

U.S. Amateur Championship

Quick Quotes

Sunday August 20, 2017

Doug Ghim

THE MODERATOR: We are very please to do welcome Doug Ghim, runner-up of the 2017 U.S. Amateur; 37-hole match. I don't know if I want to open it up to have you make a comment or just open to questions. Whichever you choose is what we'll do.

Tell us what you're thinking.

DOUG GHIM: Well, it's been an incredible ride. I mean, I feel like I played some of the best golf that I ever have.

Part of why it's kind of difficult is I feel like I gave it everything that I could. Just wasn't good enough. I'm still very proud of what I've done this week, and really excited to be back at L.A. Country Club to represent Team USA.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. I don't know the last time I've seen a match where two players matched each other so frequently. It seemed leaderboard guys were often hitting the same shots almost and matching each other on the greens. Did you get the feeling that neither one could really distance from the other?

DOUG GHIM: Definitely. I actually was really surprised when Doc missed on the 34 hole, 16, in the afternoon. I mean, it felt like every time we won a hole it was so significant because we weren't giving each other anything to -- nothing was easy. Every hole that we won was super hard earned. It felt weird to even have a putt to win the hole. You're like, I don't know when the next time I'm going to actually have an opportunity like this. Felt like do or die every time you had a chance.

It's just a testament to how good we played. Both guys -- both of us were really smart about how we played and definitely let ourselves with areas we could get up and down and force the other guy to execute.

For most the day we both stepped up and executed. Yeah, I think that's why you saw the match the way it was.

Q. Doc's father said as soon as he hit the putt on



17th he knew it was in. Of course that is the father talking. Did you have any expectation he could make a putt of that distance in this match, or was it one of those kind of matches you expect that kind of thing could happen?

DOUG GHIM: I mean, I wouldn't be entirely truthful to say that I expected him to make the putt, but I did entertain the possibility.

When it did go in, it was like, Wow, okay. That's quite a blow. I reminded myself that I was still 1-up with one to go. You know, my dad kept reminding me on the next hole that you are still winning. He might've just made the putt of his life, but you are still winning this and you have to make him go get it from you.

I mean, I didn't hit a particularly great iron shot coming into 18, but I thought I did just that with the chip. I chipped it close enough. I felt confident enough -- I had the same putt this morning for birdie.

So I felt like I did everything that I could to force him to make incredible shots. He stepped up and did it, and kudos to him. I'm very happy for him.

Yeah, very proud of what I've done.

Q. On the telecast they were just marveling at the shots you were making. Early on when you got an early lead, seemed like Doc was really pushing you and you held him off for a little bit. Then later when you got the advantage he was kind of -- how hard is it in that situation just to block everything out and just hit that shot that you need to make that putt? You made a ton of five, six, eight footers that you absolutely needed.

DOUG GHIM: Yeah, I mean, it's kind of what we alluded to before. Whenever someone got in the lead we knew it was probably going to last for a while unless we could pull off an incredible shot.

I feel like both guys were just waiting for a moment to maybe try to take a chance, but no one really wanted to because it was so risky.

You just can't walk up to the next tee and feel like you could go and win that hole. It was like a chess match. It was like a blinking contest. Who's going to blink first.

Once one blinked, it was just like, you know, you're just trying your best to make sure that if he's going to even it up with you that he's going to have to go earn it. You don't want to just give it to him.

Yeah, we did a really good job of that, both of us. I think for me, the whole week I've done a pretty good job of that. I think I got up early in most of my matches and just kind of held it there and kept putting the pressure on. The only the difference this time and he was putting it right back on me and he just kept going back and forth.

It was a lot fun to be a part of it. As disappointed as I am to not win, I still had a lot of fun. A lot of lessons that I've learned today about myself and about my game, both negative and positive. Definitely going to look back at this as one of the best accomplishments that I've had and move on.

Q. What was your reaction when you saw your lie on the 37th hole?

DOUG GHIM: I had never been in that area really all week, so when I got there I was a little -- I didn't even know there was hay in that area. When I got there, I was like, Ooh. Like I crossed my fingers, but then I hear, Show him where it is. I was like, well, if I can't see it from right here then it must not be very good.

I got there and it was obviously not the greatest lie I've ever seen. At that point in time you have to be positive. I was telling myself you should be thankful you're not stymied against a tree and that you have a gap and that you have something to work with, you know.

I may have made a bad decision by going right of the tree instead of left. I didn't think it would come out hot at all. I thought if I take it to the right I would give myself an angle to chip towards the flag. It came out super hot.

Yeah, the rest is history.

Q. After you saw Doc at the tee shot on 10, did that change your strategy at all? Did you want to go after it like him or you stuck to your plan?

DOUG GHIM: I stuck to my plan. Just it was unfortunate that I didn't pull off the shot. I think the last couple of matches I've been -- like during stroke play and in general I was laying up, and then I started seeing kind of the advantage of hitting a 3-wood, especially when they moved that tee up. I could carry that left bunker. When you carry that left bunker, you usually have a pretty good shot.

I ended up getting bitten by laying up and then having a competitor just carry that bunker and have a really easy pitch. I would hit the smart, hit it to 15 feet, and

he would make birdie and then I would have to make a 15-footer.

So kind of I think quarterfinals was the first time I really tried to go for it and ended up pulling it off and started seeing like it's kind of actually a wide area as long as they move the tee up where I could carry that left bunker easily with a 3-wood.

But it was just unfortunate that I just didn't pull off the tee shot the way I wanted to.

Q. What's your plan now? School?

DOUG GHIM: Oh, absolutely. Well, I go home because school doesn't start for another week. Go home, spend time with family and have some fun, pack for school. Be playing for the University of Texas through the National Championships, graduate, and playing in the Walker Cup. Looking forward to all these things.

Q. Staying amateur through the Masters?

DOUG GHIM: Yes.

Q. And US Open?

DOUG GHIM: Yes.

Q. You're one of the two guys who has gotten to the place where the 312 wanted to be. What was tougher for you, the physical part of the U.S. Amateur final or getting to the final or the mental part?

DOUG GHIM: Getting here?

Q. After the week's been over now, it's finished, which is more difficult, the physical or the mental?

DOUG GHIM: It's definitely the mental. I mean, if you tell me that I still have a chance to go out there, I could play until my hands are bleeding and I probably wouldn't even feel it.

But it's just the constant -- as good as Doc played, I mean, it was -- I felt like I was losing weight just thinking about the shot I was trying to hit, let alone just making the swing.

Definitely the mental part. Not only are you fighting the elements, the weather, the golf course - the golf course is difficult enough - but you're trying to anticipate -- it's a chess match, except your golf ball is not moving like a pawn should be on the board.

So the constant anticipation of what your opponent is going to do and what you hope your golf ball does is exhausting. Now that's over, I'm also tired physically. It's definitely the mental part that gets you.

Q. Until he dropped that bomb on you on 17, it looked like you were going to have a six-footer for birdie to win the tournament. Had you let your mind go to that point?

DOUG GHIM: I mean, not too much, no. I mean, I did obviously entertain that option. I knew that it was possible that that putt could be one to win.

But, I mean, obviously you have to expect some sort of crazy thing that could happen. But I was definitely ready to hit the putt, whatever the situation would be. He made the putt, so it was just like, Okay, well, I don't get the putt. Let's go to the next tee.

Because you can't necessarily completely expect him to make it and then all of a sudden be dawned with a six-footer to win. You're like in limbo kind of just waiting to see what happens, but trying to be as prepared for both situations as you can.

Felt like I did a decent job. Doc just played great.

THE MODERATOR: Doug, congratulations on a great run. We'll see you in Los Angeles for the Walker Cup.

DOUG GHIM: Appreciate it.