

# The Dr. Gordon Ira Golf Classic

## Hyde Park Golf Club

June 13 & 14 2018

Another outstanding golf tournament! Thanks for participating.

It's always great to play at the history rich Hyde Park Golf Club and it was great to see all our friends there this past week. The club members and the Hyde Park Men's Golf Association are huge supporters of junior golf, especially the North Florida Junior Golf Tour and we're grateful for their support. Again this year they had a cook out for all our players and provided transportation back and forth to range. **Florida-Georgia Windows and Doors** also supported the event by providing a **Chick-fil-a** lunch for all players and parents. Thanks to all!

Did you know this Donald Ross designed golf course is getting a new facelift. The current ownership is making some course changes, they've added new maintenance equipment to help improve course conditions and they are currently working on the exterior and interior of the clubhouse to give it a more up to date look. The course, although wet from the recent heavy rains is looking good! Better than years gone by and many of our junior players who have played in this event over the years agree. It's the best the course has looked in a long time.

Head Pro Billy Drake said the addition of the course superintendent and some new course equipment has made a HUGE difference in the course improvement. Freeing up a few dollars hasn't hurt either. Check it out, the course is a great deal of fun to play and you're sure to get a warm welcome. Take my word for it. Go play it and then let me know. Many thanks to Billy Drake, the Men's Golf Association and the staff at Hyde Park for a wonderful two days of golf.

Speaking of fun, that's what last year's champion Peyton Billings is all about. Enjoying golf is what makes the difference. Peyton, an outstanding young man and a prodigy from Magnolia Point Country Club who has committed to the University of North Florida Golf Team has a golfing demeanor which is acquired by most champion players. His confident, level headed and calmness regardless of circumstances is what takes him to the finish line ahead of most in the competitive fields.

This past Wednesday and Thursday Billings came ready to defend his title in the Dr. Gordon Ira Golf Classic. Knowing the value of this title he defended it with a tight grip that would require challengers to take the championship because he was not going to give it away.

Billings started out his open round with back to back birdies at the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> holes to take the early lead and made a silent statement of, "come get it boys, if you're able". Billings had one lone bogey on the day at the par-4 third hole, but added two more birdies for a total of four and an opening round of three under par 69 and the low round of the day.

Hayden Zitzewitz also playing in the **Boys 16-18** would be fresh on the champions trail. Zitzewitz would post up three birdies and an eagle to finish just one stroke back at two under par 70. Todd Roy would be at even par 72.

Playing in the **Boys 10-12 Division** Phillip Dunham would have four birdies on the day and be another challenger for the overall championship. For this event, the overall champion can come from any 18-hole division.

Round two would start out slow for the challengers, as each of the top players closest to Billings would bogey the first hole while the leader would make par. Billings would then pounce on the challengers with birdies at the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> holes to take a comfortable and commanding lead, but the fight was not quite over as Zitzewitz mounted a comeback with five birdies in a seven hole stretch to tie Billings after the completion of the 16<sup>th</sup> hole. Billings making no mistakes was making steady pars, but would manage no more birdies. Jacob Saarela would also card five birdies in a seven hole stretch, but offsetting bogeys would keep him from surging forward and pressing the leaders.

Zitzewitz now tied with Billings after the 16<sup>th</sup> hole would press a little too hard and would double bogey the short par-4 17<sup>th</sup> hole and miss a short birdie attempt at the last to come up just one stroke shy. Both Billings and Zitzewitz would shoot outstanding rounds of one under par 71 leaving Billings the Boys 16-18 Champion and Zitzewitz the Runner-up. Although the division championship is a prestigious title the one title all the players come for is the **tournament overall** and the right to put your name on the **Dr. Gordon Ira Trophy**. The championship was still in question. As a matter of fact, it was just not in question it was in jeopardy and in the hands of Phillip Dunham standing on the 18 hole tee box. Dunham the Boys 10-12 Division round one leader had a very slow start to his second round bogeying three of his first five holes of play to fall well off the lead, but six birdies in his next nine holes would put him atop the leaderboard one stroke ahead of Billings as he headed into the 18<sup>th</sup> hole. Dunham (playing behind Billings) would just need par to take the championship as he witnessed Billings bogey the hole. Dunham's approach to the 18<sup>th</sup> green would be left and end up in the greenside bunker. Known as a great bunker player, Dunham was assured at getting this easy shot up and down, but a thin shot would sail the ball to the far side of the green resulting in a bogey on the hole to end his day two under par for a two day total of four under par to tie Billings for the Dr. Gordon Ira Award.

The two players would head to the first tee for a sudden death playoff. At the first, both would par the hole and they would head to the 100 yard marker to play a shortened par-3 hole. Dunham first up would sh--k his tee shot left behind trees 50 yards from the green. Billings would hit his shot to 25 feet. Dunham stunned by his tee shot would take a moment to gather himself, as a true champion would. Regaining his composure and concentration Dunham would take dead aim and hit a punch shot under the trees that would be in direct line with the pin. The ball would hit 30 feet before the pin, skip once and checky-check three and ½ feet from the pin. A fabulous shot, it was!

Billings would putt his ball and would leave the ball three feet short. Still work to be done and life to be had if the par putt was made, but Dunham would pull his putt missing and Billings would make his three footer to claim victory and his back to back championships and join Robert Litsey as the only back-to-back champion in 37 years.

Our Elite Tour Girls Division had 14 players in the field and St. Augustine's Elizabeth Kondal was the round one leader. Kondal's outstanding play would include four birdies on the day against five bogeys to come in at one over par 73 her lowest tournament round. Next in line would be DeLand's Lisa Colee who would be two strokes back at 75.

Round two would remain a battle between Kondal and Colee. Kondal again would post up four birdies and so too would Colee. One stroke behind at the par-4 17<sup>th</sup> hole, Colee would make birdie to add pressure to the leader Kondal who unfortunately double bogeyed the final hole while Colee made par to take the title and top prize which included the championship and an a fully paid exemption into the First Coast Women's Amateur being played a Timuquana Country.

The **Rising Tour Girls** Would result in St. Augustine's Apryl Parker taking the gold trophy with her fine play of 81-85. This would be Parker's first Web.com Junior Players Tour win. Jacksonville's Thanya Arasu would be the Runner up with a total score of 169.

Lucas Slayden headed the **Elite Tour Boys 13-15 Division** with scores of 74-72 to trump Green Cove Springs Campbell Kennedy. Kennedy fired an opening round of one under par 71, but struggle somewhat during round two. His second round score of 76 was good enough for the Runner up spot.

In the **Boys 10-12 Division** Phillip Dunham would be the champion with his fine play, but Nolan Harper would keep Dunham on his toes with his outstanding play. Harper would put together two outstanding rounds of one over par 73's to take the Runner up spot. He would post up one under par scores on the front nine both days.

In the **Rising Tour Boys 13-15 Division** Fleming Islands Jameson Adams claimed victory once again with a final round of 79 to best his opening round by five strokes. He would lead the field by nine strokes. Lake Cities Jake McCranie would be the Runner up defeating Enrique Trabal in a scorecard playoff.

Next up is a two event week. On Monday, June 25<sup>th</sup> is the Jacksonville Junior Open at Jacksonville Golf and Country Club and then on Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> we head to TPC Sawgrass to play the "Pete Dye's Valley Open". Then it's to San Jose Country Club on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. SIGN NOW! It's filling up.

See you on the links!

Jack Aschenbach, PGA