

The St. John's Open

St. John's Golf and Country Club

January 21, 2108



Finally!! Some great weather to play some outstanding competitive golf. Wow!, another great field of players tee'd it up this week at **St. John's Golf and Country Club** for the **St. John's Open**. It's been two years since we last played this course, so it was good to get back on the *Clyde Johnston-designed course*. We were scheduled to play the course last June, but severe thunderstorms canceled that event, so happy to be back and get it in. Many thanks to the staff and members for hosting us.

St. John's Golf and Country Club as you can imagine is a very busy golf course. Unfortunately we were only able to get a later tee time start due to heavy course utilization. With more than 70 players in the field and a 11:30 am double tee start we knew we were in for a challenge to get all the players around the course to complete their round and we were right in our calculation as four groups of the Foundation Elite Division could not complete their rounds. Slow play really was the culprit here, but we will address this at a later time.

Cones, cones, cones! There were orange and green cones everywhere. Not actually, but they were on the back of every green to identify the area in which players should position their golf bag to proceed to the next hole. The GOAL, take the bag their immediately upon reaching the green, select your clubs for your shot (hopefully the putter) and proceed to the ball. This practice will save 15 minutes per round. Even with instructions to do so, many did not observe, causing delays.

If you played in Sunday's field you know first-hand the golf course was in great shape with some very testy pin placements. The golf course is not overly long and is a treat to play as the fairways are lined nicely with trees both left and right off of the tee with a little water here and there on the course to help you steer the ball. The course had a respectable 6-6-6 set. Six holes easy, six holes medium and six holes difficult with one nasty pin placement on the upper slope of the par-3 17th hole, but many endured and paid attention to the dangerous pin locations.

Funny! After all the communications I put out about the course being located on SR210 only one person got it wrong this time and went to St. Johns Golf Club off SR207. It's a running joke with the NFJG Staff, as it always seems to happen to someone. This time to the staff. Right Kyle?

Katherine Jakeway tops the leaderboard again this week. It's been awhile since see's tee'd it up with us, but it's always nice to have Katherine back with us now-and-again. Jakeway lite it up early as she started out three under par after five holes of play and four birdies on her opening nine. She would pencil-in five birdies in all as she claimed Gold in the newly formed **ELITE GIRLS 13-18 Division**. Jakeway would also claim rights to the low round of the day with 73 to take top honors in the entire field.

Also in the Elite Tour Girls Elizabeth Kondal, who makes St. John's Country Club her home course would birdie the slick par-3 17th and the very difficult par-4 18th to take hold of the Silver Medal while the "Beast" Tylar Ann Whiting would fire an 80 to capture the Bronze.

The also newly formed **Rising Tour Girls 13-18 Division** would find Genevieve Bushey claiming rights to the Gold Medal with a fine score of 85. Thanya Arasu would post up an 88 to capture the Bronze and MacKenzie McCormick and Taylar Paige would shoot 89's each to tie for the third spot. A scorecard playoff would reveal McCormick the winner of the Bronze.

Hayden Zitzewitz, the **Boys 16-18 Division** Fall Tournament Series Winner would put another notch in his belt with another first place finish and his second win of the season. Zitzewitz would only birdie two, but those would be the strokes that would help him out shine hard charging Logan Flores (80) who took the Silver and Hunter Boahn (82) who nipped out Jonathan Lumley for the Bronze. This was Boahn's first medal of the 2017-2018 season.

In the **Elite Tour Boys Division** James Clay Tucker would be the man to grab Gold. A triple bogey does not stop a player with will and determination, no matter what the circumstances. Because a player with confidence, like Tucker comes back and birdies four holes. Tucker would shoot a smooth 75 to tie for the lead with five times a birdie man Andrew Riley. In a five hole stretch from hole #8 to hole #12 Riley would birdie four times to get it to three under after 12 holes of play. The next six holes Riley come in six over par to shoot his 75. Campbell Kennedy continuing his fine play would be sitting in the wings and would be the player to accept the Bronze with a 79 on his round.

Tucker and Riley would head to the first tee to play-off for the championship and Tucker would secure the Gold within the first hole.

In the **Rising Tour Boys 13-15** Max Asher would birdie just one hole (hole #6), but that birdie would turn out to be the golden stroke as he out stroked Hill Flanigan by one stroke to accept top honors. Flanigan and Adam Vermut would tie for that runner-up position and Flanigan would win in a score card play-off.

Our **Boys 10-12 Division** saw Cam Goldknopf birdie three in a row at holes #3, #4 and #5 and another at the 12th hole for good measure to have the right to his first Gold Medal Finish. Right behind him was mister steady Mathew French who carded three birdies of his own. However, a double bogey at the difficult par-4 18th hole would prove costly. Cody Tucker would add to his medal collection as his 80 was good enough to take possession of the Bronze Medal.

The **Foundation Elite Division** would have the largest field of the year with 15 players. Luke Balaskiewitz fired a two over par 38 to claim Gold for the second time this season. Congrats Luke on your fine performance and congratulations as you move up and head to your new challenges in the Boys 10-12 Division.

Bryson Hughes would be just three strokes back with a nice 41 to have the Silver Medal slipped over his head and Lucas Elliott would win a scorecard play-off over Ryan Houck and Christian Paige at 46 all to win the Bronze.

Joseph LaNasta in the **Foundation Rising Division** would take home the Gold. This would be LaNasta's second win in just two events, Danielle Dailey would keep it close with a wonderful 51 to win the Silver Medal and Teigen Kornick would be presented the Bronze Medal for this first event with the NFJG TOUR and his first medal.

Once again many thanks to all who played. Great job by all. Up Next is the Adult-Junior Championship at Hammock Beach – Conservatory Course. There is still room, but you need to sign up quickly. Currently we have 50 players in the field.

Following this event our next MAJOR is the Match Play Championship. More details will be available in the next day or so. There is a price break if you sign up early. Between now and February 6th the cost is just \$120. After the first deadline date the cost will go up to \$145. It is critical that we sign up early for this event so we can get things organized. The opening rounds are at Deercreek Country Club and the Championship match will be played at Pablo Creek for TBD divisions/players. Not everyone will be able to play there. Sorry!

See you on the links!

Jack Aschenbach, PGA