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Bridgeman - Phillips - Gordon



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Impact Freshmen!

The Class of '23



**Morgan
Furman**



**Stewart
Clemson**



**Mayfield
S Carolina**



**Dunlap
C of C**



**Johnson
FSU**



**Masters
Lander**

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**Stephenson
Earns LPGA Card!**

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**On The Road to
Recovery**



**Taylor
Coastal**



**Knaffle
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Erskine wins NCCAA title

Flying Fleet men wins schools first national championship

Erskine College golfers captured the first national championship for the school in Due West.

The Flying Fleet finished 2-shots in front of Ottawa University of Arizona.

The men's team won the National Christian College Athletic Association championship at the tournament played in Palm Coast, Florida.

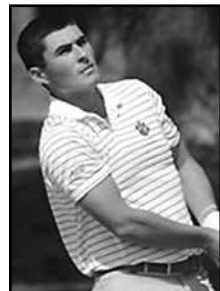
Anton Backman and Callum Watson lead the winning effort and were named NCCAA All-Americans.

Coach Jason Allen's team placed all five golfers in the top-20.

Zach McLain finished 10th, Stokes Brownlee finished 16th and Jonathan Costello came in 17th to help Erskine win the championship.



Erskine College won the National Christian College golf championship. The victory earned the Flying Fleet the first national title in any sport for the school.



Nimmer and Phillips to Walker Cup practice

Clemson's Bryson Nimmer and Georgia's Trent Phillips are two of 16 golfers chosen to participate in the first Walker Cup practice session beginning on December 14th.

The Tiger senior has won two tournaments. He opened the season with wins at The Farm in Dalton, Georgia and The Maui Jim Intercollegiate in Scottsdale, Arizona.

The two victories earned Nimmer a spot on the first Haskins Award Watch List.

Phillips, a freshman for the Bulldogs, carded rounds in the 60s for his first 10 college rounds.

He has recorded a second and two third place finishes in his first tournaments.

Phillips has also been named to the Haskins Award watch list.

SCGA HOF member Johnson passes

SCGA Hall of Fame golfer Patsy Johnson passed away in October. Johnson was 75.



The Spartanburg native, along with another Spartanburg Hall of Fame golfer Betsy Rawls were instrumental in the early development of the LPGA Tour.

As a golfer, Johnson won several state and Carolinas championships and participated in 12 USGA national events.

Johnson was a local educator for many years and was a champion for the development of girls golf and a member of the USGA Girl's golf committee.

GolfClub will be back in March

The winter months have not been kind to golfers the last few years and that fact has not been lost on us at The Golf Club.

Last year we did not publish in January for the first time in 26 years. This year we will not produce a hard copy of the paper in January or February.

Our coverage of golf in the Carolinas is not going to take the next two months off. We will be reporting on all the important stories, information and special offers for golfers on our website.

We encourage you to lock in our site at www.scgolfclub.com.

In the next two months all the off-season news will be covered on the web and with Twitter and Facebook.

We will publish a February issue online available at our website.

We encourage you not to take the next two months off from playing golf. When the weather cooperates get out and play.

The GolfClub will return in March with a special look at the College season, juniors and boys high school coverage, local amateur events and anything else that is important to Carolina golfers.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, see you in March. Stan Olenik, Publisher

Greenville wins CGA women's team title

The team of Kristen Rooke, Aloma Smith, Patricia Reid and Hall Bickman won the Carolina Division title.

The team from the Greenville Country Club won the title by four shots at the CGA Women's team championship at the Mid-Pines country Club in Southern Pines.

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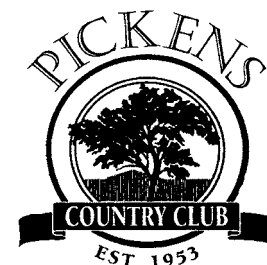
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Fantastic Freshmen

Phillips, Gordon and Bridgeman are off to great starts

Making the jump from high school golf to college golf is a big step.

College golfers play longer courses in bad weather against better competition. It often takes freshmen a little time to adjust, that is unless you happen to be Trent Phillips, Zach Gordon or Jacob Bridgeman.

The three best Palmetto State high school golfers last year have made headlines as college golfers in just the first half of their first year.

Phillips, Gordon and Bridgeman have not missed a beat moving up. After just four or five tournaments they have made it very difficult for their coaches to keep them out of the lineup.

Phillips has shot 10 of his 11 rounds in the 60s. His last round of the fall wasn't in the 60s, but was still under par.

"I know this is going to sound funny, but I don't think I have played my best golf yet," he said. "I have struggled to hit the ball the way I want to, but I worked through it during the round. I hasn't been pretty, but it has been good enough," Phillips said.

Gordon, who set a South Carolina High School League record when he shot a 62 to win last year's AAAAA individual championship, came close to matching that score.

Gordon shot a 63 in the first round of the Ka'anapali Classic in Hawaii to help Clemson set a new single round team score.

He has earned two top-20 finishes and has a 71.42 stroke average after playing in four tournaments.

"I surprised myself a little making the team for four tournaments," he said. "We



Zach Gordon (left) from Gaffney shot a 63 in Hawaii to help Clemson set a new team scoring record. Jacob Bridgeman (right) from Inman has a pair of top-10 finishes for the Tigers. Trent Phillips from Inman shot in the 60s for his first 10 college rounds. He is on the Haskins watch list and has been invited to Walker Cup practice.



have so many good players on the team. Qualifying is like playing in a tournament," said Bridgeman.

"The competition in college tournaments is a lot different than in junior golf," said Bridgeman. "You shoot around 70 in junior golf and you have a chance to win. Here a bunch of guys can throw a 65 up on the board in any round. There is a lot more fire power in tournaments," said Gordon.

Bridgeman has played in all five Clemson tournaments this fall. He finished out the fall portion of his season with two top-10s and has a low round of 66.

All three are doing well in school and are getting into the flow of college life.

"Honestly, in school you got to be on top of your work. You have to pay a little more attention than you did in high school," said Phillips.

"I've had to cut back on my practicing a little. I was practicing from noon to dark every day. I had to cut back to get my school work done," said Gordon.

"I'm pretty independent so it wasn't that hard of a switch. I like living on my own so I can do what I want within reason," said Bridgeman.

Football is big at both schools, but schedules have had golfers out of town when the Tigers or Bulldogs were home.

Each of the three golfers have had their moments when a little more experience could have produced a better finish or maybe a win.

"I need to work on finishing my rounds. I have had a couple of rough third days. I had two good rounds in Arizona, but I fell off the last day so I know I need to finish better," said Bridgeman.



"I asked myself what I needed to do to get to the level of the really good players. I faced it I have to work harder and make my weakness into strengths," said Gordon.

Phillips has come the closest of the three to winning a tournament. He finished second in the rain shortened Jim Rivers Intercollegiate.

"I really feel like I'm close, as close as you can get without actually winning," offered Phillips.

The three golfers intend to enjoy the break between seasons. They are unsure if they will play in any of the special events that take place this time of the year.

Instead they are looking forward to winding down and spending time with their families for the holidays. All three say they will be ready when the spring season starts in Puerto Rico in February.

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Clemson teams post strong fall finishes

Men move up to 10th, women now ranked 22nd

The Clemson men's and women's teams closed out the fall portion of their schedules with some momentum that will help them in the spring.

The Clemson women were led by Ana Paula Valdes. The junior from Mexico won her first college tournament by sharing medalist honors at The Battle at the Beach in Cabo, TX.

The men, playing in Hawaii shot a new school record of 22-under par in the opening round of the Ka'anapali Classic in Lahaina, Hawaii. The team's score was 2-shots better than the previous record of 280 set on the same course two years ago and tied in two other tournaments.

The Clemson women, led by Valdes, set a new record for a single round score. While Valdes was shooting her 65, the team posted a score of 274 to break the old single round record by two shots.

"We struggled the first day, but fought back," said Clemson coach Kelley Hester. "I was pleased with how we competed and beat several teams ranked ahead of us," she said.

Valdes birdied three of her last six



Anna Paula Valdes (right) won her first college tournament with a victory at The Battle at the Beach. Sophomore Turk Pettit (left) shot a career best 64 to finish sixth at the Ka'anapali Collegiate in Hawaii.



holes to pull even with Kaleigh Telfer at the end of the 54 hole event. Valdes was

awarded the championship trophy because her final round score was one shot better

than the Auburn golfers.

Senior Alice Hewson was 2-under par in her final two rounds to finish in a tie for 16th. Clemson freshmen Ivey Shepherd, Gracyn Burgess and Alexandra Swain contributed to the new team record.

Auburn won the team title posting a 7-under par total. TCU and Texas rounded out the top three. The Tigers finished at 14 over par to wrap up the fall season.

In the men's tournament in Hawaii, freshman Zack Gordon tied for the individual lead in the first round after posting an 8-under par 63. Gordon made 7-birdies, an eagle and only one bogey in his round.

The Tiger freshman was one of three Clemson golfers setting individual career best records.

Gordon's fellow freshman, Jacob Bridgeman, cut five shots off par shooting a 66 and senior Bryson Nimmer shot a 3-under par 68, while sophomore William Nottingham finished at 1-under par 70 in the opening round.

Sophomore Turk Pettit carded a 6-under par 65 for his career best round and then bettered that score by one shot in the final round. Pettit's final round 7-under par 64 allowed him to move up 19 places and finish in sixth.

"Turk has really come on this fall," said, Tigers coach Larry Penley. "He has **Clemson..**continued on page 10

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Hendley claims CGA Senior

Four-time SCGA major champion earns first CGA title at Briar's Creek

Todd Hendley added a Carolinas Golf Association championship to his list of South Carolina Golf Association titles with a victory in the CGA Senior Amateur at the golf club at Briar's Creek.

Hendley not only secured his first CGA title, but also took the championship away from legendary Carolina amateur Paul Simson. Simson is the all-time winningest amateur golfer in the Carolinas.

"I know Paul is a legend, but you don't think about that when you are playing," said Hendley. "I thought if I could get to 4-under par I would have a good chance to win," he said.

Hendley entered the final round trailing the leader by 4-shots.

"I hit it pretty good all week. I made one bad mistake with a quad in the first round, but after that I got it together and played really solid the rest of the week," he said.

The Columbus, NC golfer cut Simson's lead down to one shot at the turn.

"It kind of became match play between the two of us. We rode together in the final round, so we each knew how things stood in the entire round," said Hendley.

Simson opened the final nine holes with a bogey while Hendley birdied the hole to take a one shot lead.

The two-time CGA Senior champion fought back with two straight birdies to retake the lead by a shot and added another shot with a birdie on the fourteenth hole.

Trailing by two shots with four holes to go Hendley



Todd Hendley added his first CGA championship to his four SCGA major titles with his win in the Carolinas Senior at Briar's Creek.

got a little help from Simson. A double bogey and two other bogeys allowed Hendley to take the lead. A birdie on number 18 gave Hendley a two shot victory over the legendary golfer.

"It is a big honor to win the CGA Senior. It helps your confidence when you win a big tournament like that. I'm looking forward to having a chance to win some more tournaments next year," he said.

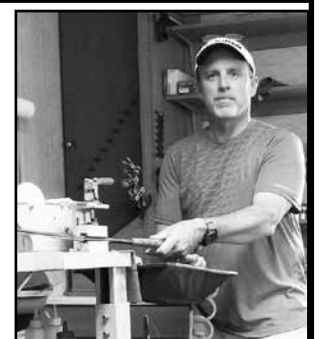
Hendley captured two SCGA Senior titles and two SCGA Mid-Am championships along with the 2013 Greenville County Amateur titles before moving to North Carolina.

Walter Todd from Laurens finished in third place, four shots behind the winner. Macon Moye from Pinehurst finished in fourth place.

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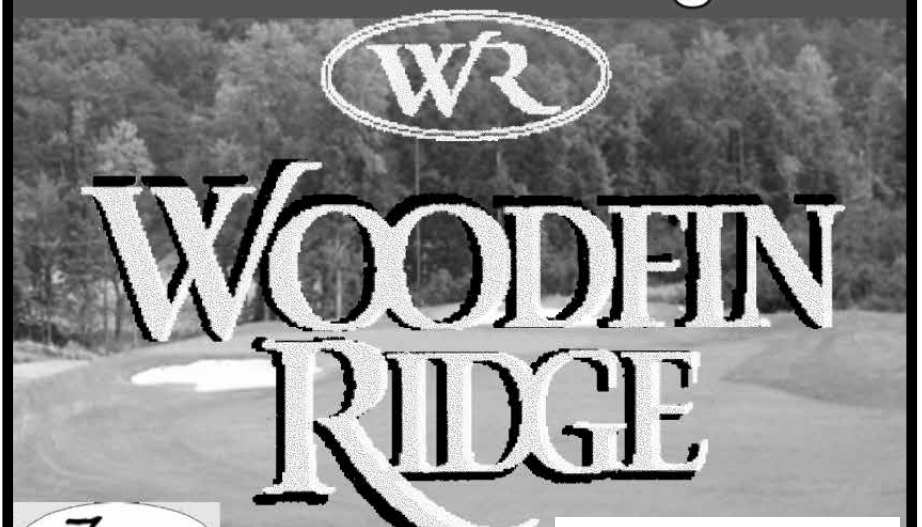
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Branyon and Todd win Chanticleer 2 man

Birdies on four of the last five holes wins Invitational

Thomas Todd and Josh Branyon did not play very well to start each round of the Chanticleer National Two-Man Invitational, but they made up for it at the finish.

The two teamed up to finish at 12-under par to win the tournament at the Greenville Country Club.

“You kind of know that it usually takes about 10-under par to win this tournament and we were not even close to where we needed to be late in the first round,” said Todd.

Branyon and Todd had made only two-birdies on their first 14 holes before catching fire and posting a strong finish.

“We went four-under on the last four holes and that made us feel better about the round,” said Branyon. “It got us into the lead after the first day, but there were a bunch of groups right behind us,” he said.

The second day, the partners had a more troublesome start than they did in the first round. Branyon and Todd were 2-over par after two holes and lost their lead.

“The club used the Golf Genius phone app for scoring, so we knew what was going on and what we had to do to get back in the lead,” said Todd.



Josh Branyon (left) and Thomas Todd (right) teamed up to shoot identical rounds of 66 for a 12-under par total and a three shot victory in the Chanticleer National Two-Man Invitational played at the Greenville Country Club. Mike Powell and J.P. Ferguson won the Fall Two-Man tournament at the Greer Country Club.

A bogey on the sixth hole was the low point in the final round, but it also was the wake up call the two golfers needed to get their games back on track.

“After the bogey we knew we had to play better if we were going to have a chance,” said Todd.

Jordan Sease and Kyle Bearden had gotten in front of the first round leaders during the front nine and by the turn the team of Garland Ferrell and Matt Hayes had also pulled even.

On their way to the top of the leader board again, another team pulled into a tie for the lead.

The team of Skip Corneliusen and Jimmy Eggers eagled the 17th hole and finished at 9-under par to take the club-

house lead.

Todd and Branyon carded birdies on number 14 and 15 to retake the lead.

They finished off their round with birdies on number 17 and 18. The two golfers shot their second straight round of 6-under par 66 to claim a three shot victory.

“It is always great to win and especially here. The course was in great condition and the people who run the tournament at the club do a tremendous job. It really was a very special weekend,” added Todd.

Ferrell and Hayes shot a second round 5-under 67 to tie with Corneliusen and Eggers for second place at 135.

Bearden and Sease tied with Tim Driver and Austin Moore for fourth place in the field that included 52 teams.

Powell, Ferguson win 2-man at Greer

After a very average start the team of JP Ferguson and Mike Powell caught fire in the second round of the Greer Fall Two-Man Championship.

The team posted a 71 in the first round, but things changed in the final round.

The two shot a 9-under par 63 for a 134 total and a two shot victory.

The teams of Brad Sill and Josh McMillan, and Ryan Lynn and Bradley Jones tied for 2nd with 136s.

Flight winners were Dan Constantino and Doug Dietz, Tommy and Trevor Boyter.

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The Class of 2023 makes it official

Top juniors take their games to the next level in college

Junior golfers from all over the state took the next big step in their golf careers on November 14th.

Young golfers made their commitments to colleges official by signing a National Letter of Intent.

The 2019 junior graduates will become the Class of 2023.

Sports like football and basketball have signing days and signing periods. Colleges can begin filling their rosters with new players and may continue to add players through the summer.

Big and small schools found talent in the Upstate and the entire state of South Carolina.

Palmetto State colleges also attracted some top talent from outside the state to help their golf programs.

Clemson Men

Clemson coach Larry Penley has signed two golfers. Drayton Stewart from Charleston won the 2018 Carolinas Junior Champion.

Carter Pendley is from Dalton, Ga. He won an AJGA championship at River Watch, and was the runner-up in the Georgia AAAAAA championship last year.

South Carolina Men

Jack Wall from Brielle, NJ. is the state junior champion. Last year he finished second to a pro golfer in the Met Open played in New Rochelle, NY.

USC also signed Nicholas Mayfield from Rock Hill. Mayfield won the 2018 Grant Bennett Junior in Florence and is ranked third in the South Carolina Junior ranking.

South Carolina Women

USC signed Smith Knaffle from Murrell's Inlet. The St. James High School golfer won back to back AAAA individual championships as a sophomore and junior.

The Gamecocks also signed two golfers



Three of the top junior girls (above (l-r) Emily Dunlap - College of Charleston, (center) Smith Knaffle - USC, (right) Elle Johnson - Florida St. were top recruits from the Palmetto State. Clemson signed the Carolinas Junior Champion Drayton Stewart (middle-top) while the Gamecocks signed Jack Wall (middle-above) who is the top ranked Junior in New Jersey. Anna Morgan (top-right) was The Blade winner last year and will play golf at Furman. Carlos Garre (center-right) signed with Wofford and just won the George Holiday Junior championship. Emily Byrne (bottom-right) is a top golfer from England who will play at Limestone next year.



More pictures and recruiting information available at www.scgolfclub.com

from France. Mathilde Claisse was a Junior Solheim Cup player and is ranked 31st in the European Golf Rankings.

Pauline Roussin-Bouchard is ranked 7th in the European Rankings and has won the Women's French Championship and was a member of the 2016 Junior Ryder Cup team.

Furman Lady Paladins

Anna Morgan is from Spartanburg and won the 2018 Blade Junior championship. She also earned the 2017 WSCGA Junior and the Carolinas PGA Junior.

Caroline Wrigley is the top ranked junior in Pennsylvania and has won back to back individual state titles.

She helped her North Allegheny High School team to three straight state titles.

Furman Paladins

Matt Davidson announced his first recruiting class since becoming the head

coach of the Paladin mens team. Davidson has signed four new players.

Walker Crosby from Memphis is the brother of current Paladin golfer Jack Crosby. Crosby brings a Tennessee state individual high school championship with him to Furman.

Sam Lape is from Atlanta and was a high school teammate of last year's Southern Conference Player of the Year Keller Harper. Lape was named the Georgia AAA High School Player of the Year.

Reynolds Lambert is from Mountain Brook, Alabama and was the top-ranked high school recruit in his home state.

Ross Funderburke is from Roanoke, Virginia and is the third ranked junior in



Class of 2023... continued on page 12

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William McGirt is a few months into his rehab after major hip surgery last September. McGirt hopes to be ready to get on the PGA Tour next September. McGirt won the 2016 Memorial Tournament and received his championship award from tournament founder Jack Nicklaus. McGirt finished the year playing in 26 events and was 116 in Fed/Ex points.

McGirt is on the road back to the Tour

Spartanburg PGA Tour pro will spend almost a year in rehab after hip surgery

Last year wasn't much fun for William McGirt. The numbers tell the story. For the first time since he became a regular on the PGA Tour he finished outside the top-100.

The 39 year old Wofford grad finished 116th on the all important PGA Tour Fed/Ex points list.

McGirt was hurting. It wasn't from poor putting or bad driving, it was because he was injured and gutted out a 26 event schedule before shutting his season down.

"It got to the point I couldn't sleep," said McGirt. "It

hurt most of the time. It never was anything that was repetitive. It never always hurt on my feet, it never always hurt when I was walking uphill, but it always hurt when I was trying to go to sleep," he said.

McGirt had a torn labrum in his left hip. He was able to keep playing with some discomfort, but his range of motion was limited. Some odd stances guaranteed McGirt some pain.

"I spent three months in the middle of the season trying to figure out how to play around it. It was frustrating. I was miserable, it stunk," said McGirt.

With his swing restricted and the off and on pain affecting his play, McGirt slipped to 121st on the Fed/Ex points list. He was dangerously close to missing the playoffs for the first time in seven years and falling out of the top 125.

McGirt earned some breathing room when he recorded his best finish of the year at the Barracuda in Reno, NV.

He shot a final round 63 to move up to sixth and he improved his Fed/Ex standing to 116 and made the playoff for the eighth straight year.

"It was really tough through the middle of the year. At the end of the year I guess I was more at ease. There was some peace of mind knowing sometime around September 1st I'm getting this thing fixed," he said.

In early September, McGirt checked into the Nashville Hip Institute and had successful surgery to fix the torn labrum.

The surgery was the first step in what McGirt has been told will be at least a year of rehab before he can think about

McGirt... continued on page 10

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CrossWinds... continued from page 9

getting back on the PGA Tour.

McGirt graduated with a degree in business economics from Wofford so it is understandable he was prepared for a year without any earnings.

"Luckily I was smart enough to take out a disability policy. I can still make more playing than I can with an insurance policy, but I physically can't play right now," he said.

With an insurance policy McGirt will not make the mistake he has seen many of his fellow Tour players make, coming back too soon.

Legendary teaching pro Butch Harmon joined McGirt at the recent Bobby Chapman Junior in Spartanburg.

Harmon echoed the advice McGirt was getting from his doctors.

"Butch told me no one has ever come back from an injury too late. He said make sure you are 100% before you come back and that is what I am going to do," he said.

The rehab process is slow and measured. McGirt could not even putt until about five weeks after the surgery.

If everything keeps healing on schedule the next step is chipping and that could start in January.

"So far we are right on schedule. I'm hoping to hit full shots towards the end of January or February and get up to full speed by March," said McGirt.

McGirt's rehab will not only strengthen his injured hip, it will also begin a



William McGirt's rehab from hip surgery will keep him off the PGA Tour for a year, but it will give him more time to be a dad with Miles Cameron and Caroline James. (McGirt family photo)

process of getting used to a much greater range of motion for his swing.

"I'm really excited to be able to hit golf balls again. I'm not going to know what to do with all the range of motion I'm gaining," he said.

The only downside he has seen after the surgery is the length of time it will take him to build his strength and stamina.

Before the surgery McGirt was tested to measure his range. A few weeks after the surgery it tripled.

"I'm going to need the time off to rebuild my swing. I will have to adjust to what I will be able to do now after surgery," said McGirt.

The business side of the game was one of the reasons McGirt did not shut down his season in April rather than going through August.

After winning the 2016 Memorial Championship McGirt was given a three year exemption.

"The only reason I finished the season is so when I do come back from the surgery

I didn't screw myself with the number of events when I come back," he said.

The PGA Tour has some special provisions to help injured players get back on Tour.

McGirt can play in five Web.com events to test his recovery. He expects to play one and then decide if he needs more work to get ready or play the next four.

McGirt played in 26 tournaments last year and has averaged between 26 and 28 each year.

"When I come back I will have 26 events from this year so I will have 27 events when I come back," he said.

The rehab will take time, but it will also give McGirt some unexpected family time.

William and his wife Sarah have two small children, Miles Cameron who is five and Caroline James who is 2 and a half.

He will have the opportunity to car pool, run errands and do the things many dads, who don't travel more than half the year get to do with their families.

The PGA Tour website says McGirt was introduced to the game by an aunt who took him to the course as soon as he could walk. The six months of rehab, without hitting a golf ball, will be the longest absence from the game he has ever experienced.

"If I stay on schedule I'm shooting for a September 1st return to action, but I'm not going to rush it. I am going to make sure I'm fully healed and ready," concluded McGirt.

Clemson... continued from page 5

his confidence back and is playing like he did last year when he earned All-American honors," said the coach.

The play of the two freshmen was anything, but a surprise to the Clemson coach.

"These two have great work habits and know how to compete. You like to see that in freshmen because you know that is only going to get better," said the coach.

The Tigers finished behind California, North Florida and Oklahoma for their fourth 4th place finish. Clemson's other fall finishes included a shared title at the Nicklaus Match Play and second at the Golf Club of Georgia Collegiate.

"We have played several lineups this fall and every one of our players has had an opportunity to help the team. Right now we have as much competition to make the team playing in a tournament as we have in the tournaments," said the coach.

The Ka'anapali Collegiate Classic was the final tournament of the fall season for the Clemson men.

During the break Penley is hoping his players take advantage of the time off and get ready to re-start in February.

"We had a very busy fall. We played a lot of tournaments and now it is time for the team to get away from golf for a time. We want them to come back fresh and ready to continue the good things we started in the fall," said the Clemson coach.

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Price and Brock win late season titles

Junior golf season wraps up with George Holiday tournament

The junior golf season in South Carolina ended with the George Holiday tournament in Myrtle Beach.

The 50th annual event includes golfers from all over the country.

This year a pair of Palmetto State Juniors won the overall championships at the nationally recognized event.

Anna Grace Brock from Greenwood won the overall girls championship. Brock will play college golf at UNC Greensboro next year.



Carlos Garre from Myrtle Beach and Anna Grace Brock from Greenwood won the overall titles at the 50th annual George Holiday Memorial Junior played at Myrtle Beach.

Carlos Garre from Myrtle Beach won the boys overall championship. Garre will play his college golf at Wofford next year.



Greenville's Tip Price won the boys 10-12 year old title at the final SCJGA event of the year.

Price shot a 1-under par 71 to win his age group title by 3-shots at the Players Championship.

The boys 15-18 title was won by Daniel Azalion from Hilton Head. Azalion shot a two-day total of 8-under par 136.

The 2018 SCGA Junior champion finished one shot in front of Chris Fortenberry

of Myrtle Beach.

Piedmont's Brandon Masters finished third.

The girls title was won by Karlee Vardas from Lexington. Vardas shot a 6-under par 138 to win the title by two shots over her high school teammate Isabella Rawl.

Anna Morgan from Spartanburg finished third in the girls division.

Abigail Schimpf from Daniel Island won the girls title at the Cheraw Fall Challenge.

Schimpf finished the 36 hole tournament with a 3-under par 141 total and a five shot victory.

Phoebe Carles from Clinton and Rachel Rich from Mt. Pleasant tied for second place five shots behind the winner.



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Class of 2023...

continued from page 8

the state.

Wofford Men

The Terriers signed Carlos Garre from Myrtle Beach. Garre recently won the George Holiday Junior Championship.

The Terriers also signed two golfers from the Atlanta area. Jack Larkin from Marist High School and Bailey Means from Holy Innocence High School.

Wofford Women

The Terriers welcome two new golfers and a returning team member.

Lina Settlemayer had returned to Germany to attend pre-law school, but decided to return to Wofford to begin her sophomore season in January.

Incoming freshman Kristine Torralba is from the Philippines and will be eligible to join the team in January.

Nicole Amos is from England and has played in all the major European Junior events. She will join the Terriers in the fall.

USC Upstate

The women's team newcomers will include Amber Amaker, an All-State golfer from Boiling Springs who claimed three wins on the GSA Upstate Tour.

Abigail Hatcher, played on a state championship team at Dorman and Ashley Looper from Travelers Rest who was the AAAA individual runner-up this year.

Spartanburg Christian golfer Parker Fain will also join the Spartans' men's team.

Limestone

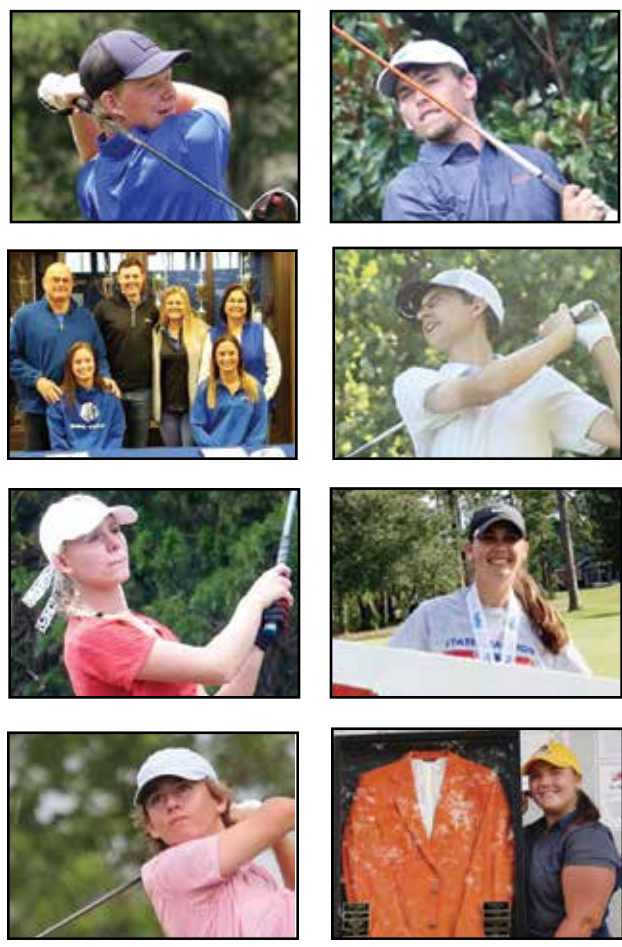
The Saints have signed Olivia Erwin from James Island Charter School and Walker Redmon from Greer. Limestone also signed a pair of golfers from Norway and a top junior, Emily Byrne from Liverpool, England.

Anderson

The Trojans signed SC AAAA champion Emma Charles from Hartsville and Caleb Henson from Buford.

Southern Wesleyan

The Warriors signed three local golfers. Sarah and Rachel Page from Pickens along with Julie Schoebel from Powdersville and Emileigh Swords from Daniel.



2018 Signings (l-r, each row) Brandon Masters to Lander, Garrett Cooper to Coastal Carolina. Sarah and Rachel Page to Southern Wesleyan. Seth Taylor to Coastal Carolina. Amber Amaker to USC Upstate. Emma Charles to Anderson. Walker Crosby to Furman. Anna Grace Brock to UNC Greensboro.

Upstate Signings - Two-time SC AAAA individual champion Brandon Masters from Wren signed with Lander. Seth Taylor from Gaffney and Garrett Cooper from Chesnee signed with Coastal Carolina. Colton Bridges from Chesnee signed with Erskine. Anna Grace Brock from Greenwood signed with UNC Greensboro. Thomas Hollingsworth from Dorman and Jimmy McCollum from Eastside signed with Presbyterian. Peyton Gillespie from Christ Church signed with Queens University. Sophia Kinsella from Byrnes signed with USC Sumter, Ian Faulconer from Mann signed with Winthrop.

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USGA updates the rules

**New rules will simplify
language and improve pace
of play begin January 1st**

Starting on January 1st, the USGA will implement a series of new rules. The changes are being put in place to make the rules easier to understand and also to pick up the pace of play.

“The USGA has cleaned up the language and modernized it in an effort to make it easier to understand,” said SCGA Executive Director Biff Lathrop.

The rule book has been reduced from 34 rules to 24 as part of the governing body’s effort to make things less complicated.

Most people who are involved in the game know that the number one problem facing golf is not cost or availability, it is time. Golfers no longer have a day to play and more people would play if the length of time for a round could be shortened.

“A lot of the changes have been made to help speed up the game. Many of the rules changes will not seem like a big change because most golfers, not playing in tournaments, play golf that way,” said Lathrop.

Among the new rules the time allowed to search for a lost ball is reduced from 5 minutes to 3 minutes.

Golfers can leave the flag stick in the hole even when they are on the green.

Courses can now define more areas on the course as penalty areas. Desert, jungle, rocks in addition to water

hazards are all treated the same concerning penalties.

A ball drop now is made from knee height. Golfers can continue to use damaged clubs, even if the damage was intentional.

Distance measuring devices can be used and if you accidentally hit your ball twice on a swing there is no longer a penalty.

One area that has often has been a problem now has been cleared up. Golfers can repair spike marks on the green.

The USGA has also allowed a local rule to be implemented that is an alternative to stroke and distance penalties for a lost ball or a ball out of bounds.

The ball must either be lost or out of bounds with “virtual certainty.” Instead of going back to the tee and hitting another shot, a golfer can accept a two stroke penalty for using this option.

“I’m pleased with the things they have done to improve pace of play. Many of the changes reflect the way people play the game now and will get more golfers understanding and playing by the rules,” said Lathrop.

The SCGA and the Carolinas Golf Association will be holding a number of rules clinic to familiarize golfers with the change.

The USGA has a number of video features on line demonstrating the new rules and the way they are meant to be applied.

“Every golfer should spend some time going over the new rules because they are responsible for knowing the rules. After the 1st of the year there is no grace period. The new rules go into effect,” concluded Lathrop.



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Tim Pope and Todd Hendley won the Senior division while Chris Mitchell and Walter Todd won the Invitational title at the Musgrove Mill Invitational.

Invitational champs

Hendley and Pope, Todd and Mitchell win at Musgrove

The team of Walter Todd and Chris Mitchell shot rounds of 70 and 72 for a 144 total to claim the Gross Division title at the Musgrove Mill Invitational.

Todd and Mitchell finished two shots in front of the second place team.

The Senior Gross Division championship was won by the team of Todd Hendley and Tim Pope.

The winning team shot rounds of 67 and 65 to finish at 12-under par and win the Senior title by six shots in front of TD Todd and Cooper Tinsley.

Columbia CC wins Lathrop Cup

The team from the Columbia Country Club won the 11th annual Lathrop Cup tournament.

The championship team event is for senior golfers over the age of 55 and was played at Thornblade Club in Greer.

The Lathrop Cup is decided by the total score of the three amateurs on the team.

Eddie Hargett, Brad Krapfel and Walter Ordiorne shot a combined total of 222 to win the event by 4-shots over the team from Forest Lake Club in Columbia.

"We didn't play very well to start," said Hargett. "We didn't get going until the last six holes," he said.

The team carded 7-birdies on the last six holes to move into the lead.

"We couldn't putt to start, but we finally got going and finished strong," said Krapfel.

In the Pro-Am portion of the tournament the team from Mid-Carolina took the top spot.

Mid-Carolina PGA professional Rohan



The team from the Columbia Country Club won the 11th annual Lathrop Cup. The team included Eddie Hargett, Walter Odiorne, Brad Krapfel and Chris Sparrow.

Allwood shot a 6-under par 66 to lead his team's effort.

Allwood was joined on the winning team by Steve Liebler, Robin Alley and Greg Austin.

The Thornblade Club team led by PGA Professional Jonathan Hines with amateurs Mike Caprio, Ken Kirkland and Steve Hall finished in a tie for second with the team from the Reserve Club at Woodside Plantation.

Amateur Events

Two-Man Tuff Day at CrossWinds Par 3 in December

Golf takes a back set to holiday activities, but there are still a few events to keep golfers in the swing of things over the holiday season.

The weather can often make playing conditions a little difficult and several clubs have scheduled Tough Day tournaments during the winter.

Southern Oaks Holiday Open, December 8-9th. The tournament is open to all golfers and is a two-man event.

Entry information will be available from the Southern Oaks Golf Shop. Call



Gamecocks win again at Woodfin

The Gamecock golfers at Woodfin Ridge have been more successful in recent years than the football team they follow.

The annual Carolina-Clemson Steak and Beans grudge match was won by the Gamecocks again this year.

Captain Cam Fant added another win to his team's total and broke a tie in the series.

Carolina and Clemson each had 25 teams representing their schools in the modified Ryder Cup style matches.

The USC team finished with a 13 1/2 to 11 1/2 victory. It gave the Gamecocks an 8-7 lead in the annual matches.

The win also kept the Gamecocks eating steak and displaying their school colors on the club's flag pole.

Almost \$1,000 was raised for the New Prospect Fireman's Children's Christmas Fund.

Christmas Captain's Choice, Village Greens, Friday, Dec 14, Noon shotgun. The tournament is open to all golfers.

Three player teams are selected by a computer draw of A-B-C players.

Call the golf shop to enter 864-472-2411. Entry closes on December 12th.

Snowman Two-Man Tough Day, CrossWinds Par 3, December 29th. The event is open to all golfers. Play will begin with a shotgun start at 10 AM.

Call Jim Cadieu at the golf shop 864-233-6336.

Pickens 3-man Tough Days, January 12-13th, Pickens CC. The event is open to all golfers. Form your team and call the golfshop to register. Call Jeff Evatt at 864-878-6083.

Smithfields 2-Man Tough Days, Smithfields CC, January 19-20th. Open to all golfers. Call 864-859-9545 to register.

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Randy Johnson, Links O'Tryon, #12. Witnessed by Bud Metz, Johnny Sims and Cleve Nichols.

Ed Chappel, Greer CC, #6, 130yds. 9 iron. Witnessed by Joe Smith, Leon Campbell, Eulon Brown.

Mike Haag, Carolina Springs, #5, 143yds, 7-iron. Witnessed by Don Hansen

Susan Land, Links O'Tryon, #4, 80yds, 9-iron. Her tenth Hole-In-One. Witnessed by Fran and Robin Mercurio, Sandy Foster.

Rick Gottrich, Greer Country Club, #4, 137yds. 9-iron. Witnessed by Scott McLallen and Dean Marchetti.

Ronnie Pack, Links O'Tryon, #12, 125yds. 7-iron. Witnessed by James Hudson.

Roger Henderson, Greer, #13, 144yds. 5-iron. Witnessed by Sam O'Neal.

Marty Henson, Pebble Creek, #8, 148yds. 7-iron. Witnessed by Dan Gaither, Rick Barber, Reed Teague, Michael Manes.

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USC grad Matt NeSmith (left) and Wofford grad Andrew Novak (right) both have advanced to the final stage of the Web.com Qualifying School. Both golfers have gained full status on the Web.com Tour for 2019 and could earn their PGA Tour cards with a top-45 showing in the finals. Alabama golfer Lauren Stephenson from Lexington (center) completed the grueling LPGA Q-Series and now has her LPGA Tour card for next year.

Stephenson, NeSmith, Novak get carded

Palmetto State golfers earn Tour status for 2019

The 2018 Golfweek Player of the Year earned a spot on the LPGA Tour.

Alabama golfer Lauren Stephenson from Lexington finished the marathon LPGA Q Series qualifying tournament in a tie for eighth place.

"There are truly no words to describe this feeling! A dream come true," Stephenson posted on her Twitter page.

Stephenson finished the qualifying tournament at 5-under par.

Jeongeun Lee from South Korea won the tournament with an 18 under par total for the 144 holes.

The top 45 players in the 8-round tournament played at Pinehurst will have full time status on the Tour starting in 2019.

In addition to Stephenson, three other golfers with South Carolina connections also survived the new way of qualifying

for the women's Tour.

Sarah Schmelzel, a 2016 South Carolina grad, led the tournament going into the final round. The former Gamecock golfer finished in third place.

Katie Burnett, a 2012 USC grad, earned her Tour card with a tie for 15th place. Kristy McPherson, who was the SEC Player of the Year while at USC, finished in a tie for 27th place to advance.

The three South Carolina grads have all been playing professionally, but Stephenson played in the Qualifying tournament as an amateur. The winner of the 2018 Golf Stat Cup for finishing the season with the best scoring average is halfway through her senior year at Alabama.

The LPGA has a special provision for college golfers who qualify for the Tour. A golfer may delay the start of her professional career until after the completion of her spring college season. Stephenson recently told the golfchannel.com that she expected to turn pro if she finished in the top-45.

"I came here pretty much knowing if I

got LPGA status, I would leave," she told the website. "I've only got two classes left to graduate this spring. I'll finish them up online. It's not like I'm not going to graduate." said the Alabama senior.

Golfers who played in the Q-Series but did not make the top-45 can receive Symetra Tour status for next year.

The 2017 SEC Player of the Year Katelyn Dambaugh from USC finished in a tie for 61st. Two golfers with Furman connections also played in the Q-Series. Laura Wern finished in a tie for 84th and Taylor Totland finished in a tie for 93rd.

Wofford grad Andrew Novak and USC grad Matt NeSmith both advanced to the Web.com Q-School finals in December.

The two professionals have assured themselves status on the Web.com Tour for next year at a minimum.

NeSmith rallied in the final round of the qualifying tournament at Southern Hills Plantation to shoot a 7-under par 65.

The 2015 SEC individual champion carded the best round of the day and moved up 18 places to advance.

Novak had been within the top 18 at the Preserve Golf Course and Club in Plantation, Florida in each round.

The 2014 SCGA Amateur champion shot rounds of 67-66-68-70 for a 272 total. He finished in a tie for 8th place.

Both NeSmith and Novak played in several Web.com Tour events last year. They both now have the opportunity to earn a PGA Tour card at the Q-School finals.

Former Clemson golfers Luke Hopkins and Doc Redman missed the cut to advance. Hopkins, who shot a 63 in the third round at the Magnolia Grove course in Mobile, shot a final round 68, but missed advancing by one shot.

Redman finished in a tie for 30th, three shots below the cut line in Mobile.

Novak and NeSmith will next compete in the Q School finals that begin on December 6th in Chandler, Arizona.

The top-25 finishers in the 90 hole tournament will earn a PGA Tour card. The higher the finish in the finals will give a golfer a better chance to make tournament fields in their first year.

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"USE WHAT TALENTS YOU POSSESS. THE WOODS WOULD BE VERY SILENT, IF NO BIRDS SANG THERE, EXCEPT THOSE THAT SANG THE BEST"

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Bob Bell, PGA