

# U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship

Press Conference

Wednesday September 14, 2016

## Stewart Hagestad

**Q. So you're going to the finals. It was a tough match today.**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Super tough.

**Q. Talk about how close it was for a while?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Yeah, I just kind of the same thing this morning. I just played a little bit better golf. We kind of just kept throwing good shots at each other and I couldn't get anything to fall. I knew that if I could kind of get it to the back nine and trust myself and commit to hitting some good golf shots that hopefully we'd be okay. Yeah, he's a tremendous competitor. The last couple nights we've kind of stayed out practicing and putting and I've gotten to know him a little bit. He's a super, super good guy, and I can't wait to see him down the road.

**Q. Now talk about on 9, I believe. You just lost to go back to all square, and then you put yourself in a tough spot on 9. Talk about that up-and-down?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Sure. I just didn't make a very good golf swing and hit a bad shot. Shoot, it's 245 downwind, and unfortunately, you can't really miss that back pin. So really just got to step up and hit a good one, and unfortunately, I didn't. Yeah, when I saw the lie I kind of looked at J.D., my caddie and I was just like that's a gnarly, brute ally. Like whoa. I didn't even know that could happen.

Yeah, it was tough. He had a 35-footer and it's match play, so you've got to -- I think there is kind of an essence of there is a time to be conservative and play aggressively, and there is also a time to kind of go for the hero shot. Like in that situation, the hero shot was just putting it on the green, let alone trying to put it close.

So I just tried to get myself 25, 30-foot anywhere on the green where I could go and make a two-putt, and hopefully he made a mistake. I guess, luckily for the match, the viewers or whoever, USGA, whoever was following. I hit a pretty darn good shot up there, made the putt, and he made a great two-putt. But let's just say I don't really want to go do it again.

**Q. Now you were in danger of losing that hole, basically. Losing two straight to go down-1. You won then number 10 to go back 1-up.**



STEWART HAGESTAD: Sure, momentum is a huge part of it. But it's just one golf shot. Match play is obviously a little different than stroke play. So you've just got to kind of go back to trusting yourself and hitting committed golf shots. Yeah, it would have been a bummer.

But this morning I was 3-down and would have just told myself to do the same thing. Just keep plugging away and hopefully make some good golf shots. I was lucky that's what I did coming in.

**Q. And you guys had a bunch of holes in between then. You were 1-up for a while, and then you connected on a couple holes in a row to kind of end things?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Yeah, I was hitting good golf shots. Even though we were halving holes, I always kind of felt like I was in the driver's seat in the sense that I was hitting good golf shots and I felt solid. Even though, you know, again, we kept having holes, I felt like I was the one that kind of had a better birdie look or maybe was forcing him to do something.

Unfortunately, I didn't get anything to fall. But I think was it on 14 when he hit a good wedge in there he was like, all right, this is where the fun begins. You're even. Let's see. No, maybe I was 1-up. Yeah, it was just like, hey, let's lock in and let's try to close the door.

**Q. Now being from California, as a finalist you're exempt into the U.S. Amateur next year which is in L.A.**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Oh, it is at Riv?

**Q. Yeah. So talk about that a little bit?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Well, I've been lucky enough to try to qualify for the U.S. Am seven times and I've been lucky enough to qualify seven times, so it's really -- it's really hard. So it's really nice to be exempt.

Every U.S. Am is special, but to play in front of my friends and family, that's going to be really, really cool. I've got some goals that I'd like to accomplish. In a perfect scenario, hopefully we'll have a couple special weeks in L.A. next year.

**Q. How are you feeling? You've played a lot of golf the last couple days. How are you feeling**



**physically, mentally?**

STEWART HAGESTAD: Yeah, but everyone has. It's stressful, everyone's anxious, it's all part of the process. I mean, I was texting an old mental coach of mine from back in high school. His name's Matt Cuccaro, and him and another guy named Ted (Indiscernible) have kind of helped me throughout the college recruiting process. Both those guys were very consistent in what they said. Obviously all of the adages: Go commit to every golf shot, hit the best shot you can, but more than anything else, enjoy the opportunity and enjoy the challenge because everyone here is such a good player.

Most of these guys, if not all of these guys, are not just the best guy at their club, but the best guy in their state. So the challenge of going up against a guy like Dan or like Scott, I mean, you've got to relish that. Win or lose, obviously everyone's going to want to win. But what a cool opportunity, and I'm really looking forward to the challenge.