

# U.S. Amateur Championship

Thursday, August 20, 2015

## Austin James

### Press Conference



**Q. We've got Austin James, a 2 & 1 winner over Jake Knapp to advance to the U.S. Amateur quarterfinals. That must have a nice ring to it.**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, for sure, it was a goal of mine to get to match play, and it's nice to see all my hard work is paying off this week.

**Q. Take us a little bit through the match, key points and big shots.**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, I got off to a little bit of a slower start. My first couple matches I was up early, and this match that wasn't the case. He made a nice birdie on the 1st hole and I was down after that. I made a really nice par save on the 2nd hole from pretty much jail. I was down probably 30 yards below the green, over the green, no green to work with, and made a nice par there, and that kind of calmed my nerves a bit, and I think that was kind of a turning point for me early in the match to get my nerves under control and to start playing good golf.

**Q. And then you won 5 and 7 to go 2-up, and that basically was the difference?**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, that kept me 1-down still, which was nice not to go down two. I thought for sure I was going 2-down, so I kept it at one, and then the next hole I won and made a nice save on the next hole, as well, after that, so then just kind of was in a groove, won a couple holes and just stayed up from there.

**Q. How much match play experience do you have?**

AUSTIN JAMES: Tournament match play, not a lot. I can't even remember the last time I did a tournament in match play. But when I'm home and at school, I play a ton of match play. At school I play matches in our off-season. We always do match play. And then when I'm at home, I've got a good buddy of mine that goes to Kent State, and me and him play match play every time we play, which is five times a week. Match play is pretty comfortable for me in that scenario, but yeah, not much in tournaments.

**Q. Who's your buddy from Kent State?**

AUSTIN JAMES: Josh Whalen.

**Q. You said your goal was to make match play. You're well past that one. What's the goal now?**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, honestly throughout this whole USGA experience, I've just kind of been making new goals as I go. I showed up at a qualifier in New York,

and my goal was just to get into this, and I was pretty excited. I was excited just to get into it, came here. New goal was to make the cut, squeaked by that one, so I was pretty excited after that. And ever since then it's just been new goals to keep going, keep playing my own game, and see where it takes me.

**Q. In terms of your own game, when everything is going well, what are your biggest strengths?**

AUSTIN JAMES: When everything is going well, I'm a fairly long hitter. Today I didn't feel like it. I played with -- Knapp was hitting it so long. It was crazy how long he was hitting it out there, so I felt pretty short today. But usually I'm a long hitter. So that helps me because it's a really long course, and I can hit a lot of 3-irons off the tee, which is nice, keep driver in the bag and fight the wind a little bit that way and just kind of hit fairways and greens. I feel like putting is definitely a strength of mine.

**Q. Is Walker Cup anywhere near your goals now?**

AUSTIN JAMES: I don't think I can play the Walker Cup. I'm Canadian, so I can't play the Walker Cup.

**Q. But Connelly, he's Canadian, too.**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, but he's dual. He grew up in Texas. I was playing with Denny this morning, and he's pretty much a lock for -- or should be a lock for Walker Cup. He's had a great year. I was at the Porter Cup a couple weeks ago and he won that, which kind of locked it in for him, and so it was just kind of cool to be playing with someone of that caliber and throughout this tournament, someone that's going to be on the Walker Cup that is obviously pretty talented. It's a big deal, so pretty cool.

**Q. What was the hole this morning, I think he cut into your lead, he had like 15 feet and you had 10 feet and he was hoping to flip a hole, he missed and you made? Was it like 12, 13?**

AUSTIN JAMES: I won 12. What was 12 out there? Oh, the morning match with Denny? Yeah, for sure. 12 with Denny was good. The match was still anyone's game at that point. It wasn't -- I didn't have a very big lead, and he had a good look up the hill from, yeah, 15 feet, and I had about a 10-footer down the hill that I couldn't really hit very quick, couldn't be aggressive with it. He hit a really good putt there actually. I remember the wind just kind of pushed it off a bit. And

then mine, the wind pushed it into the hole. So it's just kind of the way it goes there, and I was happy to get that one.

**Q. Is this a course you can see people making a huge string of birdies on in match play, or is it just too demanding?**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, I think for sure people can get it going out there. I don't know how accurate it is, but I heard Bryson DeChambeau went off this morning and was under par for sure. The scores in stroke play were under par, so it's doable out there, but you have to hit some quality shots a bunch of times in a row because the course is pretty demanding and you've got to hit fairways and greens. But yeah, if you have your putter rolling and you're hitting fairways and greens, you can do that out there for sure.

**Q. What would you count as your biggest golfing highlight to this point?**

AUSTIN JAMES: To this point? Last summer I had a really good summer. I won the Canadian Junior. Obviously not quite to this caliber of a tournament, but that was definitely a highlight of my summer, just knowing -- just the golf I was playing at that time was -- I was really enjoying it.

And then last school year we won our conference tournament from behind. We were like five back or something and had a huge last day, and that was really cool. That obviously wasn't more of an individual highlight of mine because I didn't play exceptionally well that week at all, but definitely a highlight for memories on the way back and definitely one of the highlights of my golf career for sure.

**Q. Did you ever do any of the Foley junior stuff?**

AUSTIN JAMES: No. No, the Foley -- I never went to any of those academies or anything like that. No, actually from Canada, I took some time off in the winter usually growing up until I went to school really, I would take probably four or five months off in the winter, so it was really nice being in a southern school, now I get to golf all year-round, and I'm enjoying that.

**Q. Why did you hesitate to try to get in this or why did you think you wouldn't get in this? Why wouldn't you have just expected to be in this?**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, no, that's a good question. I went to the qualifier, and I had a confidence that I knew I could do it for sure, but obviously just the way -- with how many qualifiers there are and two spots, you have to play good golf. I knew I was playing good golf, and it was just a matter of doing it. But you're not expecting to get in by any means because it's a tough thing to do, right, so I don't want to -- I didn't want to expect it and just assume that I was going to get in. I had to get out

there and actually do the work, make sure I was picking good lines, making sure I was doing good things beforehand, and it's just great the way it worked out.

**Q. Was there a part in the spring or early summer that you were going to say, I'm going to try, no, I'm not going to try, yes, I'm going to try, or did you always think you were going to try?**

AUSTIN JAMES: Yeah, I didn't go to the U.S. Am qualifier last year, and I saw a lot of Canadians got in, so that was definitely a decision of mine. I had my summer schedule picked before I went home after school, and so I had that as part of my schedule for sure was to do a U.S. Am qualifier, and the fact that I got in was kind of a bonus at the end of the year before I go to school, which was nice.