

UNH's Fuller enjoys stint as caddy at U.S. Junior Am



Carter Jenkins (left) of Raleigh, N.C., shoots from the rough of the 11th hole while caddy Ryan Fuller, a member of the UNH club golf team, stands nearby during the U.S. Junior Amateur championship on Wednesday in Stratham.

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STRATHAM — As North Carolina's Carter Jenkins poured in birdies, recent University of New Hampshire graduate Ryan Fuller started thinking.

"It was unbelievable the way he hit the ball," said Fuller, a three-year member of the UNH club golf team and Jenkins' local caddy. "I thought it might be a really long week."

Instead, Fuller could do little but offer support in the greatest upset so far at the U.S. Junior Amateur Championship.

Jenkins, who shot a 69 on Tuesday and carded 10 birdies over 36 holes of stroke play, was stunned in match play Wednesday by No. 60 qualifier Matthew Scobie, 2 and 1, at the Golf Club of New England.

Scobie, who carried his own clubs and strolled about in his own little world, led for 13 of the 18 holes and clinched the match with a pretty sand-save on 18.

"I honestly just wanted to land it on the green," Scobie said of his clutch bunker shot, which rolled just a few feet past the hole. "This green all week has been crazy with balls running away, so any putt I had left I would have been happy."

Scobie credited his win to his final 12 holes of stroke play on Tuesday. He made the turn at 6-over, then caught fire with a 3-under back nine. The surge helped him make the cut for match play by one stroke.

It didn't take Fuller long to realize Scobie was an atypical 60-seed.

"Right when I saw him hit his first drive, and he almost kept it up with Carter, I said 'Wow, we're going to be in for a battle,'" Fuller said. "This kid can hit it long."

Fuller, 23, who reached the Round of 32 at the N.H. State Amateur Championship last week, had hoped his deep background in match play would help Jenkins. Aside from the State Am, Fuller said his club championship at Keene Country Club is a match-play format.

But Jenkins never found his game on Wednesday. He twice allowed Scobie to win holes with bogeys, and he never got the match square again after a double bogey on hole 12.

"I had to kind of tread carefully," Fuller said. "I know match play. So even today, when he was 2-down with three to go, I was like 'You know what? He probably doesn't want to hear anything from me. This is a big deal for him. I'll just let him be.' Whereas the practice rounds it was more cracking jokes and whatever.

"I don't caddy often. So I was like, 'What would I want to hear right now?' And the answer was probably nothing."

Fuller and Jenkins looked to be a solid tandem on paper. Fuller played two years of Division II golf at Bentley University before transferring and joining New Hampshire's club team. Last year, Jenkins shot a pair of 69s to win a junior tournament in Raleigh, N.C., which earned him a spot in a PGA Nationwide Tour event in his home state.

But their time together was short-lived at the Golf Club of New England.

"I met Carter Saturday with two practice rounds," Fuller said. "He was a great kid. He hits the ball about 100 yards farther than me, so I respected his game. He's a nice kid from the South. It was very fun."

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