



The Lake City Open

Country Club at Lake City

May 7, 2017

It was great day for the final scheduled road trip of the season. The weather perfect and the air free of smoke from the burnings of the Okefenokee Swamp fires.

It was a small field that traveled west to Lake City, but it was a good field who threw up some pretty respectful numbers and gained some great tournament experience. I myself did not make this trip due to catching a bug that has had me down and out for more than four days now, but I'm feeling better and raring to go. The course I'm told was in excellent condition and a joy to play.

If you didn't know the Country Club at Lake City is a beautiful Championship Par 72, 18 hole golf course designed by Willard Byrd. It's Lake's City premier golf course and provides players of every caliber an exciting day on the links. Lake City has hosted the 1990 and 1991 Hogan Tour (now the web.com tour), the 1996 PGA Tour School, the 2000 and 2003 American Senior Golf Association Tournament and the 2003, 2004 and 2005 Women's Senior Golf Tour Qualifying Tournament. If you missed us this time, take a drive west and check it out, you'll be glad you did.

In the **Boys 16-18 Division** Logan Neel continues his fine play along with Ryan Williams who both tied atop the leaderboard at 77. Neel birdied three of his first six holes, but gave those strokes back at the difficult par-4 10th hole with an untimely triple bogey. He would however add a birdie at the par-4 13th hole. Williams playing equally as well would have two birdies on the day at the 6th and 13th along with 10 pars to shoot his 77. Neel would win the sudden death playoff on the first playoff hole and be declared the champion. Williams with his fine play-the Runner-up.

The ***Girls 13-18 Division*** welcomed back Sarah Edwards and Victoria Greene to the TOUR. It's been awhile and we're happy to see you both back. There's a lot of great golf to be played this summer. This week we also had two new players in Vanessa Hatch from Gainesville and Taylor Shaw from Lake City. Welcome Ladies, we hope you enjoy the TOUR.

Marissa Cardenas had it rolling at Lake City, nine pars in her first 10 holes, turning at 38 and then the par-5 11th hole took a bite out of her score with a quadruple bogey on the difficult hole. Taylor Shaw at the turn would be five strokes back at the turn, but back to back birdies at the 12th and 13th holes would move her back into contention. Steady play all day by Sarah Edwards and avoiding BIG numbers in her final nine holes would be the difference between winning and losing the Gold Medal. Edwards would end her day at 81, nipping Lake City's Taylor Shaw (82) by one stroke. Taylor would claim the Silver Medal.

The ***Elite Tour Boys 13-15*** only had three in the competition this week, but it was some good stuff! Alachua resident Colby Toner started things out right as he birdied two holes in his first six holes of play turning at one over par 37 to take a three stroke lead over Alexander Waller. A couple difficult holes on the back nine by Toner and some brilliant play by Waller on his closing nine would turn the tables. Waller with an even par back nine would take control and seize the Gold Medal with his fine score of 76.

The ***Rising Tour Boys 13-15 Division*** would be all about one young man who has been on fire ever since his first NFJG TOUR awarded medal back on April 2nd at the NFJG TOUR Challenge. Jack Barned since receiving his Runner-up Medal at the TOUR Challenge has won three consecutive events, the University of Florida Invitational, The Titleist Invitational and now the Lake City Open. It sounds like hard work and dedication to the game is paying off. Barned shot an impressive five over par 77 to win by six shots over Runner-up Alexander Whitmore would mounted a comeback on the back nine, but a difficult front nine would make it unreachable.

Our ***Boys 10-12 Division*** welcomed newcomer Jackson Day who played in his first NFJG TOUR event. The division also welcomed the lowest round of the day, by none other than Andrew Davis. Davis opened his round with a double bogey at the very first hole. He would quickly turn things around with three birdies in his next five holes of play and four during his round. Davis would turn at even par and would take a three stroke lead over steady Carson Brewer. Davis would never relinquish the lead, but would double bogey his last hole to shot a score of two over par 74 and win the Gold Medal.

Our ***Foundation Tour Boys*** found seven time champion Richard Hayden Ruth back atop the leaderboard for his eight win of the season. Ruth shot a nice 42 with six pars on the card. All five players in this week's field have been battling back and forth all year and it's really cool to witness first hand. French, a six time champion would shoot a so-k round of 45 to tie with Emmet Kuhlenkamp who came to the scoring table with a score of 43, but during scoring discussion and clarification of a rules infraction Kuhlenkamp was assessed a two stroke penalty for grounding his club while in a hazard on the eight hole. This week Ruth would claim the Gold and Mathew French would win the Silver Medal defeating Kuhlenkamp in a scorecard playoff.

Our **Foundation Girls Division** had a little fireworks at the Lake City Open as Candace Jackson and Alyzabeth Morgan went head-to-head in the battle for the Gold Medal. The lead changed every hole. First Morgan, then Jackson and at the end of eight holes of play Morgan would hold a one stroke lead, but an outstanding par at the finishing hole by Jackson would square things up at 48 each. A sudden death playoff would take place and a brilliant chip shot from behind the green by Morgan would be the shot of the day and would be the shot that would win the Gold Medal as she defeated Jackson on the first play-off hole.

Up next after THE PLAYERS is the "**Orange Park Open**" at the The Golf Club at Fleming Island. Let's beat the Titleist Invitational attendance record "98" Players.

Keep up the great work and we'll see you on the Links!

Sincerely,

Jack Aschenbach, PGA