

# U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship

## Press Conference Tuesday September 25, 2018



## Sam O'Dell

### Q. First question is how does it feel to be exempt into next year's U.S. Mid Am tour?

SAM O'DELL: I know, it's funny. When I was checking in at the U.S. Am, Parziale was walking out and he's like, So Mid-Am. Where you staying? I was like, I have to qualify for the Mid Am. He's like, You got to what? I'm like, Yeah, you beat me. (Laughter.)

That's sweet. I've never been exempt, so it's another step. It's special. I think it's great. Wow. I mean, I think any time -- especially I haven't practiced a whole lot. You know, I haven't got to play with the boy's little league and everything else, but I think anybody over -- you know, you have practice rounds, two stroke play rounds, and then you got match play.

You're going to have a bad probably four- or five-, six-hole stretch at some point. I think that's where I'm pretty go at knowing like when that happens like it's normal. You just keep doing what you're doing.

I really feel like I'm getting stronger and stronger as the week goes on. I don't know. Yeah, I mean, that's me. But for the first time, honestly, my game -- for the first time like I will be happy like when it's over, you know? I almost feel like Ben was happy to be here and he made it to -- and that's exactly probably how was it last year, you know?

I came out and bogeyed the first hole and wasn't really focused and got down two or three. Everybody is good now, you know? You get down two or three it's hard to come back. It's almost impossible to come back.

So for the first time I think I'm ready to come out tomorrow and give it my best. Want more, and if it doesn't go my way, then I'll shake hands, but...

### Q. Where does making the quarterfinals in this event rank in your golf career?

SAM O'DELL: I don't know. It has to be up there. I mean, I would have answered it different probably three years ago. At this point, all the state stuff, I mean, I've kind of done everything.

Starting to know the guys more and starting to I think compete and believe -- I wish I would have believed like six years ago -- but I finally believe I can compete.

It has to be near the top, you know. I mean, especially West Virginia has had -- we have some good players, but the quality of the field with the USGA and how difficult the course is, you know, if every kind of aspect of your game isn't pretty good, you can't make it this far.

You know, it's just too hard. So I mean, it's up there.

### Q. Let's talk about your match today; dialed in. I mean, you birdie 4 and 5 to go 3-up right away. How did you do that?

SAM O'DELL: Honestly, I made a swing on probably 3 that just kind of felt something. You know, slowed it down a little bit and finally got comfortable and said, I'm going to commit to every shot and it is what it is. That's exactly what I did.

So I just kind of slowed it down; didn't worry about where I was going to miss it. I think I've been worrying about hooking it all week or whatnot and I never hook it.

I finally just kind of settled in and hit shots. It's important, like I told you yesterday. You get up two or three in a match and I don't care who it is. As long as you keep making par -- on a USGA course, if you keep making pars, you know, because I hit it well. I can hit fairways and greens no matter how hard it is almost. I can keep making pars.

It's tough. If you're hitting first and you're hitting in the fairway, even a player that's better than you, it's tough. There are some here that, you know, obviously, can overcome that. Majority of the time I like to think I can at least make it through a little bit.

### Q. Yeah. How long were the putts at 4 and 5?

SAM O'DELL: Let's see, 4 -- I didn't putt on 4.

### Q. Okay.

SAM O'DELL: Yeah, 4 I hit a really good shot in there. Hit a much better drive today. I had about probably 13 feet and he missed it left and then chipped it short and chipped it again and said that's enough.

But on 5 I hit it about nine, ten feet short of the hole. He hit it down in the hazard, hit it in between the



... when all is said, we're done®

bunkers, hit it right of the green on the fringe, and made about a 40-footer for par.

Then I made a 10-footer for birdie.

**Q. What did you hit into 5?**

SAM O'DELL: It was like a 106 shot; I hit 56.

**Q. 56 degree wedge?**

SAM O'DELL: Yeah. I hit driver. He hit 3-wood off the tee, I think.

**Q. How about the birdies at 11 and 12 that kind of put the seal on it.**

SAM O'DELL: Yeah, I mean, that's one of those holes where I think you're better off at 11 aiming at the hole. It looks like you're going to hit it out to the right, but every green here has got the slope. That's why it's important I think you have to commit.

But that's what I told Pat. I'm like, You think I can hit 7 -- I think I can get 7 around there now. He's said, No, you can't. So I said a little punch-down 6 and I hit a little punch perfect, like probably 20 feet behind the hole.

I had a putt that was a little different, but not much. The putt I had yesterday it looks like it goes right all the way, and it goes right and then it goes left.

Then yesterday in my match he hits a putt that -- he probably thought he made it in the middle of the putt and it lipped out left. Pat was like, You remember that? He's like, It's left edge. I love it.

I'm like, I agree. It's going to come back left. I hit it left edge and went right and came back and caught the edge.

12 I made like an eight-footer or ten-footer.

**Q. So sounds like finally the relationship between you and Pat Carter is really working out this week.**

SAM O'DELL: I honestly don't like him. Yeah, he's the man. (Laughter.) We're both good players and both, you know, have our opinions on things, you know.

I told him on 9 -- on 9 I went over and I was like, Pat, you got to get me through these last nine holes. I trust you. I believe what you say. You've got to get me through.

He's like, All right. I'll talk more. The last nine he -- or four, you know -- but he talked every single shot.

Yeah, I mean, he's special. He's done this. There's very few things and there's nothing you can do that he

hadn't done or done more of, you know.

But if I win a few more matches in this I can maybe do something he hasn't done. (Laughter.) He's hoping as much as I am that I can do that.

**Q. Thank you.**