

2018 U.S. Senior Open Championship
Golf Course Set Up Notes – Round 3 (Saturday, June 30)

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Green Speeds – approximately 11 feet 6 inches on the Stimpmeter. We achieved this speed with a double cut on all greens with the exception of Holes 1, 4, and 8.

Firmness – We continue to see a marginal reduction of firmness day over day.

Moisture inputs were reduced strategically last night and this morning on all greens except for Holes 1, 4, 8, 9, 12 and 16 to increase firmness. The aforementioned holes were watered to maintain firmness consistent with previous rounds.

Weather forecast:

Here is today's weather forecast from Jake Swick of Thor Guard:

North winds arrived a few minutes before 3 a.m. and have already gusted to 28 mph. Look for this northerly flow to stay with us through 9 a.m. at 10-20 mph before letting up midday as the winds switch around (details below). Temps that were in the high 60s earlier this morning will try to dip into the low 60s over the next hour or two. There are some clouds that will mix with our sunshine early this morning, but look for enough sunshine as the morning progresses and the wind lightens to allow temps to climb through the 60s and 70s topping out around or just over 80 degrees early to mid-afternoon. Then we'll start watching the radar more closely as we near 3 p.m. because the first nearby showers and storms could develop over Cheyenne Mountain, but most models have them developing near the divide to our north. Our best chance comes as we get closer to 6 p.m. and I'm still keeping it at a 60 percent chance because the short range models came in this morning not showing it to be any worse than what I had been seeing in the medium range models. So for this update we'll keep some optimism going that somehow we can try to dodge the worst of the weather. Once the sun sets most of the activity on radar should be pulling away to the east, but a leftover shower or storm is not out of the realm of possibility. Otherwise the main story this evening will likely be the return of more gusty north winds that will usher in much cooler air as lows tonight drop close to 50 degrees by early Sunday morning. Mostly sunny skies Sunday morning will become partly sunny by afternoon as a few showers and storms try to develop in the mountains. We will warm back up to around 80 degrees once again Sunday with breezy winds in the afternoon. The models again came in this morning still showing us having a 40 percent chance by 6 p.m. Sunday for a shower or storm nearby in the higher elevations, so we'll see if we can get any change in the next update.

As previously mentioned and as expected the north winds we were looking for have blown in early this morning and will stay in the 10-20 mph range until about 9 a.m. That is when we should see the wind pulling back and transitioning over to the east as we get near lunchtime. East winds may not last long though as the models did come in with one wrinkle this morning showing a little more east to southeast flow this afternoon at 5-15 mph with maybe a high gust of 20 mph and even an hour or so with a south wind not out of the question. In reality once we get into the 3-6 p.m. window, I would expect the southeast wind to become more flexible around any shower/storm development with eventually the north wind coming back in between 6 and 9 p.m. It's supposed to be around sunset that the north wind really gets cranking again in the 10-20 mph range, then overnight it gradually lets up with light winds to start Sunday morning. The other

alteration the models showed this morning is that before noon on Sunday the wind is supposed to begin increasing to 5-10 mph with a gust of 15 mph out of the south and east (a little more east around lunchtime and a little more south as the afternoon progresses). Look for 10-20 mph winds from the southeast and maybe south by the end of the day Sunday.

Setup Information

The following are the specific hole yardages (tee to hole location) for Round 3:

Hole 1 (par 4) – 421

Hole Location: 12-10R – middle right

Notes: The opening hole will be wind-aided today, which will be helpful when putting to the hole location that is located in the front-right portion of the green. Putts from above the hole will be rather quick so players should be prepared to gauge their speed carefully.

Hole 2 (par 4) – 344

Hole Location: 21-7R – back right

Notes: The only hole on the course that doesn't have an intermediate rough cut, which will give the fairway the appearance of being even narrower. We did bevel-cut the edge of the fairway rough again yesterday to try to provide the player a slightly better lie if their ball comes to rest against the rough edge. Hybrids or irons off the tee will leave players with a wonderful opportunity to attack this back-right hole location. Approach shots that hit into the high right side of this green should release from right to left down toward today's hole location.

Hole 3 (par 5) – 598

Hole Location: 20-4L – middle/back left

Notes: Birdies and eagles may be much harder to come by today on this hole given the forecasted winds. Today's hole location sits 2-3 paces over a ridge line that runs East/West across this putting green. Like any Donald Ross putting green, staying below the hole and putting uphill will likely be the preferable option for players.

Hole 4 (par 3) – 162

Hole Location: 19-7R – middle right

Notes: Donald Ross' most daunting green on the course proved as much yesterday by playing as the hardest hole during the second round. The healthy rough that surrounds this green will make any up and down challenging. Today's hole location is in the middle-right portion of the green and will likely appear much friendlier to players than the previous days. Tee markers have been pushed up 5 paces to allow players an opportunity to get after this flag. The safe play is a tee shot to the center of the green leaving an either an uphill putt or a hole-high swinging left-to-right putt to the hole location. Players will need to respect the hole-high break that this green challenges you with because any putts that are shortsided could run out toward the front of this green. Getting up and down from off the green on any day will be extremely challenging.

Hole 5 (par 4) – 439

Hole Location: 20-6R – back right

Notes: A straightaway hole that begins your climb back toward the finishing holes of the front nine. Players will likely be gasping for a little air as they head up this fairway, though it tends to give the appearance of being relatively flat. The back-right hole

location is quite accessible and the back-to-front pitch on this hole should allow players to have a relatively straight uphill putt for birdie.

Hole 6 (par 4) – 410

Hole Location: 24-7L – back left

Notes: Our first look at one of many dogleg-left holes on the golf course. Players can gamble and try to take a harder line over the fairway bunkers that will leave them with a wider landing area (29-30 yards) as opposed to laying back and having to be more precise. This hole location is neatly tucked in the back-left portion of this green just over the bowl/hollow that occupies the center of the green. Approach shots hit on the front half of the green have a good chance of spinning/rolling back down into the bowl so players will want to reach the top plateau, which will leave them with a right-to-left putt breaking down the mountain.

Hole 7 (par 4) – 415

Hole Location: 6-8R – front right

Notes: Similar to Hole 6, this dogleg left will give players a chance to choose how aggressive they want to be off the tee. An uphill approach to today's hole location tucked over the front-right bunker will be slightly more difficult than yesterday, since this hole location is just 6 paces on from the front of the green. The area around today's hole is pretty benign so if distance control is managed properly, a good look at birdie may be possible here today.

Hole 8 (par 3) – 179

Hole Location: 22-4L – back left

Notes: Tee markers are back near the tee sign today on this hole that played as the easiest par 3 on the course yesterday. Today's hole location is in the back-left corner of this green, which again will allow players to use the ridge line that runs East/West to allow the ball to trickle down toward the hole. The tee shot is uphill and straight into the mountain so it will likely play longer than the number.

Hole 9 (par 5) – 527

Hole Location: 8-5L – front left

Notes: The shortest par 5 on the golf course played much easier in Round 2 and I would expect that to be the case again in Round 3. Longer hitters should be able to get to this green in two if they use the severely canting left-to-right fairway to their advantage. The hole location today is in the front-left quadrant of the green and will appear very inviting; however, the front and left greenside bunkers should come more into play. A small backstop well behind the hole location should help players gain a good opportunity to make birdie, but putts from the back of the green toward the front will be speedy due to the pitch in the green and due to the fact that they are down-mountain.

Hole 10 (par 4) – 488

Hole Location: 25-8R – back right

Notes: Another hole that favors a big right-to-left tee shot to a fairway that gets larger the more you challenge the dogleg. A downhill, down-mountain approach to a green that pitches more front to back will be a different look than what players see anywhere else on the golf course. The approach shot into this green is where players likely feel the yardage adjustment to altitude the most. The tee markers have been pushed up 9 yards anticipating an east wind from time to time. The hole location is in the front-right

quadrant so it is likely that most players will play to the middle of the green, leaving themselves with a fairly lengthy but flat putt to the hole.

Hole 11 (par 4) – 468

Hole Location: 7-8L – front center

Notes: Tee markers are near the tee post today for the first time all week given the fact that today's forecasted north wind will be helping. The second of a tough four-hole stretch on the back nine gives us another dogleg left to an elevated green but with the hole location in the front bowl today we should see many more birdies here today than we have the past few days.

Hole 12 (par 3) – 207

Hole Location: 20-17R – back/center right

Notes: Tee markers have been moved up 23 yards from where they were yesterday (223) on this hole due to the forecasted north/east winds. Distance control on this downhill shot will be at premium today and players should avoid missing left of this hole location due to the center ridge line that will repel balls down to the back left portion of this green. This hole played as the 2nd-toughest on the golf course yesterday but I believe today's hole location will provide players with a nice reprieve. As always, a score of 3 on this hole at any time should be celebrated.

Hole 13 (par 4) – 482

Hole Location: 19-9L – back left

Notes: The first of two available dogleg rights on the golf course should be playing into the wind for most of the day today. We have moved the tee markers up 16 paces to allow players to potentially have a better look at this back-left hole location. Approach shots below the hole should give players a good look to make birdie, given that putts back up the hill are genuinely straight.

Hole 14 (par 4) – 424

Hole Location: 10-5R – front right

Notes: Another dogleg left to an uphill approach that will likely continue to have players fluctuating on yardage. Today's front-right hole location is guarded by a greenside bunker that will keep an emphasis on distance control. Approach shots that land beyond this hole are generally safe, but it will leave players with a speedy down-mountain putt.

Hole 15 (par 4) – 464

Hole Location: 20-5R – back right

Notes: The turn for home begins with another dogleg left with a fairway that peaks and then dives from left to right slightly which could cause the ball to chase out a little. The back-right hole location will be very difficult to get back to, so I would expect to see players leave their approach shots hole high. Putts from hole high will require deft touch as the putting green begins to run off toward the back-right portion of the green. A 3-footer for par could easily become an 8-footer for par if the speed from hole high is not respected.

Hole 16 (par 3) – 185

Hole Location: 25-5R – back right

Notes: Tee markers are slightly forward but have been pushed again to the left-hand side of this tee today which should keep the fronting bunker in play. The hole location is said to be in the easiest location on the green as all tee shots tend to release back

toward the right side of this green. Most putts will have a left-to-right turn down toward the front of the green.

Hole 17 (par 4) – 517

Hole Location: 23-5L – middle left

Notes: The longest par 4 on the course will play shorter than it has all week due to forecasted winds coming from the north. Tee markers have been pushed up 28 yards here, yet I continue to expect this hole to be very demanding, although players should be able to use the open/flat approach to chase balls onto this green. A middle-left hole location that is just over the ridge that runs west/east across this green will require players to find the proper level of the green in order to have a good look at birdie.

Hole 18 (par 4) – 426

Hole Location: 15-4L – middle left

Notes: We are using the player's extreme right tee again today which will introduce the second of only two dogleg rights on the course. Challenging the right fairway bunkers should leave players 145-160 yards to a middle-left hole location. Approach shots left below the hole down in the bowl/hollow will leave a relatively easy uphill putt for birdie. Players who choose to attack this hole should be very careful not to short-side themselves. Putts from above the hole appear that they will be quick and downhill but this area of the green is relatively flat.

Total yardage

Front 9 (par 36) 3,495

Back 9 (par 34) 3,661

Total (par 70) 7,156