

The Jacksonville Junior Championship

Eagle Harbor Golf Club

July 9th and 10th, 2018

The Greater Jacksonville Junior Championship got underway this past Monday at Eagle Harbor Golf Club. Nearly 60 players took on the challenges in the hunt for the title as the "CITY CHAMPION". As you may be aware, the NFJG TOUR hosts as many as 40 events annually including TOUR and special events. Great events, one after the other, but there is only one "CITY CHAMPIONSHIP" and that is the "Greater Jacksonville Junior Championship". Next season this title will be changed to the "FIRST COAST JUNIOR". This event once known as the "JAGA Junior" should be played by every top junior player and those aspiring to rise to the top. The GJJC is once again sponsored by the men of JAGA and run by the NFJG TOUR. A great combination indeed! Many thanks to JAGA Past President Fred Seely, Jeff Adams, Tournament Director for JAGA and our own JAGA Treasurer and Administrative Assistant Kevin Glynn for their outstanding support for this event. The mission of JAGA is to grow the game of golf for our youth and our adult golfing community. Their hope is that our junior golfers will continue their amateur golfing path through JAGA. Did you know JAGA gives out junior scholarship awards? Well they do as well as run great golfing events in our area. Check them out on the website at www.jaxareagolf.org

It's good once again to be back at ***Eagle Harbor Golf Club***. Head Pro Marshall Collins cleared the way for this year's event and the staff and those playing are pleased he did. The course is a player favorite and our TOUR is always welcomed with open arms and treated with the greatest of respect. In addition, many of our tour players play out of Eagle Harbor Golf Club.

Well! Welcome back Dragon Theam! Dragon hadn't played with us in some time, but it's always nice to have our finest players return to the TOUR, as they should. This is a TOUR which our top area junior players should be part of even if they are seeking higher level junior golf. Our area is filled with the best junior players around and it just makes sense they all compete together once in a great while here in Jax. "THE BEST OF THE BEST" junior tournament is in our future. Stay tuned for that.

Dragon Theam, a Jacksonville resident and Julington Creek Golf Club champion started his return to the NFJG TOUR with a PERFECT tournament leading score of **three under par 69**. Throwing up a 35-34 to lead the **Boys 16-18 Division** and the overall field. Theam was flawless with no blemishes on his scorecard. Fleming Island's Peyton Billings was playing some fine golf once again as well with a score of 35-35 for **two under par 70**. Cody Carroll and Tommy Bishop would find themselves five strokes back with two over par 74's. Round two would result with a pairing of Theam, Billings and Carroll. A top billing for sure!

Round two's opening nine would end with the same result as it had started with Theam one stroke ahead of Billings, but a birdie at the 10th by Billings would set the stage. Theam would answer back with a birdie at the 11th and so would Carroll. Carroll would also birdie at the 12th to start his push with back-to-back birdies, but then would card back to back bogeys. The par-4 14th hole would be the turnaround as Billings would pop in his second shot to the par-4 for an **EAGLE-2**. Billings would add another birdie at

the par-4 17th hole to secure the victory and title as “City Champion” and Overall Tournament Winner. Billings would earn a NFJG TOUR membership into the 2018-2019 season and a fully paid exemption into the 57th Annual JAGA Amateur, but would relinquish the exemption as he is headed to the National Junior Championships. The next NFJGTOUR Member in line for this exemption would be Jacksonville’s Cody Carroll. Carroll will join Hayden Zitzewitz representing the NFJGTOUR in the JAGA Amateur. Good luck to both and CONGRATUATIONS Peyton Billings on your continued fine play!

Girls 13-18: Keystone Heights Camille Jackson would be the next player in line with red numbers. Jackson would post her lowest round ever with a **one under par 71** to lead the **Elite Tour Girls 13-18 Division**. Lisa Colee from Deland, Florida would throw up an even par round of 72 to stay three back and Palm Coast’s Alexandra Gazzoli would be come in at two over par 74. Gazzoli would have the only Eagle of the day at the par-5 16th hole missing an albatross by six inches behind the cup. The **Girls Rising Tour Division** would be lead by Victoria Greene with a nice 89. Two back was Belle Thiede at 91.

The Girls final round would be more of a learning experience for the round one leader as taking home the lead had to be exciting, yet nerve racking at the same time. Jackson would manage her game well during round two balancing bogeys with birdies, but three birdies in a five hole stretch by Colee would be added pressure and a deficit to deep to come back on. Colee would finish her back nine in two under par for victory by six strokes firing a closing round of even par 72. Jackson first round 71 would keep company with a deflated 79, but would be good enough to earn the Runner-up position and the Silver Cup. Not bad for two days work. A great showing by both. Congratulations! Colee would also be the “Girls Overall Winner” and earned a complimentary membership into the 2018-2019 NFJG TOUR Tournament Season.

Boys 13-15: Ponte Vedra’s Lucas Slayden playing in the **Elite Tour Boys 13-15 Division** would take home a one stroke lead over Savannah, Georgia’s Reed Lotter with a score of even par 72, Lotter a one over 73 and Jacksonville’s Carson Brewer three back at 75. Colton Swartz from Fleming Island would take a four stroke lead in the **Rising Tour Boys 13-15 Division** with a three over par 75. St. Augustine’s Nicholas Farraye would be back, but still in reach at 79.

Round two would be more steady play from two of the most consistent players on the TOUR (Slayden and Lotter). The hotter of the two players would be Slayden, but Carson Brewer would make the first push with a birdie at the very first hole to apply some pressure. Slayden would return the pressure with a birdie at the 2nd, 6th and 9th holes to turn at 34, Campbell Kennedy trying to make a move would birdie the 7th and 8th holes and then add a trio of tweeters at the 12th, 13th and 14th holes. He would be first to post a leading score of **three under 69**. Yep, you guessed it, Kennedy was all smiles! Slayden would ease his way to victory with his outstanding play by firing a **one under par 71** to capture the junior title as “City Champion”. Lotter fighting to the end would birdie the 17th hole, but his uncharacteristic double bogey at the par-3 13th hole would be costly as Kennedy nipped him by one stroke to take the Silver Cup. None the less, all three champions for their fight for par.

The **Rising Tour Boys** round one leader Colton Swartz would have no challengers for the championship as he continued his ELITE STYLE ball striking. A 39-39 closing round would give him a victory margin of 13 strokes over his nearest competitor. Great Play Colton! The battle, well it was for the pride of the Silver Cup and Yuriy Dekalsky would put on a fine performance as he bounced back from an opening round of 87 to fire a seven over round 79 to overtake Nicholas Farraye and tie Jameson Adams. A scorecard playoff would result in the Dekalsky the victor for the Runner up spot.

Boys 10-12: Tyler Mawhinney of Fleming Island would take home the lead in the Boys 10-12 Division, but Cam Goldknopf was fresh on his heels just two back to make the final round interesting to watch. Henry Robards shot 77 to stay in touch.

Round two would be all the Mawhinney Show as he continued his fine play. Turning his opening nine for round two at one over par 37. He would have a surge with back to back birdies at the 11th and 12th holes to bring it in at two under for the final nine and **one under par 71** for the day. He would take a 12 stroke lead to victory lane over Cam Golfknopf who would answer his first round 77 with an 82 to hold off any challenges from Henry Robards.

Once again many thanks to the staff at Eagle Harbor for their outstanding support of junior golf.

Up next is the North Florida Junior Amateur. The Slammer and Squire awaits you!

See you on the links!

Jack Aschenbach, PGA