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

**Saturday, Sept. 25, First Round, Sankaty Head Golf Club and Miacomet Golf Course**

**Patrick Nealon, Orchard Park, N.Y. – (65, 5-under, Miacomet Golf Course, course record)**

(on his back nine performance)

I just played solid all day. I hit a lot of greens and made a couple of putts. I missed one or two greens in regulation on the back. It was one of those days where everything was on, everything was going well, and I just kind of rode it.

(on his birdie at par-4 17th)

I hooked it left into the rough and had 156 (yards) to the pin. We played just to the front, about 150, and hit a 9-iron to 3 feet.

(one his eagle at par-5 18th)

I hit a great drive and had 190 to the pin. I played it to the front edge and we wanted to clear that one side on the left. It was a great 6-iron to about 3 feet.

(on his expectations coming into the championship)

They were pretty high. I have been playing well all season. I did play poorly last week and I found something yesterday on the range. I played really well at the other course (Sankaty Head) in the practice round.

I went more to a hard cut and kind of neutralized my swing. It really straightened things out as opposed to a bit of a hook. I struck the ball beautifully. I hit a bunch of greens and had a lot of chances. It was just one of the those rounds. It was solid, it was fairways and greens.

(on whether he fed off playing partner Yaroslav Merkulov who shot 66)

I was honestly just trying to keep up with him. I knew we were both playing well, we were both striking it well and he was hitting it close. I thought let’s just keep up with him and I will ride his coattails. That’s what really happened and I got a second wind on the back nine.

(on setting the course record)

It’s pretty neat, I was surprised honestly. I knew it’s a very tough course. It’s very challenging, a lot of tough holes, very long holes. It means a lot. It’s probably the first course record I have ever set.