's a pretty good lie. It's not as nerve-racking as hitting off some of the fairways because they're really tough. The lie I got was actually better than the actual primary rough.

It was sitting up pretty nice. There was like a tuft behind it, but I was about to pull 50 degree and just chip it out to the fairway, but then I was kind of like, I feel like I can actually get enough club on this to get it to the green if I get steep and hit a hook. I hooked it in there so I can hook it out. I did that, and it just rolled up there perfect and was able to get out of there with a tie, so that felt really good.

Q. I've heard you get your personality, your positiveness from your dad who's a bartender --

CARTER LOFLIN: Yeah, that's true.

Q. What's the best drink that he makes, and what's it like being the son of maybe the most popular guy in Atlanta?

CARTER LOFLIN: I mean, I don't think he really enjoys the modern bartending very much. I think he'd be the first



... when all is said, we're done.®

to tell you that. I'm probably not supposed to say that on camera. But he'll pour you a good Jack and Coke. That's probably about it. Don't ask him for a Manhattan. Don't ask him for anything like that. He'll do it, but it's pretty funny. My uncle will come over to the house sometimes and give him a hard time, like can you make me this, and my dad is like, no. He's pretty old school. All that new craft bartending stuff, he got into it way before any of that came out. He won Bartender of the Year in Atlanta one time, I think. But that's more for his personality. People love to come and sit at the bar with him because he's just -- he has no filter and he'll say whatever, and he's just fun to be around.

Q. Anti-mixology you're saying?

CARTER LOFLIN: Yeah, that's the word I was looking for, 100 percent.

Q. The chip-in on 5, did you sense any shock from him at all, maybe a demeanor change, or were you not really focused on him at all?

CARTER LOFLIN: From Brandon? No. Everybody at this stage is so cool because you've already had a few matches on your belt and everybody knows that a match is not going to go exactly perfectly the whole entire time.

I think it might have put a little bit of heat on him. The main reason you want to get that ball up-and-down there, make it, is just because it just kind of shows your opponent, like, yeah, I can hit a horrible drive and have to chip out and I'm still going to find a way to tie the hole or make you have to do something -- I'm not just going to give it to you. That's kind of the main thing. But I don't think he was at all affected by it.

That putt up the hill was really difficult to get there, and I knew that, and he left it short and missed the next one. That's one of those ones that's only going to go your way one out of 100 times. But sometimes that's how it works.

Q. Just the pre-shot rehearsal you do with the right hand on the bottom of the club, could you describe what you're doing there?

CARTER LOFLIN: Yeah, so actually I haven't watched on video in a few days, so it might be getting a little bit out of whack, but I've always had a big issue with like a shut club face at the top. I'm super bowed. I get across the line and I get really bowed. Across the line shut club face is like death for a drawer, and I like to move the ball right to left. My swing coach and I Scott Hamilton have been working really hard on getting more loft in the club face at the top. I'm pretty sure -- I don't know how it looks, but typically

when I split grip like that, it makes my left wrist to have to open the club face sooner. So I figure if I do enough of those and rep it on the course and on the range then maybe over time I believe in it a little bit.

Another thing, too, is it helps me feel like shallowing -- I get just one plane, so it helps me feel a little bit stronger too.

Q. Not to look too far ahead, but if you were to win your semifinal match tomorrow you'd get spots in the U.S. Open and the Masters. I'm wondering what getting a chance to play in those two tournaments would mean to you if tomorrow goes your way.

CARTER LOFLIN: Well, it would be really, really cool. The Masters is a tournament I've grown up going to. I've been fortunate enough to make it out there and play since I went to University of Georgia. We'd get to go once a year. It's a really special place, and I actually really enjoy the golf course a lot. Obviously who wouldn't.

But it would mean a lot. But yeah, I'm just kind of more stoked that I get another day of golf. When you kind of show up at this place -- I felt really good at the beginning of the week, but when you show up you're kind of jokingly telling people on the range, like, I'll be here -- I'll see you next weekend. It's kind of funny that I'm actually here next weekend.

But yeah, I think I'm more excited about that than anything else. If I win, great. If I lose, hopefully Jack will give me a ticket. That would be my hope.

Q. Through five days with Jack on the bag, how would you describe how much he's helped you get from stroke play to the semifinals?

CARTER LOFLIN: Oh, he's helped me immensely. I was telling somebody out there, I was like, this must be what Scottie feels like having Ted Scott on his bag. Before he even tees up his ball, he knows he's going to save two or three strokes somewhere today. Maybe. It might not be that much if you just stripe it. But you feel like you're saving shots before you even start, which is like just such a big confidence builder because it takes so much pressure off of you feeling like you have to play your "A" game.

But he knows this place so well. He's an incredible green reader, and he's a very calming influence. He doesn't talk very much. He's very quiet, which I like because I talk a lot. I'll talk to you if I'm pissed off or if I'm happy. It's nice for me to have a caddie that doesn't quite talk as much because he's more just like whenever he says stuff, it really means something. If he tells me no, then I'm not going to do it type of thing.



It's been a lot of fun.

Q. Who was the match maker? How did you two get together?

CARTER LOFLIN: The caddie master, Tim. I came up here in July and Jack just happened to be added to my group. I went in and talked to Tim after the round, and he was like, hey, if I can get him for the tournament, that would be incredible. He's like, yeah, we can do that. I feel like I just got super lucky.

We have a friend up here in Philly that helped us get a round out here, and we kind of got it set up through that as well. I'm just super lucky to have him.

Q. He said he caddied in the '05?

CARTER LOFLIN: Ooh, I can't remember. I want to say I heard him say he's caddied like seven USGA events out here.

Q. Since probably before you were born.

CARTER LOFLIN: Probably. He started here when I was 12, and he hasn't been here that entire time, but this is like year 35 or 36.

Q. How did you lean on Jack early on today when you were feeling the nerves with the crowd? How did he help maybe settle you?

CARTER LOFLIN: He's just super -- he's very positive. I think it's funny that -- was it you that said I was super positive? I get doom and gloom like that sometimes. Not so much this week. It's been a lot better. But I struggle with that at times. I feel like every golfer does.

But he's, like, endlessly -- he's kind of a foot in your ass a little bit. Sorry for the French. But yesterday on 18, I'm 2-up with two to play, I lose 17 hitting a horrible shot. Hit a horrible tee shot on 18. I hit a good punch shot, but I'm over the green. Jennings is on the green. All he has to do is two-putt basically. I'm in the rough, and Jack is like, how are you feeling. I'm like, man, I can't believe I feel like I'm just blowing this thing. He's like, you haven't blown it yet; chip the ball.

That kind of was a good reset because after that, I was like, okay -- I got to 1 tee -- I was just glad they didn't send me to 14. I've hit that tee shot all over the place. I've hit it left, I've hit it right. If they send me to 14, I'm so done. But they sent me to 1, and that was one of those moments he helped me out a lot being super short, straight to the point,

no, you're not out of this. He's a fighter.

Q. You've played well, obviously, but if not for the stroke of luck of getting paired with him in July and the caddie master pairing you, do you think you'd be here without his help?

CARTER LOFLIN: I don't know. I don't think so. I feel like I'm a good player. I feel like I'm definitely capable of doing this type of stuff, but I can't say that it hasn't helped me having like a positive voice on my shoulder the entire time. Yeah, it's hard to say. But I don't think so. I just can't see it.

There's been too many situations where he's helped out to -- it's like small stuff, but those small things add up. A tenth of a shot here, a tenth of a shot there, a quarter shot there. That really makes a difference.

Q. Just curious to see, obviously new era at UGA with the coach and these incoming freshmen, but what are you going to miss most about Coach Haack and what you've learned at UGA the last three years?

CARTER LOFLIN: Coach Haack has helped me a lot. I'm going to miss his influence every single day. He's a big dude. He's got a booming voice. He can light up a room. Obviously I'm not on the team anymore, but I'm still going to miss having him around.

Hopefully I get to see him around Athens a good bit. He's still living at the lake. But he takes us in like we're his kids. He doesn't really treat us like he's a coach. He treats us like his grandkids, honestly. He wants us to have the world, and having somebody like that in your day-to-day life is really nice. He's always super supportive and very calming, so I'm definitely going to miss that from a golf standpoint.

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