

# U.S. Amateur Championship

Friday, August 21, 2015

## Sean Crocker

### Press Conference

PETE KOWALSKI: We'd like to welcome Sean Crocker, a 2 & 1 winner over Austin James in the quarterfinals to advance to the 2015 U.S. Amateur semifinals.

And Sean, that's a pretty good spot to be. Tell us how you did it. You were shaking your head when you first came in. Tell us a bit about the match.

SEAN CROCKER: Well, I mean, Austin played really good golf today. But he played a type of -- a different of version of golf than I would play on that golf course. He hit a lot of 2-irons to keep the ball in the fairway. I'm a little more aggressive hitting drivers. But in his benefit, I didn't hit any fairways today. I might have hit one or two. Kind of put me in trouble a lot where par won a hole here and there.

So I kind of got it together coming back down the stretch, made a couple fairways and made a birdie here, which won a hole. And then I made a really good par save on 13, the short drivable par 4 and made like a 15-foot putt there to put the pressure on his birdie putt, which he missed, which kind of gave me the upper hand there.

Then he kind of found a very tough spot on 16, and ended up winning that hole to go 1-up.

On 17, he made a great par save, which was very, very good. And he put himself in a tough spot on 18 in the bunker and I hit a -- I felt like I hit a really good second shot into that green, just kind of hit it a little long. And then that putt just looked really good the whole way. Got a good read and good speed and ended up going in the hole.

PETE KOWALSKI: What was the length of that putt on 18?

SEAN CROCKER: 35 feet I think some, where around there.

**Q. Did you have to tell yourself anything? We were out there on 9 and watched you clunk a couple of trees, and you fall back to 2-down. Is there anything that you're telling yourself at that point, like you've got to get it going here?**

SEAN CROCKER: Yeah, went to the bathroom, washed my face a little bit, took a breath and stepped on that tee thinking I was all-square with him and had

to go from there.

**Q. How many fairways did you hit, if you can recall? And given that you didn't hit very many, do you think you got a way with one today? Will you change your game plan tomorrow?**

SEAN CROCKER: Absolutely. If I don't hit fairways tomorrow, Bryson is going to kill me. He's not the type of player that you can go out of the rough hitting it to 30 feet all day, because he's going to be more or less on the fairway, on the green and super close going for birdie. Right after this, I'm going on the range and try to fix that driver. I think I must have hit like four.

Yeah, I did get away with it because Austin didn't hit driver. He hit two drivers today. And on this golf course, being a bigger golf course than we are used to, hitting 2-irons and having to hit 6-irons and 7-irons into holes, it's going to be tough to hit it close. That made par a really good close out there.

Kind of like his match with Jake, par won I think just about every hole out there with him and Jake.

PETE KOWALSKI: Do you know what you think you might be doing with the driver? Do you have some help you can reach out to?

SEAN CROCKER: Yeah, I'm going to give my coach a call, Neal Smith, right after this and ask him. I usually have a problem going left but the driver is going right right now. See if he has any adjustments for me. Pretty sure he's watching, so he'll have seen a few, and go from there.

**Q. Has the driver been an issue with you all week or just today?**

SEAN CROCKER: I'd say late, like yesterday afternoon's round, but yeah, usually that's the strongest part of my game, hitting it long and straight. If I can get that going, you never know what's going to happen.

PETE KOWALSKI: You don't seem concerned, but you know you've got something to fix, right? Is that the deal?

SEAN CROCKER: Yeah, but it's not usually something big to fix. I put good swings on it today. Just timing might have been off or a little thing at the top. But I'm



not worried about it. Should be able to get it done in the next 40 minutes.

PETE KOWALSKI: So the stage you're on now, is that as big a stage as you've ever experienced in your golf career, considering what we talked about yesterday, your golf career isn't that long for a young man.

SEAN CROCKER: Yeah, yesterday, just getting to today, was pretty big. With now four guys left, there's nothing that comes close to it. I'm feeling really good, and my game is feeling good, so see if we can go even further.

**Q. Yesterday you made I think a 20-footer to win. Today you made a 30-footer to win. So the question is: What are you thinking over both those putts, because the likely -- if you go percentage-wise to make those, you're in the ten to 15 percent range, at best. So what are you doing in your head thinking about what you're over those putts?**

SEAN CROCKER: Yesterday's put I would say is a little different because in my eyes, I had to make that. If I miss that, I thought I was done, going home, packing bags and everything.

But today's putt -- I looked at my caddie and said, let's lag this thing nice and close. And for it to go in was just a plus side, just ended right there.

I feel like I'm stroking the ball really well this week. If I can hit my lines with good speed, I feel like I have a chance of it going in all the time. I mean, I guess it's the case all the time, though.

**Q. Did your teams run to the championship match in the NCAA? Do you feel like you're kind of back in that situation again and do you have a chance here for a National Championship, something like that?**

SEAN CROCKER: It definitely calmed the nerves the whole time, because nationals I would say is my first time having camera crews around and everyone running around and galleries.

So to be able to have that in the back of my mind saying, hey, you have these people next to you the whole time and just hit the shot like you've done a hundred times. That's one of the biggest things that someone said: You've hit this shot many times in your life.

But nationals is a little different because it's team play and you're out there playing for your team. Stroke-play, you don't want to make big numbers and knock your team out of it. But in a match-play situation, you are by yourself, but you are trying to get that point for your

time. The match-play portion of it did prepare me for this, so, yeah.

**Q. You trailed that whole match until late. In your mind did you feel the whole way you were going to win that match?**

SEAN CROCKER: In the beginning, I had a feeling that if I can just hit the ball like I've been doing and putt well, it was going to be hard to beat me out there. But started off super slow. Hit some bad shots. Made some -- I think I made a couple doubles which is just giving the hole away which you can't really do in match play.

I thought because he was hitting 2-iron all day, if I can just get the ball in the fairway with the driver, I was going to have a better chance of making a birdie and even better chance of making par than him holding it.

PETE KOWALSKI: Speaking of what happened with the team at the NAAs, how is your comfort level with match play growing, or is it?

SEAN CROCKER: I love match play because it's one-on-one. You can make it 12 and keep on going and next hole, you're only 1-down losing a hole.

I mean, I struggled at nationals. I got beat twice and won once, and that was a comeback win, so I was trailing the whole match.

I just think out here, the golf course suits me pretty well. So I'm not too worried about the match play portion. If I can just go play my game, hit my shots like I have been, I should have a really good chance.

PETE KOWALSKI: You said that if you don't hit fairways, Bryson is going to kill you. But how do you prepare to play somebody like Bryson in your head and when you are out there on the course?

SEAN CROCKER: I'm just going to take it one shot at a time the whole day. I'm really not too worried. It's just a northern person to me. It's obviously Bryce and he's a top-ranked player and he's a great player, too. He's beat people pretty badly in this tournament so far.

But I feel like if I can play my game, hit the shots like I want to hit them, I can keep up with anyone out here. So if I can do that, I should have a good chance.

PETE KOWALSKI: Thanks so much. Well played and congratulations.