

U.S. Amateur

Monday, Aug. 12, 2024
Hazeltine National Golf Club
Chaska Town Course

**Caden Fioroni,
San Diego, Calif.**

5-under 65 (first round, stroke play)



Q. Bogey-free and four-under to start your third U.S. Amateur, how are you feeling?

Fioroni: It felt pretty solid, especially for the way I hit it today. My last two events, my short game's been killing me – wedges, chipping, putting. Last week, I reached out to one of my good buddy's dad, who's a putting and chipping coach, and I spent the majority of my time last week, like 75 percent, just working on my short game and wedges. Didn't even acknowledge my swing much besides setup. I didn't necessarily hit it great today, but you can play pretty good if you have those three going for you.

Q. Did you change anything in particular with the new coach?

Fioroni: Just some setup stuff. Different strokes, the motion of it, and chipping... just a couple setup things. I also took a putter from one of my friends, started using it and it felt good and was putting great today.

Q. You're on a new putter?

Fioroni: Yep.

Q. How long ago did you make that switch?

Fioroni: Three, four days ago.

Q. And then you come into a U.S. Amateur with it, did you have any moments of doubt out there with it?

Fioroni: I mean, the first couple of holes it took a little to get comfortable with it. But, so my friend actually left it at my house, and I just put it down – I have a putting green in my back yard – and I'm like, this feels good. I've been searching for my putter for a long time, it's been a struggle putting. But it feels like my strength right now, so I'm excited.

Q. Any key birdie or par saves out there that kept your momentum going?

Fioroni: Yeah, I was so confident in my wedges that on hole 15, a 490-yard par 4, technically par 5, before the round even started I went into it knowing I was going to play it as a three-shot hole. And I hit 3-iron off the tee, on basically a 500-yard par 4, then laid up with an 8-iron to 75 yards, and then stuffed it in to 5 feet and made par like that. That was the most feel-good hole. Everyone, my dad's like, 'What are you doing? It's basically a par 5?' I'm like, 'Yeah. I'm laying up and I'm taking out a 5 or 6.' Because the fairway's super tight, and then you have to hit a 4 or 5 iron, with water. If I'm one-back of the cut line, with one hole to play at the U.S. Am, then maybe I'm not sure I pull that off. But right now I'm just trying to get to match play. It's just game on.

Q. Hazeltine is a pretty different course than [Chaska Town Course], how are you adjusting your gameplan heading into tomorrow?

Fioroni: Yeah, I'm going to go head over there now and hit the range, because I got away with it a little bit on this course today. I know that Hazeltine requires excellent ball striking, and you have to have everything going, or it's going

to be a long day. I'm excited for the test, I love tough golf courses. I'm going to battle it out, and hopefully I come out on top.