

The North Florida Junior Amateur

World Golf Village – Slammer and Squire

July 16 & 17, 2018

Wow!

What a great field for the **North Florida Junior Amateur**. This annual junior tournament held at the World Golf Village – Slammer and Squire year after year for the past four years has gotten bigger and better as the years go on.

Eighty-seven (87) players in the field this week with 74 players in the 13-18 divisions. Fifty-two players in the Boys and 22 players in the girl's division, plus the Boys 10-12 and Foundation Rising Tour. Now this is the field size everyone one of our Web.com Junior Players Tour events should have. I've said it many times, "build it and they will come". Put this one on the books for next year if you missed us this year. This event could reach 144 players. What do you say, let's make this happen. This is North Florida, the home of junior golf, isn't it? Let's do this!

We'll start this "story of the day" with a young man who hasn't played with us for some time, but we're glad he's back and he's back with added skill and devotion to the game. Ponte Vedra's Jack Barsed worked on his game to make his reappearance back on the NFJG TOUR and would come ready for bear! His guns were a-blazing as he hit the course. Five straight pars, a birdie at the par-4 5th hole and then another at the par-3 7th hole would start his opening round that include another two more birdies and a perfect scorecard on his inward half. Barsed would post the low round of the day at 69 amongst several under par rounds to take the overall lead and the leader in the Elite Tour Boys 13-15 Division.

Campbell Kennedy, the Player of the Year and Web.com Top Honors Award points' leader would be just one stroke back posting a round of two under par 70. Campbell's round included six birdies on the day. Riding the third spot and working on his swing with changes that normally go bad before they get good would be Jackson Klauk at two over par 74.

In round two, with tougher course set up and hard to reach pin placements, most would play steady golf, but only one player would mount a push towards cutting into the leader's advantage and that player would be Jacksonville's Moses Compaan. Compaan would birdie the opening hole while the leader bogeyed. Compaan would be derailed with a bogey at the par-5 4th hole followed by a triple bogey and the par-4 6th hole, but would continue the fight for the lead. Barsed would birdie the par-5 4th and the par-4 6th hole to regain his comfortable lead. He would then have back to back birdies at the 10th and 11th holes to fend off any challengers. Barsed would take the title as the "North Florida Junior Amateur" Champion by five strokes over a very steady Compaan. In the house at 144 Barsed was also the "Overall Tournament Leader", but would need to wait some two hours to seal the deal.

In the Boys 16-18 Division Jacob Saarela would also make a return to the NFJF TOUR. He would also post up six birdies on the day leading him to a score of two under par 70 to lead the division and stay one stroke back in the overall competition. Following Saarela at the top of the leader board would be Jacksonville's Cade Black at one under par 71. Black, who can just "bomb it" recorded five birdies on his

round. Rounding out the leader board after the opening round would be Jake Luczak and Pace, Florida's John David Cobb at even par.

In round two, Saarela would find himself in early trouble with two double bogeys in his first three holes would put Cade Black and John David Cobb defending the lead. A birdie at the par-4 5th by Saarela would put him at ease, but at the turn Black would hold the lead by two strokes, but a double bogey at the par-4 10th hole would make it anyone's championship. Saarela, the seasoned veteran that he is would seize the moment with back to back birdies at the par-3 13th and par-4 14th holes. Bogeys by his competitors would make the journey a little easier as he sailed into the final hole. Saarela would outshine Runner up Cade Black by two strokes and would come in at a total score of 144 to tie the "in the house" leader Jack Barned.

THE PLAY-OFF: The two players would head to the 9th tee to decide the "Overall Champion". Both players would make impressive approach shots at the first play-off hole which lead to birdies. At the par-4 10th hole both players again would hit outstanding approach shots to less than 12 feet, but this time both would miss their birdie putts on the tricky green. Back to the 9th they went and again they would both hit approach shots to within 15 feet. The balls would end up two feet apart and in line with Barned the closer and the advantage to see the putt of Saarela. Saarela reading the ball to break left, stayed straight and missed the bird. He would tap in for par. Now knowing the putt was straight in Barned stroked as pure a putt as one could strike. Right into the center of the cup it went for a birdie and a win of the "Overall" Championship.

Barned, with the win would earn a spot on the NFJG TOUR Shootout with the Web.com Tour Players prior to the Web.com TOUR Championship.

In the Girls 13-18 Division past champion Olivia Whitten would once again be in the lead with her five over par 77, but this year she would have another 13 player's right behind her in reach of the lead with just one stroke of the club. Camille Jackson would join Whitten at the top with an outstanding score of 77 and Katelyn Huber and Reni Jancsik would be one back at 78 each.

On the Rising Tour Girls side of the field St. Johns Ashley Huffman would lead the way with a fine score of 79. Two back would be Thanya Arasu 81.

Round two for the first round leader would be a story of bogeyitus (if there is such a word). A lone birdie at the par-4 10th hole would do Whitten no good. The race to the top of the leader board could have been any of the top seven players in the field of 22 girls, but the final few holes would tell the story. Truthfully no one was hot, the players were all just chugging along with no one making a move, but while everyone in the top 10 were bogeying or double bogeying the final three holes Reni Jancsik was masterfully putting the course to shame. She would fire a two under par score for her final five holes with back-to-back birdies at the 17th and 18th hole to claim the rights to a very coveted trophy. With the win Jancsik would secure her spot in the NFJG TOUR Shootout with the Web.com Tour Players come September 19th prior to the Web.com TOUR Championship.

Camille Jackson would play hard all day. She had one of those rounds, birdie, bogey, par, birdie, bogey, and par and was just unable to mount the challenge to overcome the leader Jancsik. Jackson would once again take home the Runner-up trophy for her fine efforts.

In the Rising Girls Division the opening score of 79 by Ashley Huffman would be a great buffer to hold off just one challenger for the lead. Only two players in the field of eight would better their score over round one and they would be sisters, Taylar and Madison Paige. Madison by one stroke and Taylar who made a strong push towards the top of the leader board five strokes. Although making up six strokes on the leader on the back nine Paige would come up a few strokes short, but with her fine back nine score she would catch Thanya Arasu to tie for the runner up spot and win the award in a scorecard playoff.

The Boys 10-12 Division would have some fire power in the Division. Phillip Dunham just won the Junior World Championship in California and several of the NFJG TOUR top contenders were in the field. Surely it was contemplated that Dunham would prevail once again, but this week the fireworks would be started and finished by Jacksonville's Nolan Harper. Harper with a birdie at the par-4 3rd hole and then another at the par-5 8th hole would tie Dunham at two under par at the turn. Dunham one stroke back at the par-3 7th hole would make up ground by draining an eagle putt at the par-5 8th to offset Harpers birdie to bring both players to the turn at two under par 34. The duo would battle back and forth on the back nine. Harper would birdie the 18th hole to come in at even par for the nine and two under for the round. Dunham would bring it home in 39 with a double bogey at the par-4 18th and would be three strokes back of Harper at 73.

Round two for the overnight leader would not turn out as planned and we'll just leave it at that. Although Nolan Harper had visions of repeating his first round score, it just was not to be. At least on this day.

Phillip Dunham would birdie the first hole to make his move, but would run into troubles on holes 4-6. A Birdie at the Par-5 8th and he was right back in it. At the turn, Harper was still the leader by two over Dunham and three strokes over Cam Goldknopf. Birdies at the par-5 11th hole by Dunham and Goldknopf would inch them closer to the leader and a double bogey by Harper at the par-4 12th hole would begin the fight to the end. Goldknopf would also birdie the par-5 16th hole to catch Dunham who carded a bogey and both players would go into the final two holes tied for the championship. Goldknopf's two under par 34 on his back nine was the momentum he needed to carry him through at 2-hole sudden death play-off. At the par-3 2nd hole he would capture the title of Champion with another stellar birdie.

The Rising Tour Boys 13-15 Division would find Gainesville's Christopher Terzian in the lead with a 78 and a one stroke advantage over Max Asher who fired a 79. Jameson Adams would be two back at even 80. In round two the round of the day would come from a player to far back to challenge, but Collin Small gave it an awesome try. Small fired a round of three over par 75 to best his first round score by 14 strokes. Jameson Adams and Christopher Terzian playing in the same group would go head to head. Terzian at the turn would take the lead, but three holes with "Other" scores would ruin his chances of snagging the champion's trophy from a young man itching to be advanced to the "Elite Tour". Adams would birdie the par-5 16th hole on his way victory lane. Terzian would hold off Small by one stroke with a needed par at the tough finishing hole.

In the Foundation Rising Division the battle would be between four players and anyone of the four have proven that they are winners in the division, but the opening day would result in two players tie at 42 to take the overnight lead. Jacksonville's Maxwell Morgan and St. Augustine's Preston Shields would hold that honor. Four back would be Cash Winch, followed by Laila McNair.

In the final round Morgan would take charge early with a birdie at the par-4 14th hole. Morgan would go on to win the championship by seven strokes over Runner-up Preston Shields who carded a score of 51 for a total score of 93.

Many thanks to all who played in this event and congratulations to all our winners.

The final two day event is the NFJG TOUR Championship at Marsh Landing Country Club and at Glen Kernan Country Club. Champions for this event will have their trophies presented to them at the Annual Awards Banquet on August 8th.

See you on the links!

Jack Aschenbach, PGA