

U.S. Senior Amateur Championship

Quick Quotes

Wednesday September 21, 2016

Matthew Sughrue

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: I kind of, I think the fatigue kind of got to me early in the round but I kind of pulled it together and hit some shots coming down the stretch when I needed to and I feel very good about it. I feel really good about it. I played great all week and when it really counted and I did in this match as well.

Q. You had to grind all day today. Both matches were up-and-down.

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: The Hanzel match was a real grinder. It was a touch match against a great player. We didn't play as well in this one, but on the back nine, we both kind of steadied and coming down the stretch, it's not stroke play, it's a matter of who wins the match.

Q. What happened on 18? I saw your tee shots and nothing else. What happened after the tee shots?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: We were both in the rough. He hit it short and left. I hit it on the green to about 40 feet. A great shot. And I putted it down to a few inches. And he hit it by about 12 feet and missed it.

Q. So then what's your, you got new life, what are you thinking coming to the first tee?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: I feel very fortunate to have gotten through this match. Like I said, we have talked before, you got to be a little lucky. And I caught a player who wasn't playing his best when I wasn't playing my best and I won. And you got -- out of six matches you got to have at least one of those to get through. But I'm very excited about this.

Q. Has it sunk in at all yet that tomorrow morning you're playing for a national championship?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: Not really. Not yet. Like I said to you last night, I just, I think we're going to go to Sonic, get an ice cream, have some dinner, and kind of let the tension come out. It's been a long day and, but I'm really, really happy. This is obviously my greatest golf accomplishment to date and I'm really proud of the effort. It's been a great, great week already. To get to the final just makes it that much better.

Q. How valuable is a caddie on a day like this, a double round day, so much stress, to deal with that?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: Pat was absolutely essential to me. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Pat. I wouldn't



have made it through the playoff in the qualifier. I wouldn't have gotten through this match, this was really tough. I was pretty much on cruise control in these other rounds. I was hitting the ball great and putting great. But today I really needed him and he was there and he deserves a lot of credit for this victory.

Q. He had the hole he hit it in the water, you won that hole and you went one up I think going to 16, and then you hit your tee shot way right. Were you starting to think about the finish line already?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: No, I was just, I'm just kind of fatigued. My lower body is not moving very well right now and so the timing's off. That's what happens when you get fatigued, your timing gets off. So I hit a few loose shots. But when it counted, on 17, I got it up-and-down and 18 I made four. And that's really when it counted.

Q. I noticed you a couple times chipping out with your hybrid. How long have you been, have you always done that?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: No. That lie was particularly horrible. It was in some sodded area and it, I didn't get relief. It was determined I didn't get relief. And I used a 23-degree rescue and it really was the perfect club for the shot. It was down in a hole. It was a terrible lie. And I popped it out perfectly. I'll remember that one. That was -- when the official says it's over, you got to forget it and you got to get it up-and-down to win, because it looked like, if I got it up-and-down, I had a good chance of winning the playoff.

Q. So, I don't know if you know you're in the Senior Open next year now as well as the U.S. Am.

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: I am?

Q. You're in the Senior Open, the U.S. Am, and the Mid-Am.

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: As a finalist.

Q. Yes, as a finalist. Most people are excited when they learn that.

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: I'm glad you didn't tell me. I wouldn't have been able to take it back on that last shot.

Q. And you're three years into this now as a finalist, you have a three-year exemption.

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: Well, wow, I'm just getting showered. Well, you know what, darn it, I've earned it. I played so many qualifiers and I made it through my share, and I'll take the break, I'll take the break and the exemption, darn it. And the Senior Open, this is just like one of my greatest goals. I made one Senior Open and I had a tough week on the golf course and I just, I think it was overwhelming for me. I never played in front of 40,000 people before. So, but I vowed that if I ever got a chance again I would be ready for that. And I, and I wanted to try to prove myself again at a Senior Open and now you're telling me I'm in. I'm just thrilled.

Q. How much do you practice or work as opposed to golf?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: Well, I have a full practice as a psychotherapist.

Q. How much golf does that allow you to play?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: When I'm playing in a golf tournament, that's when I'm playing. If I'm not playing in a golf tournament, I'm not playing. You can -- he can attest. I come over in the middle of the day between my sessions, like I'll have morning patients and then I'll work for an hour and a half on the chipping and putting green, and then I run back and I work until eight or nine, 10 o'clock that night.

Q. Does that mean you don't play golf in the winter?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: No, I don't. In fact, that's my busiest time. School, I'm a family therapist, so I work with families. So, when kids are in school, I tend to be very, very busy.

Q. What is psychotherapy?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: It's talk therapy. It's psychology, using psychology to treat mental illness and relation problems.

Q. So, all your life have you been even before you did this, made this decision to be a psychotherapist, were you interested in other people and that?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: I've had, I've done quite a bit of mentoring work with jail populations. But you found or somebody found my thesis, I guess, and which was on chronic male homelessness, so I have an interest in that. And my residency was all about homelessness. I worked at a shelter for three and a half years or three years. In Manassas, Virginia. So I would have to say that not all my life did I have an interest in doing this, I was an insurance executive, I built an insurance business, and then sold it in 2012. But I knew that I didn't want to knock on doors and manage people forever. And so -- and I'm a worker, so I wanted to have something I could do and this was a career that

was suggested to me and given my mentoring work, all I had to do was get through grad school.

Q. Where did you go to?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: Virginia Tech. That's one of the top graduate programs for this discipline, which is marriage and family psychotherapy. Relational therapy.

Q. How long did it take you to get through?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: Three and a half years of school work, clinical internship, and a thesis. And then post-Masters I had a three-year clinical residency. Which was a lot of work. So I didn't do a lot of golf, I did no golf in during graduate school, but post-Masters I had a little bit more time, because I had sold my business, I was doing both, so I started playing a little bit more.

Q. Did you play golf as a kid?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: I did. In Bethesda, I grew up at Bethesda Country Club, I was a junior golfer there and I went to college and I played some, I played golf at the University of North Carolina. I wasn't an A team player action I was mostly a B team player. I was not a particularly big success. I think I was somewhat of a disappointment to my coach.

Q. You're a late bloomer.

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: I am definitely a late bloomer.

Q. I've heard an Ian Baker Finch story. Is that true?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: It is true. I was at a tournament last year, right after the Senior British at Royal County Down, and we, after a round, Mike Donald and Ian Baker Finch and I had lunch and I had just gotten back, and I was trying to kind of make sense of what happened there, because I was in the lead with two holes to go and bogeyed the last two. And Finch walked me through the 18th hole there, I told him what I did and he kind of said, hey, you know, you tried to win it.

Q. Was that a decision of laying up or going for it?

MATTHEW SUGHRUE: Yeah, it was. I thought it was a pretty easy decision for me, because I had driven it so far down there I could actually see the pin, which is unusual there, and the layup would have been only about a hundred yards and I could fly it over all those bunkers and get it up near the green or on the green and probably win at that point. But Pat played it conservatively off the tee, he had to hit an unbelievable great golf shot on his third shot into the wind of a 4-iron to that green, and I'm sure you know it, so he earned it. He earned it. And it was a special moment for me. But anyway, Finch gave me some good advice and it made me feel a little better.