

Cole Hammer, World's Top Male Amateur, Earns McCormack Medal

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. and ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND (Aug. 21, 2019) – Cole Hammer, 19, of Houston, Texas, has won the Mark H. McCormack Medal as the leading men's player in the 2019 World Amateur Golf Ranking™ (WAGR). As the McCormack Medal recipient, Hammer earns exemptions into the 2020 U.S. Open Championship and 2020 Open Championship, conducted by The R&A, provided he remains an amateur.

Hammer, a sophomore at the University of Texas, has spent eight weeks as the world's No. 1-ranked amateur golfer. His standout freshman year included victories at the Southern Highlands Collegiate, Lamkin Grips SD Classic and the NCAA Austin Regional. He also achieved top-five finishes in the Amer Ari Invitational, Augusta Haskins Award Invitational, ASU Thunderbird Invitational, Big 12 Championship and the Northeast Amateur. He was the recipient of the 2019 Phil Mickelson Award as college golf's Freshman of the Year and helped Texas to a runner-up finish in the 2019 NCAA Championship.

Hammer, who made his debut in the U.S. Open in 2015 at Chambers Bay at the age of 15, was also among the finalists for the Haskins Award and Ben Hogan Award this year.

In 2018, Hammer won the U.S. Amateur Four-Ball Championship with partner Garrett Barber, as well as the Western Amateur and Azalea Amateur championships. He was also a semifinalist in both the U.S. Amateur at Pebble Beach and U.S. Junior Amateur at Baltusrol Golf Club.

Hammer will represent the USA in the Walker Cup Match on Sept. 7-8 at Royal Liverpool Golf Club in Hoylake, England.

He was previously selected to represent the USA in the World Amateur Team Championship and the Arnold Palmer Cup.

"This has been an incredible year and I am honored to be recognized with the McCormack Medal," said Hammer. "I am grateful to everyone who has helped me get to this level and thankful for my family and friends who continue to support me."

"Cole is a great representative of the game and the next generation of golfers who are rising through the ranks," said John Bodenhamer, USGA senior managing director of Championships. "On behalf of the USGA, I wish to extend our congratulations to him and look forward to watching him represent the USA at the upcoming Walker Cup."

The USGA and The R&A co-award the McCormack Medal annually. It is named after Mark H. McCormack, who founded sports marketing company IMG and was a great supporter of amateur golf. On Aug. 14, Andrea Lee, 20, of Hermosa Beach, Calif., won the McCormack Medal as the leading women's player in 2019.

Duncan Weir, executive director – Golf Development and Amateur Championships at The R&A, said, "We

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would like to congratulate Cole on this outstanding achievement as he follows in the footsteps of a number of notable golfers in winning this prestigious award.

“Cole has played to a high standard of golf and has recorded a series of outstanding results over this past year. He is a deserving recipient of the McCormack Medal.”

The World Amateur Golf Ranking, which is supported by Rolex, was established in 2007 when the men’s ranking was launched. The men’s ranking encompasses more than 2,700 counting events, ranking 6,200 players from 106 countries. The women’s ranking was launched in 2011 and has a calendar of more than 1,850 counting events with more than 2,850 ranked players from 78 countries.

The World Amateur Golf Ranking™, which comprises a women’s ranking and a men’s ranking for elite amateur players, is offered by The R&A and the USGA as a global service to golf. Through incorporation and assessment worldwide of both amateur and professional events, WAGR encourages the international development of the competitive game. The ranking endeavors to be the most comprehensive and accurate ranking in golf by effectively comparing players from around the world who may never directly compete against one another. It is available to national federations and organizers of amateur and professional events and tours as a criterion for tournament field selection and purposes of exemptions, national team selection, and orders of merit.

The award is named after Mark H. McCormack, the late founder of sports marketing company IMG and an avid supporter of amateur golf. The Mark H. McCormack Medal is awarded to the player ranked No. 1 in the World Amateur Golf Ranking™ after the U.S. Women’s Amateur Championship or the European Ladies’ Amateur Championship, whichever concludes last. Established in 2007, the same award goes to the player leading the men’s ranking after the European Amateur Championship or U.S. Amateur Championship, whichever concludes last.

Women: 2019 Andrea Lee (USA), 2018 Jennifer Kupcho (USA), 2017, 2016, 2015 Leona Maguire (IRE), 2014 Minjee Lee (AUS), 2013, 2012, 2011 Lydia Ko (NZL)

Men: 2018 Braden Thornberry (USA), 2017 Joaquin Niemann (Chile), 2016 Maverick McNealy (USA), 2015 Jon Rahm-Rodriguez (SPA), 2014 Oliver Schniederjans (USA), 2013 Matthew Fitzpatrick (ENG), 2012 Chris Williams (USA), 2011 Patrick Cantlay (USA), 2010 Peter Uihlein (USA), 2009 Nick Taylor (CAN), 2008 Danny Lee (NZL), 2007 Colt Knost (USA)

The USGA celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf’s premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women’s Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment and amateur status rules. Our operating jurisdiction for these governance functions is the United States, its territories and Mexico. The USGA Handicap System is utilized in more than 40 countries and our Course Rating System covers 95 percent of the world’s golf courses, enabling all golfers to play on an equitable basis. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association’s Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world’s most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit usga.org.

Based in St. Andrews, The R&A runs The Open, elite amateur events, international matches and rankings. Together The R&A and the USGA govern the sport of golf worldwide, operating in separate jurisdictions but sharing a commitment to a single code for the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status and Equipment Standards. The R&A, through R&A Rules Ltd, governs the sport worldwide, outside of the United States and Mexico, on behalf of over 36 million golfers in 143 countries and with the consent of 156 organizations from amateur and professional golf.

The R&A is committed to working for golf and supports the growth of the sport internationally and the development and management of sustainable golf facilities. For more information, visit www.randa.org.

<http://mediacenter.usga.org/news-releases?item=122725>