

U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship

Press Conference

Thursday October 12, 2017

Josh Nichols

Q. Well, let's ask the obvious question: Tomorrow you're playing for a national title, but you are also playing for a berth in the U.S. Open.

JOSH NICHOLS: Yeah.

Q. What's that feel like?

JOSH NICHOLS: It would be the biggest thing I could ever imagine with golf. I mean, there is nothing bigger than the U.S. Open, right?

But the only thing I'm focusing on is the drive on No. 1. That's all I've got in my mind right now. One shot at a time. That's all I can do.

Q. How about the high quality of that match. Neither one of you made a bogey.

JOSH NICHOLS: I mean, Mark was -- I don't really know how it ended up towards me. He couldn't miss a shot. I guess putts just weren't falling for him.

But, boy, he was just a great ball-striker. It was fun to watch him. Kind of spurred me on a little bit.

Q. And, again, your short game, just like this morning, proved to be a big key to this.

JOSH NICHOLS: It did. It helped me on 14 and on 16, the bunker shot. That was a difficult bunker shot. I couldn't see the bottom of the pin. Just kind of had to hit and hope.

Short game was very important. I hit some good shots coming down the stretch, too.

Q. What did you hit into 12 that you two-putted for birdie?

JOSH NICHOLS: 12, that was 265, I believe, and I just hit a full 3-wood. Just kind of landed right short of the green. Was a good shot.

Q. And you stake that 9-iron...

JOSH NICHOLS: Yeah, that was big. That was a big moment in the match, I thought, just those two birdies back to back. Yeah, that was right in there about two, three feet.

That was a good one, too.

Q. What were you thinking on this last hole? Well,



actually the last two holes. You drained the birdie to make it all square.

JOSH NICHOLS: Yeah. You know, it didn't surprise me, because all day -- he should have been doing that all day. It was just a matter of time.

And good players come up in big moments; he did there. So as he's putting it I'm saying, We're going to be all square going into the last hole. You know, it's just a given. Good players do that.

Did you think the same thing when he made that 18 -- footer for par?

JOSH NICHOLS: When he was chipping I said, He's going to come up with something special here. I didn't think it would be on the putt, but I said, I'm going to have a putt to win or to tie, so focus on making your putt. He's going to do something special, and he did. Good players do that.

Q. There is a player from your area that this championship three years ago. Do you know him?

JOSH NICHOLS: I do. Yeah, he's from Greensboro; I'm from Kernersville. Yeah, I know him. We played in tournaments here and there. He's a great guy, a great player.

Q. Have you picked his brain about this at all?

JOSH NICHOLS: No, I haven't. Maybe if I can find a way to get in contact with him...

I'm okay. I've seen these holes a billion times now. I'll be fine.

Q. (No microphone.)

JOSH NICHOLS: I have, yeah.

Q. So you've been close to the Open?

JOSH NICHOLS: Yeah, I guess. Kind of close, yeah. As close as that.

Q. What in your job as a wedding caterer applies to playing golf out here?

JOSH NICHOLS: That's a great question. I've never thought about that. There is not a whole lot of parallels, but there is stress working up to weddings. It's a stressful thing.

It's not quite the stress that this is. In weddings we strive to put on a perfect event. Out here we strive to hit perfect shots. I guess it's similar there.