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| **Steve Stricker Continues Assault on Record Book at U.S. Senior Open Championship** |
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| June 27-30, 2019, Warren Golf Course at Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind.[mediacenter.usga.org](http://icm-tracking.meltwater.com/link.php?DynEngagement=true&H=FcQ5do3Mtm%2F2JnP%2FxXFcY%2BL9mOkU%2Fad4G7kfqxVfSdkEEq1vNf2gyyzca2EI6ZYpbegck3RuIqBuP2vJWOSAMIgEZL5LnwYHySaPOgEP9Fz7dfxT5HwzMw%3D%3D&G=0&R=https%3A%2F%2Fnam05.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%2F%3Furl%3Dhttp%253A%252F%252Ficm-tracking.meltwater.com%252Flink.php%253FDynEngagement%253Dtrue%2526H%253DbtYXC68syxmDVppbhVzFoYHdeMNV9070xvOlf%25252FNdDQ0wXj6aidRhm0w6DZoGITpCcLkftf8fVbwMeVq7YUOJ%25252FmnmWvvTYk9qS%25252FHstTyNu5DyViKpQpAwWHtGmNj933kV%2526G%253D0%2526R%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fnam05.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%25252F%25253Furl%25253Dhttp%2525253A%2525252F%2525252Ficm-tracking.meltwater.com%2525252Flink.php%2525253FDynEngagement%2525253Dtrue%25252526H%2525253DAqX%252525252Fyxxn%252525252FCsKfNEzXNs%252525252BvxKe7ZZW379%252525252BIapVVCHkcj06tGRioNXHyfncDrdOWtx%252525252Br0W1J4QLTGtbmyE4F7AZ2n8It7KEBxN%252525252FCdm9mJlwE68TzozwkLFxVh7nnDmVKF8e%25252526G%2525253D0%25252526R%2525253Dhttp%252525253A%252525252F%252525252Fmediacenter.usga.org%252525252Fus-womens-amateur%25252526I%2525253D20190530032742.000002d318f6%2525252540mail6-60-usnbn1%25252526X%2525253DMHwxMDQ2NzU4OjVjZWY0ZGFkZGZhZGJiZjVhOGFlOGZmYzsxfDEwNDY3NTk6dHJ1ZTs%252525253D%25252526S%2525253D-wl7Lfzw6R078grqnkBzKAhz-_Rh5pxal6osU8RqYVk%252526data%25253D02%2525257C01%2525257CBDePasquale%25252540USGA.org%2525257C78e72703bae847c6c7f608d6e4af299a%2525257C17abf7083a064391bdbd06808d1b9f81%2525257C0%2525257C0%2525257C636947838303744122%252526sdata%25253D15SAuU5V1rjvw1FsrdDXhoyUUOZ%2525252BEAedxTMqVl6wjtw%2525253D%252526reserved%25253D0%2526I%253D20190606150115.0000048d49d6%252540mail6-114-ussnn1%2526X%253DMHwxMDQ2NzU4OjVjZjkyYTgxZGZhZGJiZjVhOGFlOWJmMDsxfDEwNDY3NTk6dHJ1ZTs%25253D%2526S%253DG15OQMvyd8t6YXgiu65qpg12S9Yt5UD1OAwolskz4mc%26data%3D02%257C01%257CBDePasquale%25) | [ussenioropen.com](https://nam05.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ficm-tracking.meltwater.com%2Flink.php%3FDynEngagement%3Dtrue%26H%3DFcQ5do3Mtm%252F2JnP%252FxXFcY%252BL9mOkU%252Fad4G7kfqxVfSdkEEq1vNf2gyyzca2EI6ZYpbegck3RuIqBuP2vJWOSAMIgEZL5LnwYHySaPOgEP9Fz7dfxT5HwzMw%253D%253D%26G%3D0%26R%3Dhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.ussenioropen.com%26I%3D20190629003919.00000453468b%2540mail6-41-usnbn1%26X%3DMHwxMDQ2NzU4OjVkMTZiMzM1ZDdkNzRjY2IwYWNjMjZjMzsxfDEwNDY3NTk6dHJ1ZTs%253D%26S%3DAMZ0I6Qp4YmEQHPmi0F8_xAIyPuH-d0PW7Bj0BXy2-Q&data=02%7C01%7CJAltstadter%40USGA.org%7C33ce218722c746f0afd408d6fc2ab9d7%7C17abf7083a064391bdbd06808d1b9f81%7C0%7C0%7C636973657766171574&sdata=iNkmi2W2tVXTg0d8950GA90Ju0EhskiRbSa3NsD%2F4vo%3D&reserved=0) | @usga\_pr (media Twitter) |@usga (Twitter and Instagram) | USGA (Facebook) | #USSeniorOpen |
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| **What Happened** Jerry Kelly broke the U.S. Senior Open Championship’s 36-hole scoring record on Friday. And that still wasn’t good enough to be atop the leader board – or even one shot off the lead.That’s a testament to how well his good friend and fellow Madison, Wis., native Steve Stricker is playing this week on the rain-softened Warren Course at Notre Dame.Stricker, a U.S. Senior Open “rookie” at 52, birdied his final two holes to post a bogey-free, 6-under-par 64 for a two-round total of 14-under 126. That’s three strokes better than the previous mark set by Kirk Triplett and Kenny Perry in 2017 at Salem Country Club in Peabody, Mass.Kelly, the winner in Stricker’s PGA Tour Champions event last week in Madison, the American Family Insurance Championship, carded a second consecutive 64 on the 6,927-yard Bill Coore/Ben Crenshaw layout.At their current pace, the two could surpass the 72-hole scoring mark of 264 set by Perry in 2017. But just one golfer can hoist the trophy on Sunday evening.“We grew up playing junior golf together in Wisconsin,” said Stricker of his fellow Badger State native. “I've known Jerry a long time, been a friend of his and family friends for a long time. He's got a boy the same age as our daughter.“It's good to see him playing well, too. I knew this course would set up well for him. It's a course where if you drive it well, it sets up a lot of good second shots, and he's a good iron player. And he's playing well. He's putting well and he's doing everything well, as it shows from winning last week.”Just five days ago, Kelly edged Stricker and two-time U.S. Open champion Retief Goosen in a three-way playoff, one in which Stricker had a chance to win on the final hole of regulation, but missed a putt that sent the tournament to extra holes.The disappointment left a sour taste in Stricker for a couple days. Recharged, refreshed and dialed in – he’s hit 31 of 36 greens in regulation – the 12-time PGA Tour winner has mastered the 19-year-old layout through two days. After playing his opening nine in 2-under 33, he closed with a 4-under 31 that included consecutive birdies to finish the day on Nos. 8 and 9.“My iron play has been pretty strong this week, and I'm holing a few putts,” said Stricker, who didn’t play the U.S. Senior Open the past two years because he qualified for the U.S. Open. “To go bogey-free around here is a good day.”Through two rounds, Kelly, who was the 54-hole leader at The Broadmoor in 2018 before being passed by David Toms on Sunday, is one behind Stricker in greens in regulation (30) and tied with him in putts per round (27.5). Kelly also went bogey-free on Friday, punctuating the round with consecutive birdies on Nos. 17 and 18.“Definitely a continuation from last week,” said Kelly, who has a win and five other top-10 finishes this season. “[I’ve] got a great feel. It's just been the last five weeks or so that I've really had a great feel of my swing and putting. My short game has been good, because I wasn't hitting it very good earlier in the year. So that's tuned up.“So it's just keep on the pedal. Keep hitting good shots and keep trying to get those putts to go in. Just give yourself chances.”Toms, the 18-hole co-leader, couldn’t match his record-tying 62 from Thursday, but still managed a 67 and is three behind Stricker.“I feel good. Game feels good,” said Toms. “I had a couple of bad drives today that cost me, but other than that, I drove it pretty nicely. You know, that's really the key. And then attack when you can, back off when you should, and try to keep rolling it on the greens.”Goosen birdied holes 14 through 17 to post a 65 and, sits five behind Stricker at 9-under 131. Chris DiMarco, who posted a second-consecutive 66, Bob Estes (67-65) and Triplett (64-68) share fifth position at 132.**Notable**Exactly 60 players (all professionals) made the cut, which came at 1-over 141 and matched the lowest in championship history (2017). But for the first time since 2003, and the second since the championship began in 1980, no amateurs will play the final 36 holes. Notables to miss the cut included U.S. Senior Open champions **Olin Browne, Fred Funk** and **Gene Sauers,** 2005 U.S. Open champion **Michael Campbell**, British Open champions **Darren Clarke** and **Todd Hamilton**, and PGA champion **Shaun Micheel.** Also missing the cut was 2018 U.S. Senior Amateur champion **Jeff Wilson**, who earned low-amateur honors in 2018.  Despite a 1-over 71, **Gary Nicklaus**, the son of four-time U.S. Open champion and two-time U.S. Senior Open champion **Jack Nicklaus**, made the 36-hole cut (1-under 139).For the second consecutive day, **Tom Watson**, 69, managed to shoot his age or better, posting a 2-under 68 to comfortably make the cut. The 1982 U.S. Open champion, who birdied four of his last six holes, is the only player to achieve that feat twice while still in his 60s. He also is 17-for-17 in cuts made in the U.S. Senior Open. Watson has **Greg Helmkamp**, the 35-year-old assistant teaching professional at the Warren Course, serving as his caddie. **Jerry Barber**, in 1992, is the last player to match or better his age multiple times in the same U.S. Senior Open.**Vijay Singh** started the championship with 32 consecutive bogey-free holes before suffering his first blemish on the par-4 sixth hole (his 15th of the round).Two-time U.S. Senior Open champion **Kenny Perry** withdrew prior to his round on Friday with an elbow injury. Perry had opened the championship with a 3-under 67. **Tom Kite,** the 1992 U.S. Open champion, also withdrew after nine holes due to a back issue.**Quotable**“Let's first off get it on the table: Steve Stricker is kind of becoming a jerk (laughing). This isn't right. You can't look up at the board and see 14-under. 62, 64. It's not the Greater Milwaukee Open.” – **Billy Andrade** humorizing the leader’s performance through 36 holes“He played nicely. He just never did get the putter going. But making the cut is good. I know he’d like to be a few shots better, and he hit it well enough [to do that]. But the first rule is no one can win the tournament if they miss the cut.” – **Jack Nicklaus** on son **Gary** making the cut“My short iron game is a little sketchy, but I hit some decent shots, enough decent shots today to kind of stay within striking distance of being here on the weekend. I wanted to be here on the weekend again. At my age, 69, you never know how many more USGA championships you're going to play in.” – **Tom Watson** (69-68)“He was quiet, and I was not. He was really good, and I was kind of not. And I think he helped me along. And then when he was on his downside, I helped him along. It's competition and support and friendship. I appreciate everything he's done for my game. I hope he knows I've been there for him.” – **Jerry Kelly** on his longtime friendship with **Steve Stricker**“I'm sure it'll get tougher. They can set some tougher pins. Once they make the cut, they'll have fewer players, and they may get a little tougher with the pin locations. You know, I don't know if it's going to dry out much, just because there's so much humidity, it's not that dry air. I'm no weatherman or anything like that, but usually when it's this humid, things usually stay wet. It'll probably dry up a little bit but still probably be pretty receptive.” – **Stricker** forecasting the weekend conditions“Steve set the pace at 14-under. If you want to beat him you've got to get up there near him. He's probably not going to shoot 77 tomorrow and come back to everybody. That would be more the frustrating part to me than if the leader was at 10 or 11. I would feel, hey, I'm right in this thing. But I'm having to convince myself at 8 that, hey, you're still in it, because there is 36 holes left, and it's not fair to the game, it's not fair to the competition to say Steve has already got the trophy.” – **Kirk Triplett**“I was just telling my caddie (Ryan Rue), it's a funny story, this is like the first real cut that I've made in a long time. I missed the cut at the [Senior] PGA, and on the [PGA] Tour the last couple years, I really haven't played much, but the ones I have played I haven't made the cut. So it was nice to kind of earn this right [to play the weekend]. It feels good. Every time you get to go on the weekend, in a major especially, it's going to be fun. It's going to be a good battle.” – **Chris DiMarco**“The greens started firming up this afternoon, especially on the back nine. The ball was actually releasing and not spinning back like it was on the front nine. So if it's going to start drying out, these greens are going to start getting a little different as the weekend goes on.” – **Retief Goosen**“I said the winning score at the start of the week would be 18 under. That's what I thought because kind of like the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach, the weather and Mother Nature has kind of kept the course where it's not going to get … out of control or fast or weird or anything like that.” – **Tommy Armour III** (69-65)### |
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