

Clemson University grad and Greenville native Lucas Glover wins U.S. Open Championship

It was a final hour packed with emotion as Lucas Glover won the United States Open Championship at Bethpage Black in Farmingdale, NY. There were stories all around this tournament, from Phil Mickelson's stirring bid to win for his beloved wife as she battles breast cancer, to David Duval coming out of nowhere and almost winning for the first time in eight years. But Lucas Glover had a story all to his own and he would go on to play the kind of golf that wins a U. S. Open Championship under difficult conditions. He made only one birdie in the rain-delayed final round, and it could not have been at a better time. Lucas holed out a 6-foot birdie putt on the 16th hole to break one last tie for the lead, then held on with pars to close with a two-shot victory. "It was a test of patience, that's for sure," Glover said. "It was just heart today."



Glover, a graduate of Wade Hampton High School and a three-time All-American at Clemson University, had not won since holing out a bunker shot on the final hole at the Disney tournament nearly five years ago. But once he was given the lead by Ricky Barnes, Glover was rock-solid till the end. Glover would hit two of his best shots of the final round to the 16th green for his lone birdie, and this would make for a climactic finish to a U.S. Open filled with closing drama. It was the first time the U.S. Open ended on a Monday without a playoff since 1983, courtesy of relentless rain.

Glover finished at 4-under 276, earned \$1.35 million and will move inside the top 20 in the world ranking. When he made his final putt on 18, he pulled his cap over his head and walked off the green and into the arms of his wife, Jennifer, stopping next to hug his parents. Lucas after a long week hoisted the silver trophy no one expected to be his, and told the cheering crowd, "It's an honor, and I'm just excited and happy as I can be to be on here."

It's impossible to get a really good look at Lucas Glover without seeing the shadow of his grandfather, Dick Hendley, behind him.

His grandfather, Dick Hendley was a member of the Clemson Sports Hall of Fame, an All-American football player and baseball catcher. He was a blocking back for Frank Howard (Frank Howard was Clemson's version of Knute Rockne) in the single wing in the days before facemasks. He went on to play for the Pittsburgh Steelers for one season, then quit when they went away from the single wing because he knew he was too slow to do much of anything except punish people out of the backfield.

He returned to Greenville, got his degree and worked for the local minor league baseball team, the Greenville Spinners. Mr. Hendley would go on to start a cleaning company called IH Services that today services everything from factories to hospitals. In 1996 the family started a new company devoted to the staffing industry, named Pinnacle Staffing, Inc.

Mr. Hendley remembers giving Lucas his first set of clubs when he was only two years old. The set of clubs had a wood with Mickey Mouse painted on the head. That club is now framed alongside Glover's trophy for winning the Funai Classic. When Mr. Hendley saw that he couldn't take Lucas any further himself with his golf, he took him to Texas, to work with Dick Harmon. Harmon's brother, Bill would later say, "Dick Hendley is what America was built on, guys like him."

Lucas Glover had a simpler view of his grandfather, "He's my hero, to start with."

Adapted from www.PinnacleStaffing.com

