

U.S. Amateur Four-Ball

Wednesday, May 29, 2024

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Philadelphia Cricket Club

Sam Engel

Brian Blanchard

Quick Quotes

Q. What does it mean to be a USGA champion?

SAM ENGEL: I mean, it's hard to put that into words. It's something that Brian and I have always dreamed about. Having the chance to compete in these championships and compete for a prize like that, it's super special. Hard to put into words.

BRIAN BLANCHARD: It's why we grind. It's why we're out there after work until it gets dark, grinding all day.

I think he has a little more confidence than me. But here we are. I appreciate Sam for bringing his really strong confidence this week and helping the team to victory.

Q. I think this was your third USGA championship?

BRIAN BLANCHARD: Yes.

Q. And this was your second?

SAM ENGEL: It was my second, yeah.

Q. You guys had never made a cut at a USGA event. This week you make the cut and you go all the way. What does that say about where your games are at right now?

SAM ENGEL: I think having your partner there with you, it's a good place to start. I think we both definitely believe in our games, but having the support is nice. Yeah, it's hard to qualify for USGA championships, and you just don't have your best, best stuff, and you go home. There's a lot of really great players.

We brought it this week, and obviously awesome to ultimately bring home the hardware.

Q. Blades may be the second or third best junior in the country, Jackson hits it a mile. They didn't even play 18 in a match this week. You guys played it four



out of five times.

BRIAN BLANCHARD: We like 18 a lot.

SAM ENGEL: We played it four times, yeah.

Q. Just your thought at lunch when you saw you were playing these guys in the final?

SAM ENGEL: Honestly, I didn't look up or research who we were playing all week. I thought Brian and I were a really strong team. There was no reason for us to get in our own heads about who we were playing. We know we're playing great players; we're at a USGA championship. Those boys are awesome, awesome players, and we know that they have super bright futures ahead of them.

We wanted our chance to make them remember playing Sam and Brian. I think we went out there and kind of gave it everything we had and ham-and-egged it pretty well and made a lot of birdies.

Q. You guys never trailed against these guys. They had been the team that had really gone out and taken early leads on people, and in this match you never let them have a lead.

BRIAN BLANCHARD: Yeah, I heard some statistic, maybe it's not true, but I heard if you win the first hole, you win the majority of the matches. I was like, let's win the first hole, so I hit a good drive and I hit it in there to like three and a half feet and poured it in, and we were off to the races.

Those guys are unbelievable players. I'm sure we'll be watching them on TV for many years to come. But I think playing great players like that, for me personally, kind of takes the pressure off because you know you have to play great or you're going to lose. There's no kind of like in the middle kind of thing, so you kind of have to play great or you're not going to win.

Q. You seemed to take control on 13 and 14. I guess you made a bomb on 13, like 20, 30 feet.

BRIAN BLANCHARD: Yeah, I made a bomb upon 30 and then Sam hit it to like a foot.



Q. What did you hit into 14?

SAM ENGEL: I hit a 52-degree wedge. I was playing my Ping Glide 4.0. Those are nice clubs. My brother is an engineer at Ping. We were dialed in, had the spin dialed in perfectly and knew I could just kind of go after those and kind of get a nice flight and control. I hit a lot of really close wedges this week that I think were definitely the difference in some of those matches coming down, and I think that just kind of -- be 2-up going into 15 I think is super important.

Q. How far was your shot into 14?

SAM ENGEL: I think I had like 125 or so, yeah.

Q. These guys, as far as they hit it, Jackson hits a bomb on 17, sets up a four- or five-footer, and then on 18 he's down at the bottom of the hill. What's going through your minds? I know you knocked it on the green and you were in a little bit of trouble.

SAM ENGEL: We knew if we make birdie they couldn't beat us unless they made eagle or something. I think statistically over time if you have a lot of distance, you're probably going to win, but today we were going to hit it closer, we were going to make more putts.

He can hit it far, but you've just got to play your game. He hits it great, but obviously we could go out there and try to steal it from him and hit it closer and make more putts.

Q. You guys now have some nice exemptions. You're 10 years for this so no more qualifying for a while, and two years from now it will be in Arizona, be a home game. Then you're also into the U.S. Am and the Mid-Am. Just talk about that.

BRIAN BLANCHARD: I might need some more PTO. I'm going to have to talk to the boss man about that.

Q. You are a software engineer?

BRIAN BLANCHARD: Yeah.

Q. And you are a software salesperson?

SAM ENGEL: Yeah, we can call ourselves team software. We figured there would be a lot of college boys out here this week and maybe they would overlook us. We work really hard at our games, and we play a lot of tournaments back home in Arizona. We travel around and play as well.

But we were ready to go this week. We've been super excited about this tournament. We qualified in September

last year. Brian totally carried me in the qualifier. We were happy to be here. We just knew if we put our best foot forward and hit some good shots, we'd be hard to beat.

Q. Software guys take home the hardware.

SAM ENGEL: Absolutely.

Q. You're the 10th lefty to win a championship and we had two in the final, which we've never had, ever.

SAM ENGEL: We think the lefty-righty combo --

BRIAN BLANCHARD: The lefty-righty is nice because he likes to fade it off the tee, I like to fade it off the tee. There's some holes out here that are not good for a righty that fades it but they're great for a lefty that fades it.

Q. What's the name of your company?

BRIAN BLANCHARD: It's worked Workida. It's a great company to work for.

Q. What's the name of your company?

SAM ENGEL: I'm actually starting with a new company soon. You'll see on LinkedIn soon.

Q. You were with another AI company, I think?

SAM ENGEL: I was, yeah.

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