**2021 U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship**

**Sunday, Sept. 26, First Round, Sankaty Head Golf Club and Miacomet Golf Course**

**Jimmy Ellis, Venetia, Pa. – (65, 5-under, Sankaty Head Golf Club, ties course record)**

(on why Pittsburgh golfers are playing well this year in USGA events)

It’s getting the confidence, playing with Nathan (Smith) a lot and he has done so well in these. We can do it too. We play in a lot of the same tournaments, I see him all the time. It definitely gives you a lot of confidence.

(on playing practice rounds with four-time U.S. Mid-Amateur champion Nathan Smith)

We are literally the opposite. He is like the guru of the short game and I usually drive it really good. Any time I can get help on the greens from Nathan (Smith) it is huge because he is the best putter I have ever seen.

(on a few of his birdies today)

The back pins on [holes] 18 and 16, they are really tough to control your spin. Obviously, all of this rain totally changed the golf course. In the practice rounds everything is bouncing over the greens and now we have to worry about it sucking off the front of the greens. So actually it helped me to be in the right rough on 18 because I could just hit a little pitching wedge from 105 (yards) dead into the wind. It had no spin and it just stopped wherever it landed [6 feet].

It so hard to putt out here. I’ve actually widened my stance trying to get some kind of stability because it is so windy. We don’t deal with this in Pittsburgh much, our courses are tree-lined.

(on his confidence from being runner-up in 2021 state amateur and winning 2020 state open)

I won the state open at Oakmont. I know they are not that similar but it is kind of open and links-style. The greens are different here as opposed to Oakmont but it is the same visuals. It’s hard to pick targets, it’s hard to get the right lines off the tee.

(on his goals for the second round of stroke play)

I am not good enough to play it safe and guide it around there. I am going to play my game. I am going to try and make birdies, just try and stay away from the absolute disasters. I am trying to shoot the lowest score I can.

(on his overall play)

I didn’t miss any greens today. Hitting all 18 greens made it a heckuva a lot easier. If you get in some tricky spots around here the greens are really sloped.