

Conservatory Adult-Junior Championship

The Harbor Challenge

Tournament Story



What a great weekend of golf we had this past weekend. I couldn't have been more pleased with the outcome of our two events. First on Saturday we headed south down I-95 to **Hammock Beach Resort Conservatory Course** for the second and final Adult-Junior Championship of the year and then on Sunday the junior tour players teed it up at the Eagle Harbor Golf Club for the "**Harbor Challenge**". This was our 18th tournament of the season. Wow, Really? Time is flying by! Both events were filled with exciting times and outstanding memories for our junior tour players, their parents, grandparents, guests and a few of our NFJG Staff members who finally got to show their stuff.

On Saturday, arriving at the gates of the Conservatory Course one could only be pleasantly surprised as they drove through the gates to receive their first glimpse and preview of the golf course. As you passed by fairways and greens the views would give you the immediate impression of a PLUSH golf course and indeed it was. Upon arrival at the clubhouse if you weren't impressed at what you saw, I would say you were blind. The clubhouse can simply be described as an architectural masterpiece. What a great place to spend the day!

I'm going to tell you right off the bat, if you ever go to Conservatory order the breakfast sandwich, it was the bomb! One of the best breakfast sandwiches I ever sunk my teeth into. I think, if you took a poll, everyone would agree.

The Adult-Junior originally scheduled in January was postponed due to imminent severe weather. At the time it was a tough decision to postpone, but that decision turned out to be a great move given the 80 degree weather we had to play in. Besides the great weather, the course was a truly a delight to play. It was in perfect conditions and fun to play. Yes it was tough, but trust me, you would not be disappointed traveling south to play this great course. That is unless you get intimidated by the course length of 7747 yards from the tips. Yep it's a long one, but fast! Seven or so tee boxes, a distance for everyone to enjoy.

For this event with a unique format, many players (adult and junior) had to experience the tips, as the Scramble format had a little TWIST to it. At the start all players would play from their respective tee box based on age and gender with tees set at a reasonable distance. Make a birdie and you would be required to move back a tee. Eagle a hole and you moved to the TIPS. Par or bogey a hole and you moved up a tie. This format designed by me was created to balance out the talent level and create a closer end result. It works every time and the scores reflected it. In the end, champions would be identified and wouldn't you know it Slammin Jay Adams for the third time in a row would take home the Gross Division champions trophy. Obviously, he loves this format. This time, it was my pleasure to be

paired with this young man who six years ago started his golfing adventures under my tutelage. As his past instructor, I can only be so proud of a young man who has elevated his game, through struggle and hard works. Jay has elevated his game with his current instructor, Boots Farley.

Jay and I tag teamed to shoot 10 under par to bring in the winning gross score of 62. Trevor Humphries and Kirk Irvin were next in line with a 64 for the runner-up spot and hard charging Brody Stevenson and Neal Pease took home the third spot at 65.

In the Net Division, Andrew Riley and Steve Ritter would fire a nice 60. They also shot 64 gross. Jacob Carter playing alongside partner and Dad Steve Carter took home the runner-up trophy with a score of 61.50 and Orlando's Kaleb Palm and NFJG Staffer Mike Charrie grabbed the third place award.

If you missed us this year, make sure you put this on your list of events to play. These events are always fun to play in and a good way to spend some quality time together.

On Sunday, 56 TOUR Players teed it up in Fleming Island on another golf course in GREAT condition. A player's favorite, Eagle Harbor Golf Club is a great track to slap it around. As head golf professional Marshall Collin's is quoted as saying "The course is Popping and Looking Good". Meaning the grass is growing and filling in nicely. Indeed he was correct, the course was in fabulous condition and here again the scores reflected it. What's great is, we get to play this course again in three weeks-time and it should even be better then.

Let me not even beat around the bush, because this day was owned by two players who played their hearts out with some of their best golf on the NFJG TOUR. Gavin Fleming would be the young man to top the 56 player field with a four under par 68. This would be Fleming's low round on the NFJG TOUR. Fleming would post up five birdies, 12 pars and one lone bogey. That's one AWESOME round of golf! Fleming would take home the Gold for his third win of the season in the **Boys 10-12 Division**. With his win he would tighten the race for Player of the Year and the Spring Series Championship. Finishing in the second spot and taking home the Silver Medal would be another hot player in Cam Goldknopf. Goldknopf carded a 75 while Jackson Klauk finished third with a score of 77.

St. Augustine's Logan Underwood playing in the **Boys 16-18 Division** would be the next in line for the best rounds of the day posting up a nice one under par round of 71. Underwood jarred two birdies, 15 pars and a single bogey to take home the Gold. Fernandina's Jay Adams and Jacksonville's Ryan Poblacion would tie for the next spot at 76. A scorecard playoff would reveal Adams the second place winner and Poblacion the third place award winner.

Genevieve Bushey in the newly formed **Elite Tour Girls 13-18 Division** lead the field with a fine round of 78. Bushey would top the field by two strokes over Lacey Tucker and five shots over third place winner Tylar Ann Whiting. The **Girls Rising Tour** would only have two players in the field. Thanya Arasu would win with a score of 87.

Campbell Kennedy and James Clay Tucker were the feature players in the **Elite Tour Boys 13-15 Division**. Both players would post scores at two over par 74. The two players would play extra holes to determine this week's champion. Kennedy would make it look easy as he had stuck his approach shot on the first sudden death hole to two feet. Tucker would miss his birdie attempt and Kennedy would tap in for the win. Kennedy would also win his semi-final match play challenge against Jack Hardy by 4 & 3 to advance to the championship round at Pablo Creek Golf Club. Finishing in third would be Brody Stevenson.

The **Rising Tour Boys 13-15 Division** would have one of the largest fields of the day. Fourteen players worked hard all day to keep it in the short grass. Cody Tucker and Tucker Fletcher would post the best scores at 79 each. They too would head to the first tee for a sudden death Play-off. Cody Tucker would be the victor and Tucker Fletcher would be presented the Silver. Jameson Adams with a score of 82 would finish in the third spot.

The battle continues in the **Foundation Elite Division** with Ryan Houck narrowly outscoring Alyzabeth Morgan. Houck stroked 78 times to win and take a bite out of the Gold. Morgan three shots back would be presented her third runner up medal to go with her five Gold Medals. Lucas Elliot with two wins this year would also shoot 81, but would lose in a scorecard playoff to Morgan and take the Bronze Medal.

The **Foundation Rising Division** welcomed a new member in Dylan Frein. Frein from Fleming Island and home to Eagle Harbor would shoot the low score of 40 to take a nine stroke lead and the win at the "Harbor Challenge". Looks like he'll be headed to the Foundation Elite Tour real soon. Kathryn McNeil playing in her first NFJG TOUR event and would take the Runner up spot with a score of 49 for her first NFJG TOUR Medal and South Hampton's Danielle Dailey would grab third place for her third medal of the spring tournament series.

This week is the "Junior Azalea". I hope you can play as this event will be one of the most popular events around in the coming years. Fully paid exemptions to the annual "Azalea" Tournament will be supported by the Palatka Men's Golf Association and matched by the NFJG Foundation. This short Donald Ross golf course can make you pull your hair out, but it is fun to play and a challenge for all!

See you on the links!

Jack Aschenbach, PGA

