

## Family Matters as Gunner Wiebe Leads the 2020 National Car Rental Assistant PGA Professional Championship

By John Dever  
November 13, 2020

**PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla.** - As the 36-hole leader at the National Car Rental Assistant PGA Professional Championship, Gunner Wiebe of Sherman Oaks, California had a phone call to make.

Wiebe had just posted a second-round 67 at PGA Golf Club in Port St. Lucie, Florida to pair with his opening round 70. He was at 7-under par, good for a two-day total of 137, and leads Alex Beach of Stamford, Connecticut by one stroke.

He's playing well. Just two bogeys in as many days and his Friday round on a suddenly docile Wanamaker Course was highlighted by a hole-out for eagle. Life was good, so why not share the good vibes with his father, Mark Wiebe, a two-time winner on the PGA TOUR and the 2013 Senior British Open Champion?

"I have a great relationship with both my parents. My wife is incredible too," said Wiebe, a PGA Assistant Professional at Bel-Air Country Club in Los Angeles. "They all individually encourage me to play as much as I can. But my Dad is the only coach I have ever had.

"My swing is unique and I manage it myself. My Dad wants me to be, ... me. Then, we get together to fine tune things. That process has been a challenge within this pandemic, but I was with him for three days last weekend, which put me in a good frame of mind for this event. I am fortunate to have him in my corner."

Having hit 16 greens each day, Wiebe's mitigated the stress with a "good number of tap-in pars," which he appreciates because they provide his mental game "a welcome rest. It is just easier that way."

That doesn't mean he hasn't converted some scoring opportunities. Like on the Wanamaker's 15th hole, when he holed out from 136 yards for eagle.

"I had a similar shot and yardage (136 yards) last year, so I knew what club to pull, which was a little 9-iron that I wanted to carry 128. I just did not want to go over (the green). ... I saw it land on the green, but did not see the ball. Then my playing partner (Brian Quilter of Old Lyme, Connecticut) yelled, "Dude, ... it is in the hole!"

Wiebe took the lead at 7-under, with consecutive birdies on Nos. 6 and 7, followed by back-to-back pars on 8 and 9 as he finished his round on the Wanamer's front side.

In all, 18 players are within five shots of Wiebe entering the weekend, including Beach, the defending champion with a rich resume that includes three consecutive entries in the PGA Championship and a victory in the 2019 PGA Professional Championship.

Beach (73-65, 138) posted seven birdies and an eagle on the par-5 16th Friday to atone for a rare quadruple bogey in Thursday's opening round. His second-round 65 was the low round of the week, to date.

Both of Thursday's co-leaders, Aaron Purviance of Park City, Utah and Jin Chung of Lawrenceville, Georgia, are two shots back after carding even-par 72s on Friday. They are among three players that are T-3 at 5-under, 139.

With a two-day total of 142, Brittany Kelly, of Fishers, Indiana, is T-12. She is one one three women in the field.

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