By David Shefter, USGA

**WHAT HAPPENED**

Todd Mitchell approached his partner, Scott Harvey, on the 17th green of Bandon Dunes Golf Resort’s Old Macdonald course late Wednesday afternoon and planted a hearty bear hug, the kind of embrace one gives for a big moment.

This was one of those appropriate situations.

After some close calls, including a runner-up finish in the 2008 U.S. Mid-Amateur, Mitchell had finally arrived at the mountaintop. Finally, he could call himself a USGA champion just like his partner, Harvey, did in the U.S. Mid-Amateur five years ago.

Playing in some of the most challenging conditions all week, Mitchell, 40, of Bloomington, Ill., and Harvey, a Kernersville, N.C., resident who turns 41 on Thursday, defeated East Carolina University rising seniors Blake Taylor, 21, of Wilmington, N.C., and Logan Shuping, 21, of Salisbury, N.C., 2 and 1, in the 18-hole championship match of the 5th U.S. Amateur Four-Ball Championship.

After five trips to match play in this team event that began in 2015, including a semifinal showing in the inaugural competition at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, Harvey and Mitchell will have their names inscribed on a USGA trophy and forever be immortalized inside the USGA Golf Museum’s Hall of Champions. They are the second mid-amateur side to claim the title, joining 2015 winners Nathan Smith and Todd White.

“I don’t know that I can have a better feeling from a golf and competition side,” said Mitchell, a former minor-league baseball player. “I know he won the Mid-Am by himself. As close as Scott and I have become over the past probably six years, I’m elated that it happened like this.  
  
“I can’t think of a better scenario than to do something like this with Scott. I mean, we live, I don’t know, 800 miles away, and we talk every day; every single day. There’s not a day that goes by unless, you know, he’s on vacation somewhere, that we don’t talk. And to share this with him means everything.”

Added Harvey: “There's not enough team golf events, in my opinion. And like he said out there, this is the best event going currently, and it’s just more fun. Everything you’re doing is with someone. You’re sharing every part of it with someone, and it just feels that much better.”

Just like Tuesday, the marine layer quickly lifted by mid-morning and was replaced by sunshine and blustery winds that averaged between 14 and 18 mph and gusted to as high as 28 mph. It made an already challenging layout even more difficult. To account for the wind, some tees were adjusted for the championship match from the morning semifinals.

After eliminating co-medalists and No. 3 seeds Troy Vannucci, 27, and Vince Kwon, 25, both of Marlton, N.J., in the semifinals, 4 and 3, Mitchell and Harvey grabbed an early 2-up lead in the final, thanks to consecutive birdies on Nos. 5 and 6.

But these Pirates (East Carolina’s nickname) weren’t about to let their older opponents steal the show. Taylor answered with a 3-foot birdie on the seventh and they tied the match on No. 10 with another Taylor birdie. They grabbed their only lead when both stuffed their approach shots on No. 14 to within 5 feet. Mitchell and Harvey, a property manager, both flew the green with their approach shots and registered just their second bogey of the entire championship (116 holes).

But the momentum turned on the 285-yard, par-4 14th hole. Shuping drove the green, but three-putted for par. Mitchell, however, made a nifty up-and-down birdie from below the green with a 60-degree wedge to tie the match.

“That was the shot of the match,” said Harvey. “Then when [Shuping] three-putted, everything went in our direction … Yeah, I felt like 14 was the match.”

Mitchell, an insurance agent, followed with a 63-foot eagle putt with 25 feet of break on the par-5 15th hole that stopped 2 feet from the flagstick that their opponents conceded. The winning birdie put the side 1 up.

On the par-4 16th hole, Mitchell stuffed his blind 8-iron approach shot from 155 yards to 4 feet to set up another winning birdie.

“I finally showed up,” said Mitchell of his winning birdies on Nos. 14-16.

The match concluded on No. 17 with matching pars, although Shuping thought he had made his 15-footer for birdie.

“Obviously, we’d like to be holding the trophy,” said Shuping. “Any time you lose, you’re not going to be that happy.  
  
“But looking back on it, this is probably going to be my favorite week of golf ever. I mean, this is so much fun, having the family here, playing with Blake. We played so well. I mean, we even played well this afternoon. Those guys got hot, and they’re great. That’s what happens.”

Being from North Carolina, Shuping and Taylor were well aware of Harvey’s playing credentials on both a regional and national level. In addition to his USGA title, Harvey also was the runner-up in the 2016 U.S. Mid-Amateur and represented the USA in the 2015 Walker Cup Match. He also won the 2015 South American Amateur and qualified for the 2017 U.S. Open.

“He’s known because he wins stuff like this,” said Shuping. “So, we tried to stop him today, but he and Todd played great.”

Taylor and Shuping earned their spot in the championship match by outlasting Andrew Medley, of Scottsdale, Ariz., and Taylor Wood, of Coto de Caza, Calif., 2 up, in the semifinals.

**WHAT THE CHAMPIONS RECEIVE**

The champions receive custody of the U.S. Amateur Four-Ball trophy for one year and gold medals. They also earn a 10-year exemption into the championship, provided the side remains intact. The runners-up received silver medals and a three-year exemption from qualifying.

**NOTABLE**

A total of 105 Bandon Dunes caddies were used during the championship, including Adam Burlison and Brandon Skytta, who caddied for **Todd Mitchell** and **Scott Harvey,** respectively**.** Skytta missed qualifying for this year’s U.S. Amateur Four-Ball with partner and fellow Bandon Dunes caddie **Cody Stoffel** by four strokes in the sectional held last October in Portland, Ore.

**Logan Shuping** and **Blake Taylor** had their fathers, Todd and Mike, respectively, carrying their bags.

**Shuping** earned a spot in last year’s Greenbrier Classic on the PGA Tour via Monday qualifying. He first survived a pre-qualifying tournament to get into the Monday field.

Fifteen players in this year’s U.S. Amateur Four-Ball field earned spots in U.S. Open sectional qualifying, including **Harvey**, who will play in Purchase, N.Y**.**, on Monday.Also competing this Monday at one of the eight sites in the United States are **Hunter Epson, Austin Fox, Dustin Hall, Stewart Hagestad, Cougar Collins, Derek Busby, William Peel IV, Tyler Cooke, Matt Parziale, Michael McCoy, Jack Wall, Jeremy Wall, Rob Laird** and **Sam Tidd.**

The 6th U.S. Amateur Four Championship will be contested May 23-27 at Philadelphia (Pa.) Cricket Club. The entry deadline to enter is Aug. 14 at 5 p.m. EDT, and sectional qualifying begins on Aug. 26. Each member of a side must have a Handicap Index not exceeding 5.4.

**Shuping** and **Taylor** birdied the par-4 18th hole on Old Macdonald three consecutive matches from the Round of 16 onward. The side did not play the hole in their 4-and-2 victory in the Round of 32.

En route to the championship match, **Harvey** and **Mitchell** eliminated two of the three co-medalists, **Matthew McCarty** and **Derek Ackerman** in the quarterfinals, and **Troy Vannucci** and **Vince Kwon** in the semis. The medalist(s) have yet to win the title in the first five years of the championship, with Vannucci and Kwon advancing the furthest.

**QUOTABLE**

“We somehow have the ability to pick each other up. When somebody is in trouble, the other person steps up. And I think … the way we go about the golf course is a little bit different, but we see things the same way, if that makes any sense at all.” – **Todd Mitchell** on what makes his partnership with **Scott Harvey** work

“Little things like in between the rounds, making sure you get a little bit of a warm-up in, not eating something too heavy in between. And just the mentality of, we’re ahead, but let’s not take a break because who knows what can happen. But you just draw on experiences. Out here, drawing experiences from Walker Cup, where it’s very similar conditions, the wind’s blowing 35 miles per hour. You’re hitting 9-irons from 100 yards. That’s not very often you get around in the States. So just a little bit of comfort and conditions.” – **Harvey** on how drawing from past experiences in big events helps in a competition such as the U.S. Amateur Four-Ball

“We’ll be traveling all day [on Thursday]. I know we’ve got a tournament next week on Tuesday. So, I mean, pretty worn out right now, honestly. But we’ll regroup, obviously. [Blake] played in the Greenbrier [event on the PGA Tour], but I’ve never played in front of this many people before, people I had no idea who they were. But it was a blast today. That’s what it was about. I think we held our own. Wish we could have made some more birdies down the stretch, but that’s how it goes.” – **Logan Shuping** summing up his week at Bandon Dunes

“That’s even more incentive to come back here.” – **Blake Taylor** on the U.S. Amateur coming to Bandon Dunes in 2020

“It was tremendous. Taylor [Wood] was awesome all week. We had a great partnership for the most part, and just didn’t get it done. It was an all-time experience. We had a blast.” – **Andrew Medley** after losing in the semifinals with partner **Taylor Wood**

“We’ve already signed a contract.” – **Wood** on playing again with **Medley** in the 2020 U.S. Amateur Four-Ball at Philadelphia Cricket Club.

“They were playing great golf. We would have had to make birdie to win a hole. You’re not going to win pars against these guys. They’re solid.” – **Troy Vannucci** on the 4-and-3 semifinal loss to **Harvey** and **Mitchell.**

“It’s just a great experience. I’ll remember it for a long time. It was fun battling against all the top golfers in the nation. You just look at some of the résumés we played in the last two matches. I mean, those guys’ résumés stack up against anyone. And we’re playing against them side by side. – **Vannucci** on the experience of playing in his first U.S. Amateur Four-Ball and first USGA championship.

“Oh, that’s going to be great. Got the home crowd behind you. I had a bunch of support from Golf Association of Philadelphia, New Jersey State Golf Association, family, the membership at Little Mill Country Club, Huntington Valley (Pa.) Country Club. We had everyone texting us, rooting us on. A bunch of great guys and family, that should be fun. Can’t wait to play. – **Vannucci** on being exempt into the 2020 U.S. Amateur Four-Ball at Philadelphia Cricket Club with partner **Vince Kwon**, who caddies at the club.

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