

FREE

JULY

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No.5**

Golf News For Carolina Golfers

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See Mike's Tip for May on Page 2

Bridgeman breaks out!



Jacob Bridgeman challenged for the win at the BMW... Page 13

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SC's Top Junior

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NCAA DII's Top Assistant

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SC's Top Pee Wee

Do You Know?



Mike Carter Coach and Professional Instructor

In 2010, I traveled to Houston, Texas to study under Jim Hardy and Chris O'Connell.

Hardy is a member of the PGA Teachers Hall of Fame.

Both Jim and Chris are listed in the Top100 instructors in America.

Everything I teach in the long game I learned from Jim and Chris.

I am part of their INNER CIRCLE instructor group.

Each year we have a summit at Watters Creek where Chris teaches in the winter months.

Our instructor mantra is to always get better...always improve.

Is your body turn correct?

In this article I want to focus on the body turn in the golf swing.

A large percentage of the golfers I see at Haas Family Golf over turn the body during the backswing.

Most of the problem is caused by an improper hip turn.

In an effort to "load up on the right side", the right handed golfer turns the left hip almost 90 degrees.

The hips then finish level or parallel to the ground.

The shoulders follow the motion of the hips and finish level or parallel to the ground.

The left arm chases the upper body turn and finishes almost parallel to the ground.

Gears technology shows that tour pros turn the left hip very little during the backswing.

Their right hip is a different story. The tour pro's right hip has a huge turn.

To correct the over turning, don't let your hips turn more than 45 degrees in the backswing.

Focus on keeping your left knee, hip and shoulder lower than their right side counterparts.

You will be "tilted" correctly and will achieve a much better top of backswing angle of approach.

I hope you find this article informative and helpful. I would love the opportunity to work with you on your game.

Come see me at Haas Family Golf. Wishing you fairways and greens.

Upstate events and aces

County Ams

All Spartanburg County amateur events are presented by Delaney's Irish Pub, Budweiser of Spartanburg and Michelob Ultra, the official beer of the PGA Tour, and Langers Juices.

Spartanburg County Amateur, Three Pines, July 15-17th. Open to Spartanburg County residents or members of Spartanburg County Clubs.

Registration for both Spartanburg County championships can be made online at www.firstteeupstate.org and tab events.

Robert Staley Laurens County Amateur, July 23-24th. Lakeside Country Club.

The County Championship is open to golfers in Laurens County and members of Musgrove Mill and Rolling "S". Registration information is available from the Golf Shop at 864-682-3614.

Greenville County Junior, July 25-26th, Holly Tree.

Age group competition for boys and girls divisions. Age groups 7-9 and 10-12.

Girls Divisions for 10-12, 13-18. Boys Divisions 13-14 and 15-18.

Registration can be made at the SCJGA Greenville website or at www.upstategolfclub.com

Greenville County Amateur. July 29-31st, Fox Run.

Open to all Greenville County Amateurs. The tournament will feature a Championship Division and a Senior Division for golfers over age 55.

Seniors must declare their choice of championships before play begins.

Juniors 16 and under may play in the Championship if recommended by a club professional or high school golf coach.

Registration for the Greenville County Championship can be made online at www.upstategolfclub.com

Upstate Ladies Amateur, August 1-2nd. Green Valley.

The tournament is open to women golfers age 16 and up who are residents of or members of clubs in Greenville, Spartanburg, Anderson, Pickens, Oconee, Greenwood, Laurens, Cherokee, Union and Abbeville Counties.

The 36 hole tournament features a 9am shotgun start for each round. Practice rounds are based on availability. The field is limited to the first 100

golfers who complete registration with payment of the entry fee.

Registration information is available by email: UpstateLadiesAmateurGolf@gmail.com

Events you can Play

After playing County Championships, Upstate golfers will close out the summer with a full schedule in August.

Texas-Two Man, The Fort Club (old Star Fort) July 9-10th. Open to all golfers, Optional Skins game, Sunday cash buy in, Flighted after first round.

Register to play by calling the golf shop at 864-543-2757.

The Budweiser Classic, Boscobel, August 13-14th. Open to all golfers. Individual stroke play format, flighted after the first round.

Entries can be made online at www.boscobelgolfclub.com/budweiser-classic.

Earl Wooten Memorial, Saluda Valley, August 20-21st. The individual stroke play tournament is open to all golfers and includes a senior division.

The tournament is flighted after the first round. Entry can be made by calling the Golf Shop at 864-847-7102.

Upstate Amateur Championship, Green Valley, August 27-28th. The tournament is open to all amateurs.

The individual stroke play event features a Championship Flight and several other Flights dependent on field size. 140 golfers played in last year's event.

Upstate Aces

Pete Revis, (First) Green Valley, #14, 105 yds. 8-iron. Witnesses Jeremy Revis.

Jim Coons, Village Greens, #6, 118 yds. 9-iron. Witness Robert Donald

Ralph Polson. Musgrove Mill Gene Altman, Boscobel, #10. Witnesses Clint Wright, Melinda Parsons and Alivia Davis.

Dan Sheehan, Links O'Tryon, (2nd HIO) #7, 110 yds. PW. Witnesses Bill Reid and Chuck Bridwell

Tony Amos, RiverFalls, #6, 115 yds. PW. Witnesses Joey Amos, Aaron Wagner.

Carolina Springs - Paul Vible #6, Keith Hayes #5.

We want to include your next Hole-In-One in our Upstate Aces Send your name, course, hole number, distance, club used and any witness to us at golfclubsc@gmail.com

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Bells win SCGA Father-Son title

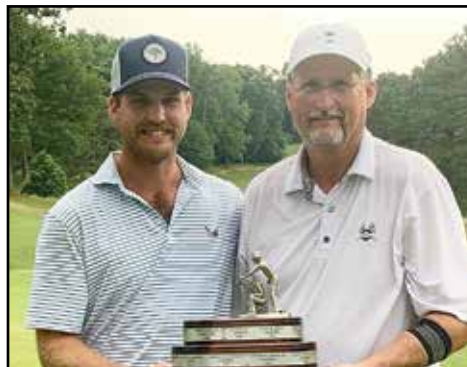
Jeff and Weston team up for second Dudley-Sullivan win

Jeff and Weston Bell won their second SCGA Dudley-Sullivan Father-Son championship.

The 2019 champions along with the teams of Rob and Austin Reeves as well as Eric and Eric Nord all finished regulation play at 3-under par 69.

The Bells won the championship on the second playoff hole.

The tournament is named and played in honor of SCGA Hall of Fame golfers, Charles Dudley and Heyward Sullivan.



Weston and Jeff Bell from Easley won their second SCGA Dudley-Sullivan Father-Son championship at Chanticleer course. (SCGA Photo)



Macolly and Talley win 4th Lefty-Righty

Trailing by 2-shots going into the final round the team of Tyler Macolly and Matt Tally from Spartanburg shot a 9-under par 63 to win the SCGA Lefty-Righty championship at the Lake Marion Golf Club in Santee.

Twin-State girls win goes to Mia Gray

Conway's Mia Gray didn't have to go far to win the CGA Major Junior title.

Gray came from six shots back in the final round to win the Twin-State Girls title at the Hackler Course by a shot.



First Ware Shoals Memorial on Aug 6th

The first of what will become an annual Memorial tournament will be played at the Ware Shoals Golf Course on August 6th.

The tournament will honor a number of Ware Shoals golfers who have passed away.

The format is a two-person aggregate net and gross tournament. Entry fee is \$50 per player.

Proceeds will fund a scholarship for a Ware Shoals High School golfer and to support the Junior Golf program at the course.

Entry information is available from Kyle Davis at 864-993-4321 or email: Hertamdavis@gmail.com.

Mayfield wins CGA SC Match Play title

Winthrop University junior Nick Mayfield cruised to the CGA South Carolina Match Play championship at the Rock Hill Country Club.

Mayfield only had to play the 17th and 18th holes once in the Match Play bracket in his semi-final 2 up win over Walt Todd, Jr. from Greenville.

He defeated Clemson rising sophomore Andrew Swanson 4 & 2 in the final to win the major CGA Championship.

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Hall cruises to win at Chanticleer Senior

Savannah's Hall wins battle among top ranked seniors at Chanticleer Invitational

When you assemble a tournament filled with highly ranked players, you expect competition to be close and a tight leader board.

But, sometimes when you have a field full of highly ranked players, one of them gets on a roll and can leave every one else behind, Jack Hall did that at Chanticleer.

Hall broke out of a tie after the first two rounds to shoot a 3-under par 69 and win the Chanticleer National Senior Invitational by six-shots.

Hall, from Savannah is the eighth ranked senior in the world according to the latest WAGR standings.

After the first 36 holes he was tied with another Savannah golfer, Doug Hanzel, who was ranked 16th.

"I hit the ball well, my chipping was good and my putting struggled at times. I opened with a 68 and thought it should have been a little better," Hall said.

While Hall had a good start to the final round Hanzel struggled. He bogeyed four of his first six holes before three birdies sent him to the turn at just 1-over par.

Hall made the turn at 1-under opening a two stroke lead going to the final nine holes.

"I never felt comfortable until the back nine," said Hall. "I love Chanticleer and you have to drive the ball well here and that is what I do. I think I only missed one shot," he said.

After the 14th hole there was little doubt the trophy would be going back to Savannah with Hall.

Hanzel bogeyed two of his first three holes on the back nine, but was still close enough to make a run for the lead until a double bogey on 14 and a birdie by Hall on the same hole bumped the margin between the two to six-shots.

Hall's final round 3-under par 69 was the best final round. He finished the 54 hole event at 9-under par 207.



Jack Hall, the 8th ranked senior in the World Amateur Golf Rankings shot a three round total of 9-under par 207 to top a field of other highly ranked seniors to win the Greenville Country Club's Chanticleer National Senior Invitational title.

"You never know you are going to do that (win by 6 shots). Playing with the guys (other leaders) I knew it was going to be a pretty good score, so I'm happy," said Hall.

Another highly ranked competitor, #20 Bob Royak from Alpharetta, GA., eagled the par-5 17th hole to slip in front of Hanzel for second place with a three day total of 213.

After Hanzel, Mike Combs from Roswell, GA. was the only other golfer to finish under par in fourth place.

The Super-Senior championship required a two hole playoff to decide the winner.

Jerry Hudgins from Tyler, TX took a one-shot lead into the final round, but on the first nine-holes a pair of Charlotte golfers took over the lead.

Johnny Elam and James Pearson took turns in the lead late in the round.

Pearson finished with a 74 and Elam carded a 75 for a 216 total to force the playoff.

The two played the first hole even, but on the Chanticleer's Par-3 second hole Elam's tee shot found a trap while Pearson hit the green and made a two putt par for the win.

The Legends championship was won by Neil Spitanly. The Chattanooga golfer was the only golfer in the Legends division to finish under par.

His 9-under par 204 total earned him a 12 shot victory over James Castagna from Sandy Springs, MD.

Each year the Chanticleer National Senior Invitational draws more of the top senior golfers in the country to the highly regarded event at the Greenville Country Club.

Several years' ago when the event was recognized in the World Amateur Golf Ranking, the already popular event got a boost.

"You look at our field this year and we have golfers who have won just about every major senior championship," said Frank Wrenn, who founded the tournament in 2011. "We have seniors from all over the country. They love the course and enjoy Greenville," he said.

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Vardas wins WSCGA Amateur

Georgia Southern soph shoots 1-under par final round for championship

Sometimes even a bogey can be a good score to write down on a scorecard.

Karlee Vardas rolled in a long bogey putt and penciled in a 5 for her final hole in the final round of the Women's South Carolina Golf Association's Amateur Championship.

"It was a good bogey," said the 2022 champion from Lexington. "If it didn't go in, it could have meant going into a playoff," she said.

Vardas started the 54 hole championship at Fort Jackson's Old Hickory golf course tied for the lead.

Vardas, who just finished her first year at Georgia Southern shot a 2-under par 70 to finish the first day tied with future Clemson golfer Sydney Roberts.

"I was hitting my irons really well. A lot of them were ending up around 5 feet or so. I was pleased with the way I was playing," she said.

While Vardas and Roberts were tied for the lead, Furman's Sophia Burnett was just a shot off the lead after the first round.

Burnett was in the hunt for the Carolinas Golf Association's Women's Amateur title last week.

The Lady Paladin golfer from Bluffton finished



Georgia Southern's Karlee Vardas from Lexington won the WSCGA Amateur championship by 2-shots at the Fort Jackson golf course in Columbia. (WSCGA Photo)

third in the championship played at Yeamans Hall in Charleston.

In the second round, Roberts kept her share of the

lead while Burnett moved ahead of Vardas going into the final round.

Vardas was still happy with her iron play, but the putts in the second round just did not fall for the 2019 AAAAA SC high school individual champion.

"I was playing well. In the final round I just wanted to go for the middle of the fairways and the middle of the greens. I was going to play it safe," she said.

After the first couple of holes her game plan proved to be the perfect plan.

Roberts had trouble at the very start of her final round. Last year's SCHSL AAA champion bogeyed her first three holes.

The Chesnee golfer bounced back with a pair of birdies on her fourth and fifth holes, but both Vardas and Burnett took advantage of her troubled start to move into the lead.

Burnett birdied her first hole, but ran into bogey problems before the turn to finish her first nine at 2-over par.

Vardas birdied her second hole and had a 2-shot lead after her first nine-holes which she was able to hold until the 17th hole.

Burnett made a birdie on the par-3 hole to cut Vardas's lead to just one shot.

On the final hole Vardas made her "good bogey" while Burnett missed a putt that could have made a

WSCGA Am... continued on page 20

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Madison Messimer (center) from Myrtle Beach is almost dwarfed by the size of the ceremonial trophy she won for her victory in the 96th Carolinas Golf Association's Women's Championship played at Yeamans Hall in Charleston. Messimer birdied the first playoff hole to top Spartanburg's MK Talledo for the championship. Furman golfer Sophia Burnett shot a final round 3-under par 69 to finish third. (CGA Photos)

Messimer wins playoff for CGA Women's Am

15 year old from Myrtle Beach birdies playoff hole for Carolinas Amateur title

The ceremonial trophy Madison Messimer received for winning the CGA Women's Amateur championship is almost as big as the 15 year old golfer.

Finishing in front of the field, which included dozens of outstanding college golfers from the Carolinas, was an accomplishment that even dwarfed the big trophy.

"It means a lot, because all of the players are really good," said Messimer. "I've worked so hard so it is great that it is paying off," she said.

College of Charleston rising sophomore MK Talledo from Spartanburg set the pace early with an impressive 7-under par 65 in the first round.

"On this golf course I was just trying to hit the middle of the fairway, the middle of the green and if the

putt fell awesome and if it didn't just take the par and move on," said Talledo.

Messimer opened with a 1-over par 73, that left her 8 shots out of the lead and behind a half dozen golfers who posted a better first round score.

College of Charleston's Emma Schimpf and incoming Clemson freshman golfer Sydney Roberts were tied for second at 71.

In the second round Talledo gave a few strokes back to the field carding a 2-over par 74 while Messimer shot a 2-under par 70 to move up to second place 4-strokes behind the leader.

In the second round Augusta State's Chloe Holder from Anderson shot a 71.

The Southland Conference freshman of the year was in third place going into the final round.

Talledo's lead shrunk quickly near the end of her round while Messimer played steady to catch up on the final hole.

The 2021 WSCGA Junior champion came close to

winning the tournament on her final hole, but her birdie attempt slid by the hole sending the two golfers back to 18 for a playoff.

"I have been in playoffs before. I was really nervous, but I have won every playoff I have been in so that made me feel better," Messimer said.

The SC High School AAAA individual champion had a similar putt to the one she missed in regulation.

"I missed it on the high side the first time, so I aimed it in the same spot and it went in this time," she said.

The birdie putt won the playoff and earned Messimer the Carolinas championship.

Before she started the tournament at Yeamans Hall in Charleston she recalled she was a little nervous.

"I was excited and a little bit nervous coming in. I wanted to start out strong, finish strong and make as many putts as possible," she said.

After the top-two golfers Furman's Sophia Burnett from Bluffton finished with a 3-under par 69 to claim **Messimer...** continued on page 14

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Eubanks blows away the field for SCGA Junior

Final round 7-under 64 blitzes the field for a 5-shot victory

Somebody forgot to tell Myles Eubanks that the final round of the SCGA Junior was supposed to be a replay of the 2021 final round.

With Rowan Sullivan last year's champion and Luke Sullivan last year's runner-up separated by a shot at the top of the leader board Eubanks started the final round 3-shots off the lead.

The top-two golfers from 2022 were looking forward to a rematch.

"I was at the top of the leader board going into the final hole last year and lost by one, so I want to get revenge on that and give myself opportunities," said Luke Sullivan.

"It'll be fun to run it back again and play with Luke, he'll have just as much motivation as anybody, and it'll be fun to go at it with the other guys playing their best," said Rowan Sullivan.

Eubanks, playing in the second to the last group, opened his final round with a birdie while the others settled for pars.

The South Aiken High School rising senior bogeyed his third hole, but closed



South Aiken rising senior Myles Eubanks shot a sizzling 7-under par 64 in the final round to win the 2022 SCGA Junior Championship at the Florence Country Club. (SCGA Photo)

out the front nine with a pair of birdies to get to 6-under par.

By the time the golfers made the turn, the leader board looked different than it did to start the day.

Luke Sullivan finished the front nine at 6-under par dropping a shot while Rowan Sullivan also lost a shot and was 5-under to start the final nine.

Eubanks and Mitchel McNeil from North Augusta each got to 6-under par for a three-way tie starting the back nine.

Eubanks took control of the tourna-

ment and the lead over the first six holes on the back nine.

The Warrentonville, SC golfer reeled off 4-birdies in the next six holes to pull away from the field,

His bogey on number 16 was followed up with two more birdies to finish his round with a 7-under par 64 total to finish 5-shots in front of McNeil.

"I had fun, the putts were falling and I'm just speechless," said the new champion.

Second round leader Luke Sullivan carded a final round 5-over par 76 to fall

into an eighth place tie with Greenville's Tip Price.

Rowan Sullivan, the defending champion, shot a 2-over par final round to finish in a three-way tie for fifth.

"I've put myself in positions like this in the past and when I get down the stretch, I fold. So today I just wanted to have a good time and see what happened," said Eubanks.

The South Aiken High School golfer has a number of top-10 finishes on his SCJGA Heritage Classic Foundation rankings, but the state championship tops them all.

"This win feels so great. This gives me so much confidence It tells me that I can do it. I just have to trust myself, let it happen and never force it," said the 2022 SCGA Junior Champion.

The top eight finishers qualified for the 47th annual Georgia-South Carolina Junior Team Matches.

In addition to Eubanks and McNeil Dallas Johnson and Adam Hunt tied for third with Pake June, Waymon Thomas and Rowan Sullivan finishing in a fifth place tie.

Greenville's Price was the eighth golfer to qualify for the matches to be played July 29-31 at Savannah Golf Club in Savannah, Georgia.

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Pruitt is back in the game

Longtime PGA Tour Rules Official is back playing amateur golf

Over the last 22 years or so Dillard Pruitt has mostly been watching other people play golf.

As a PGA Tour rules official, Pruitt has helped Tour players understand the rules, made difficult rulings and was an important part of the professional game.

Last year he put up his rule book and brought out his clubs and is once again playing tournament golf.

Pruitt and his partner Rob Butler teamed up to win the 2022 CGA Four-Ball championship at the Camden Country Club early in May.

"I decided to tip-toe back into playing," said Pruitt. "I had a really great partner in Rob and Camden is such a great golf course, and we won. It was fun," he said.

It was the second time in the last few months Pruitt played the Donald Ross course in a tournament.

In March, Pruitt and one of his college teammates at Clemson, Julian Taylor, teamed up to play in the SCGA Senior Four-Ball at Camden.

"Playing with Julian was so much fun I thought maybe I could start playing a little more," he said.

Pruitt's accomplishments as an amateur, a college golfer and as a PGA Tour player in the 1980s and 1990s earned the Greenville native induction into the



Greenville's Dillard Pruitt, a member of the SCGA Hall of Fame retired after a 22 year career as a PGA Tour rules official. The Clemson All-American and PGA Tour tournament winner was part of the winning team with Rob Butler at the CGA Match Play championship at Camden. (GolfClub and CGA Photos)

South Carolina Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2021.

The successful rise of the Clemson golf program can be traced directly to Pruitt's days as a Tiger. He accomplished a great many "firsts" during his college days in the 1980s.

He was the first two-time All American at Clemson in 1983 and 1984. He was selected to the All-ACC First-Team three-times and was honored by being included on the ACC's 50th



Anniversary team.

"I don't have many trophies in my house, but one I have always kept is the 1982 ACC Championship Trophy," Pruitt said in an article for a Clemson IPTAY publication.

As a sophomore he helped Clemson win its first ACC Championship in 1982, playing his final hole with an orange golf ball.

In addition to his college credits, Pruitt won the SCGA Amateur cham-

pionship at Chanticleer in 1982 and the prestigious Sunnehanna Amateur in 1983 and again in 2003 after his amateur status was restored.

After graduation he played the PGA Tour from 1988 to 2001. He won the 1991 Chattanooga Classic and with it a trip to the 1992 Masters where he finished tied for 13th.

He became a PGA Tour official after finishing his playing career and continued in that role until he retired.

While a Tour official, and after regaining his amateur status, Pruitt occasionally played in state events when his schedule permitted.

He won the 2003 CGA South Carolina Match Play championship defeating Todd White in the final at Green Valley, but the constant traveling for work made him enjoy his time away from the game at home more than finding a tournament to play.

"During the pandemic we were off and I enjoyed not being on a schedule, so I decided to retire. I have some things I want to do, but I want to do them on my own schedule," he said.

Playing tournament golf is one of those things, but not to become the focus of his retirement planning.

When Pruitt and Butler entered the Four-Ball tournament they had no expectations they would be playing into the last day.

"We did okay in stroke play and won our first match 1 up," he recalled.

Pruitt and Butler advanced to the **Pruitt...** continued on page 14



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Getting younger all the time

Easley's Danbom is youngest to ever win the Upstate Junior

It may not mean as much to Jace Danbom today as it will in a few years, but the 14 year old from Easley won the overall championship at the Upstate Junior Classic and made some history.

With the win comes a special line in the record book. Danbom became the youngest overall champion in the 32 year history of the tournament played at Smithfields in Easley.

"It means a lot to win this," said the new Upper State Junior champion. "I've been working my butt off with my dad to win this tournament," he said.

The Upstate Junior lists among its past champions PGA Tour star Kevin Kisner, the 2000 champion and former Tour player Kyle Thompson who won the 1994 and 1995 tournaments.

Danbom opened the 36 hole event with a 2-under par 70 to take the lead in his 13-14 year old age division.

Danbom was ahead of his division by 7-shots going into the final round.

"I've been working hard for a long time and my game has really improved over the last couple of months. My short game has improved and I've added some distance," he offered.

The Easley High School golfer shot a second round 2-over par 73 to win his age group by 9-shots.

Ordinarily Danbom would get his trophy, have his picture made and be on



Easley's Jace Danbom became the youngest overall winner of in the 32 year history of the Upstate Junior at Smithfields. The 14 year old shot a 1-under par 143 total for the 36 hole championship. (Makayla King Photo)

his way home.

Instead, in the Upstate Junior any golfer, playing the same set of tees, can be the overall champion.

Gage Howard, from Woodruff had the first round lead in the boys 15-18 division. His 2-under par 70 tied Danbom for the overall lead with 18 holes to play.

Gage struggled in the second round and finished in a tie for 8th.

Jay Smith from Florence and OT Michell from Fort Mill trailed Gage by a shot after the first round and the two would battle with Cade Kriscunas from Hilton Head for the age group title on the final holes.

While the three were finishing their rounds, Danbom, who played earlier with the other 13-14 year olds, waited to

see if his two-round total of 1-under par 143 would hold up.

Smith birdied his final 3-holes to make a run at the leader, but some early round bogeys left him with a 1-over par 73 and an even-par 144 for the tournament and second place.

Kriscunas finished third at 2-over par 144, while defending champion Logan Lutz from Mount Pleasant and Drew Jeffords from Florence tied for 4th place.

Danbom got to take home a pair of trophies, one as the overall champion and the other as the 13-14 year old division winner finishing in front of Belton's Bennett Scaletta and Ben Smith from Gaffney.

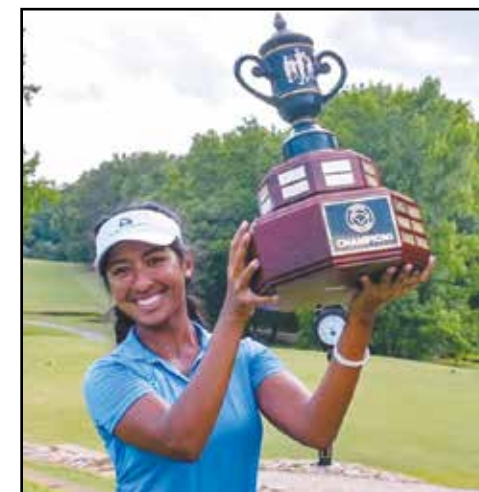
Jack Coleman fro Aiken topped Will McCraw from Inman in a playoff for the

boys 12 and under championship.

Danbom has a busy schedule planned for the summer.

"I'm going to play in all the majors and keep working to get better," he said.

The field of over 120 golfers was the largest in recent memory. The event which came close to being lost before the SCJGA took over its operation now has flourished for several years in a row.



Bluffton's Fernandez Win Girls Upstate Jr.

Anne Fernandez shot rounds of 71 and 70 for a two-day total of 3-under par 141 to win the girls Upstate Junior Championship.

"I made three birdies in six holes on the back nine which motivated me to finish strong," said Fernandez.

Emily Baker of Chapin took home second in this division, finishing with an overall score of seven-over par 151.

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McCraw wins SCGA Pee-Wee championship

Sixth grader is the fifth golfer from Inman to win the title

Since the South Carolina Golf Association began the Pee-Wee Championship 24 years ago, more than a handful of the 7 to 12 year old champions have grown up to be college All-Americans, national championship winners and a few are on pro Tours.

The best example is last year's US Women's Amateur champion Jensen Castle, from Columbia, who won the SCJGA Pee Wee Championship in 2013.

This year four golfers finished on top of the boys and girls age group divisions in the tournament played at the Columbia Country Club.

Will McCraw could be the next outstanding golfer to follow ACC Champion Jacob Bridgeman and Georgia All-American Trent Phillips out of Inman.

The rising 7th grader at the Campobello-Gramling School was playing in his first Pee-Wee championship, but he was not a newcomer to tournament golf.

Like many kids, who have to age into some of the SCJGA events, McCraw already has experience playing in US Kids, Under Armour Tour and GSA tournaments.

The Pee-Wee championship is split into two nine hole segments played on the same day.

McCraw carded a 3-under par 33



Will McCraw (left) broke out of a first round tie to go on to win the SCJGA Pee-Wee championship at the Columbia Country Club. Chloe Crosby from Simpsonville (top right) won the girls (7-9) title while Gaffney's Rilen Kozic was the boys (7-9) year old division winner. (SCJGA Photos)



on his first nine holes before the break to finish the first half of the tournament tied with Connor Wolfe from Blythewood.

"I wanted to be in the top-5 and I got off to a good start," he said.

McCraw birdied three of his first four holes to take the lead, but Wolfe finished his first nine holes with three birdies in his last five holes to catch McCraw.

During the break between nines the young McCraw was talked out of getting in some extra practice by his father

Jason.

"At lunch he told me to just let my mind relax instead of hitting balls," he recalled.

It was good advice as McCraw started the second nine holes with a birdie. He didn't bogey a hole on his second nine.

He shaved another shot from par with a birdie on his seventh hole and when he parred number 17 he thought he could finish with a win.

McCraw parred his final hole to shoot a 2-under par 34 and a 5-under par 67

for the Pee-Wee championship.

There is never anything bad that comes with a win, but McCraw was disappointed his Mom wasn't with him in Columbia.

"She has told me when she was looking at scores that she was afraid she might miss me winning a big tournament, but we took a lot of pictures and face-timed so it was almost like she was there," he said.

McCraw has been working with Kevin Britt for the last four years. Britt heads up the instruction program at the Carolina Country Club and believes he sees something special in McCraw.

"He reminds me of some of the kids I've worked with who went on to become college and pro golfers. He wants to get better and he works hard and still has fun," said Britt.

Wolfe and Jack Coleman from Aiken finished tied for second.

Four Upstate juniors tied for fourth place. Heyward Jennings, and Thomas DeMint from Greenville along with Hunter Devriendt from Greenwood and Ty Childers from Gaffney all finished at 2-over par.

The girls championship was won by Kinley Brazell from Blythewood, finishing in front of AC Peake from Pauline.

The younger boys division (7-9) was won by Rilen Kozic from Gaffney and Chloe Crosby from Simpsonville won the girls (7-9) title.

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Woodruff's Gage Howard (left) needed a few extra holes before he could claim the 2022 Spartanburg Junior Boys championship. Olivia Ireland (right) improved her score by 10-shots in the second round to come from behind and win the Spartanburg County Junior Girls championship. The tournament was played at The Country Club of Spartanburg. (GolfClub Photos by John Byrum)

Ireland and Howard win Spartanburg Junior

A playoff win and a 10 shot improvement earn county titles

It took Gage Howard three extra holes to win the boys championship, while Olivia Ireland improved on her first round score by 10-shots to win the girls title at the Spartanburg County Junior Amateur Championships.

The tournament played at The Country Club of Spartanburg crowned

champions in boys and girls 13-18 year old divisions and boys and girls championships in the 10-12 year old division.

The defending champion, Granger Amick opened the tournament shooting a 1-under par 71 to tie Gage Howard for the lead.

Two Woodruff High School golfers Ben McKinney and Greg Kelly shot rounds of 2-over par 74 to be tied for third going into the final round.

McKinney eagled his fifth hole to stay close to the leaders, but a pair of double bogeys dropped him out of con-

tention.

The competition for the county title came down to the defending champion and two Wolverine golfers.

Kelly had the most ground to make up and he shot a 3-under par on the front nine to get even with Howard, but Amick still held a 1-shot lead over the two going to the back-nine.

Amick gave his one shot lead away with a bogey on the 10th hole setting off a tight battle for the rest of the round.

Howard took the lead with birdies on numbers 11 and 16. Kelly stayed within

a shot with a birdie on number 12.

Amick finished his round and was 1-under for the tournament, 1 shot outside the playoff.

Kelly came to the final hole needing a birdie to tie Howard. When he rolled his putt in the title would be decided in a playoff.

Kelly and Howard each finished at 2-under par and needed three playoff holes before Howard was able to top his Woodruff High teammate for the boys title.

Spartanburg Jr... continued on page 20

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It is hard to find pictures of almost anyone in the days before selfies, but (left) sportswriter Luther Gaillard was the founder of the Spartanburg County Amateur. On the list of County champions you will see Sill and Biershenk more than any others. Stan Sill (right) owns 6-Spartanburg County Amateur championships while the Biershenks (l-r) Robbie, Nicky, Tommy, Jr. and Tommy, Sr. have divided up 10-Spartanburg County Championships. (Sill picture from the 1996 championship, Biershenk Family picture was taken after Nicky won the 2002 championship. (GolfClub Photos)

Spartanburg County celebrates its 50th Am

Sportswriter Luther Gaillard is remembered for founding the County Championship

When golfers take to the tee for the start of Spartanburg County Amateur at Three Pines starting on July 15th they will be playing in the 50th championship.

The county championship was begun by Spartanburg Herald Sports Writer Luther Gaillard in 1974.

Gaillard passed away in 2013 and there is no definitive record of why he thought a county championship was needed, but he got it going with the help of his newspaper and a handful of local golfers.

With Gaillard leading the way the Herald-Journal got behind the effort and turned it into a major coverage event. Golfers remember countless stories leading up to tournaments over the years, with special newspaper sections produced in advance and after the event.

Winning the Spartanburg County Am might not have been big in other places, but in Spartanburg it was huge.

"There were so many good golfers in Spartanburg getting them in a tournament to see who was the best was great," said Tommy Biershenk, Sr. who played in the first County Amateur and won the second.

Mike Gravley played in the first championship as a teen-ager. He went on to join Biershenk, Sr. as the only two golfers to win both the Greenville and Spartanburg County Amateurs.

"I remember the guys I was paired with like Stan Littlejohn were legends. I remember hitting every green and still shooting an 81," but it was a thrill to play.

The year before the County Championship began Village Greens was the site of the 1973 NAIA National Championship Golf tournament.



The leaders in the final round at Lan-Yair always had a big following of carts and spectators much like the year Tommy Biershenk, Jr. became the youngest winner of the championship in 1997. (GolfClub Photo) The Spartanburg County Am is sponsored by Delaney's Irish Pub and Budweiser of Spartanburg.



The Wofford Terriers won the first ever national collegiate championship for a South Carolina school at the course.

The first championship set the stage for what would become a normal great finish for the county title.

Richard Lowery and Mike Crowley ended the regulation 36 holes in a tie.

On the first playoff hole Crowley was in good position for a possible birdie while Lowery was in a green side trap.

Legend has it Crowley called over to Lowery and said "knock it in Richard," and he did for the win and the tournament was off to a great start.

Biershenk, Sr won the next tournament and remembers the fields growing over the years as the event found a permanent home at Lan-Yair until the

course closed in 2004.

"It did get bigger and bigger and it got harder to win over the years because of all the good golfers," he said.

Billy Hough, one of the owners of the course, remembers how much fun there was just being around during the tournament.

"The golfers all had their fans and they would come out and follow them around on foot and in carts," recalled Hough.

With the support of Lan-Yair and the promotion by the Herald Journal not only was the tournament on its way to being a successful competition, but it developed as a fund raising opportunity.

"I remember one year the proceeds went to the Sertoma Club and they had a big event just to receive the check. The tournament had an impact," Hough said.

In the first ten years of the tournament, Lowery and Biershenk would each win another championships. All the winners were a little older and recognized as very good players.

When the tournament began its second decade a new name came to the top of the leader board and it would appear at the top more often than any other, Stan Sill.

The 20 year old lefty had played in the tournament a few times, but the 1982 championship was his first to really be in contention at the end.

"I was playing with older guys who I knew were very good and I was nervous," said Sill. "I got in position to win, but went into a playoff with Pat Crowley.

Crowley was on the Wofford team that won the National championship at Village Greens and was very much a **Spartanburg Am...** continued on page 22

Spartanburg County Amateur Champions

- 1973 Richard Lowery
- 1974 Tommy Biershenk, Sr.
- 1975 Olin Callicutt
- 1976 Buddy Price
- 1977 Steve Burgess
- 1978 Barry Black
- 1979 Billy Joe Gentry
- 1980 Richard Lowery
- 1981 Tommy Biershenk, Sr.
- 1982 Stan Sill
- 1983 Steve Burgess
- 1984 Scott Smith
- 1985 Stan Sill
- 1986 Todd White
- 1987 Tommy Biershenk, Sr.
- 1988 Barry Black
- 1989 Mike Byce
- 1990 Tommy Biershenk, Jr.
- 1991 Tommy Biershenk, Jr.
- 1992 Butch Genoble
- 1993 Stan Sill
- 1994 Stan Sill
- 1995 Jared Wilkins
- 1996 Stan Sill
- 1997 Tommy Biershenk, Jr.
- 1998 Robbie Biershenk
- 1999 Robbie Biershenk
- 2000 Nicky Biershenk
- 2001 Randy Childers
- 2002 Nicky Biershenk
- 2003 Barry Black
- 2004 Brian Kennedy
- 2005 Stan Sill
- 2006 Mike Gravley
- 2007 Mike Gravley
- 2008 Daniel Stanley
- 2009 Daniel Stanley
- 2010 Richard Burgess
- 2011 Tyler Macolly
- 2012 Kyle Milner
- 2013 Kevin Roberts
- 2014 Tyler Macolly
- 2015 Taylor White
- 2016 Kevin Roberts
- 2017 Trip Morrow
- 2018 Trevor Phillips
- 2019 Matt Carter
- 2020 Kevin Roberts
- 2021 Trevor Phillips

Star Sightings at the BMW
GolfClub Photos by John Byrum



Larry The Cable Guy



Anthony Anderson



Lauren Thompson



George Birge



Larry Fitzgerald

Bridgeman shows he belongs

ACC champ makes a run for the win in the BMW's final round

After a warm up week in Raleigh making the cut and playing four rounds in the Rex Hospital Classic, Jacob Bridgeman came home to the Upstate.

The Clemson grad from Inman gave local fans something to cheer for at the BMW and a glimpse into the possibilities for the young professional just beginning his career.

Early in the week Bridgeman set a goal for himself.

It was ambitious and maybe even a little brash for a brand new pro playing in only his second Korn Ferry Tour event.

"I want to have a chance to win on Sunday," the ACC Champion said in an interview.

By Sunday afternoon his play in the first three rounds gave him that chance.

The large number of Bridgeman and Clemson fans following him got to see the talent of a player destined to play the PGA Tour.

"This is a home field event for me. I had a lot of people out here supporting me this week," he said.

At the beginning of the final round, Robbie Shelton had a 5-shot lead over



Inman's Jacob Bridgeman finished the BMW Charity Pro-Am at 19-under par in a tie for fifth place. (GolfClub Photo by John Byrum)

Ben Griffin and Augusto Nunez.

There were a few more seasoned Korn-Ferry professionals between Griffin, Nunez and Bridgeman who shot a 6-under par 65 at Thornblade to have a 54 hole total of 13-under par, 9-shots behind Shelton.

Bridgeman got into contention in the first two rounds with a 3-under par 68

at Thornblade and a 4-under par 68 at Carolina.

His eagle on his final hole in the second round sent him into the weekend with some momentum at Thornblade where he set records as a Junior.

Bridgeman won The Blade Junior setting the tournament record in 2017.

His first round 6-under par 65 included a run of birdie, birdie, eagle, birdie on the back 9.

On Saturday in the third round he made the turn at 1-under par and came close to matching his junior record on the back.

This time Bridgeman reeled off 5-birdies in a row from holes 12-16 to finish at 6-under par for the day.

His 13-under par total put him right where he wanted to be.

"I want to have a chance to win on Sunday,"

In the final round Shelton was unable to add to his lead, while Bridgeman started hot.

He birdied three of his first four holes and carded a 4-under par 31 on his first nine.

On the back nine, he wasn't able to duplicate his record setting performance, but got to 20-under par by sinking a long birdie putt on the difficult par-3 17th hole.

Bridgeman... continued on page 18

Grading the 2022 BMW Charity Pro-Am

After covering every tournament since the first Ben Hogan Tour at Verdae Greens, through the "Salad Days" of the Kevin Costner era at The Cliffs, to today's Korn-Ferry Tour, I thought I would offer a few of my observations and a suggestion for the future.

Stan Olenik, Editor - Publisher.

Competition A - The BMW and its predecessors have almost always featured great golf with exciting finishes.

I don't know if this year's win by Robbie Shelton is better than when Greenville's Michael Christie won at Verdae, but a playoff is memorable.

Course Conditions A+ - Kyle Calahan at Thornblade and JR Reynolds at Carolina and their crews deserve congratulations for having their courses in great shape for the players and also for how good the courses looked on TV.

Celebrities C - I don't think I ran into anyone who couldn't wait to get a selfie with Scottie Scheffler's caddy or



A Night with the Marshall Tucker Band in Spartanburg attracted a huge crowd.

an autograph from the Shee sisters.

The hardest job at the BMW is wrangling celebrities to play in the event.

The tournament has usually done a good job of attracting fan friendly celebrities, but this year the star power was down again.

With appreciation to all the celebrities, especially those who have been here before like Anthony Anderson, Larry the Cable Guy, MLB Hall of Famer Ozzie Smith and Boxing Champ

Canelo, thank you for playing.

Community Outreach B+ - Thanks to Carolina Country Club's owner Tim Dunlop for bringing the Upstate event back to Spartanburg.

And thanks to the BMW organization for including the Spartanburg community, not only for golf, but for some of the fun events that can happen around the tournament, like the Marshall Tucker concert. Hopefully there are more ahead.

Charitable Contributions - Inc. - The Pro-Ams were reported as sold out which is a big contributor to the bottom line. It usually takes some time to add up all the numbers and pass out the checks so that is why it is an incomplete.

Carolina Charities, Inc. the tournament operator, once again picked some good organizations to share the events proceeds and for that they get an A.

Growth and Future - C - Every Korn-Ferry pro knows if you are just **Grading the BMW...** continued on page 18

Messimer

...continued from page 6
third place.

While the Myrtle Beach golfer is three or four years younger than many of the players she finished in front of, winning a big tournaments is nothing new for Messimer.

She has quickly compiled an impressive junior record before stepping up to play with older and more experienced golfers.

As a high school golfer at Myrtle Beach she was the 2021 AAAA state champion last year and was also the Women's South Carolina Golf Association junior champion.

Messimer finished fifth in last year's CGA Girls championship and added several top-10s in the Twin State, Viki DiSantis, Junior Heritage and the Beth Daniel Junior Azalea to name just a few.

She was ranked fourth in the Heritage Foundation Junior Girls Ranking in South Carolina and surely will move up after the win.

With so many college golfers entered into the championship the CGA began the Collegiate Cup tournament within the tournament.



Madison Messimer won a playoff for the CGA Women's Amateur championship. Wren HS grad Chloe Holder finished in fourth. (CGA Photos)



This year the Cup was won by the College of Charleston posting the two lowest combined scores.



Susan Pruitt helped her husband Dillard celebrate his induction into the South Carolina Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2020. (GolfClub Photo) As a Clemson All-American golfer Pruitt was an important part of the growth of the Clemson golf program and its first ACC Championship.



Pruitt...

continued from page 21

quarter finals with a 4 & 2 win, but were pressed to go on to the semi-finals needing 20 holes for the victory.

"We were playing two matches a day and a couple of times in the second match we would ask each other what in the world are we doing. I'm 60 and Paul is 49 and we were playing matches with guys a lot younger than we were. Sometimes we wondered if we could finish," joked Pruitt.

The two gathered up their strength for

the final match against North Carolina golfers Anthony Conn and Brandon Reece.

The match was even until the 15th hole. Pruitt's par put his team 1 up and Butler followed with a birdie on the 16th hole to take a 2 up lead. Both golfers parred 17 to wrap up the victory 2 & 1.

"I had another great time and so I plan on playing a little more. I traveled for 22 straight years (as a PGA Tour Official) and I'm happy doing nothing around the house. I may play in a few tournaments, maybe four or five a year, but it will be the ones I enjoy like Camden," he said.

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- June 25-26 (Monticello GC & Tara GC)
- July 2- Cherokee National CC
- July 23- Etowah Valley GC
- July 30-31- Riverbend GC and Deerbrook GC
- August 13- Clemson Walker Course
- August 27- Apple Valley GC
- September 10-11- Southern Oaks GC & Carolina Country Club
- October 10-12- North American Championship (Nashville, TN)

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Anderson University's Associate Head Coach Denton Moore has been chosen the top women's assistant coach in NCAA Division II by the Women's Golf Coaches Association. Moore guided the Trojans to their first ever appearance in the NCAA DII Championship and advanced to the final four to compete for the NCAA DII Match Play Championship.

Moore is NCAA DII's Top Assistant

Trojan's Associate Head Coach named best by WGCA

This has been a very big year for the Anderson Women's golf program.

The Trojans have claimed their fair share of awards from their best golf season in the program's history.

The latest award was presented to Associate Head Coach Denton Moore.

The Anderson native was named the NCAA DII Women's Assistant Coach of the Year by the Women's College Golf Coaches Association.

"I'm really appreciative of this honor, but anyone who coaches knows it is the players who are responsible for an award like this and I am fortunate to coach some great players," he said.

The team made their first trip to the NCAA DII Championship after winning

the South Atlantic Conference championship.

Under Moore and Director of Golf Danny Neal, the Trojans didn't go to the NCAA DII finals just to get a T-shirt.

The team advanced to the final-four in match play before their season ended.

"We had a great year. The team responded to all the challenges and got better as the year went on," said Moore.

The former Trojan golfer began his work with the golf teams as a volunteer assistant and was named an assistant coach in 2014.

The school elevated Moore to Associate Head Coach a year ago.

While Moore helps coach both teams at Anderson it is the women's team that gets most of his attention.

Guiding recruiting Moore has brought in a number of outstanding golfers and he has not had to go far to find them.

"We believe there are a many out-

standing golfers all around us. Some may take a year or two to develop, but the golfers who join the program all work hard to get better and as they have, so has the program," he said.

While almost all the top teams in Division II have foreign players on their rosters, Anderson's longest reach for a golfer has been to Virginia.

This year Jessica Rathbone, a rising junior from Virginia, was named a first team All-American by the WGCA.

During her All-American season Rathbone won the SAC individual title, finished fifth in the national championship and is ranked 7th among all DII golfers.

Four of the five Trojan golfers on the team that finished the season ranked 4th in Division II are from South Carolina.

Senior Victoria Hall is from Byrnes, Kerington Lamb is from Easley, Emma Charles is from Hartsville and Kennedy

McGaha is from Belton.

McGaha was named the conference Freshman of the Year and was a second team All-Conference selection.

"We don't want to pass up on any golfer who can help our program. There are many outstanding players in and around South Carolina and we have shown we play a great schedule against top quality competition and we can win here at Anderson," said Moore.

The program loses two important contributors to graduation this year.

Victoria Hall and Anna Freeman have been important contributors to the rise of the Trojans national reputation.

Lamb will use her extra year of eligibility to return and with Rathbone, Charles and McGaha along with rising sophomore Zoey Iglesias, Moore has five veteran golfers to begin next season.

Moore... continued on page 20



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Friends gathered to honor the memory of Alen "A" Coursey (center). The longtime Lakelands' area pro and superintendent passed away in 2015 at the age of 49. Coursey was a champion in and of junior golf. The special tournament was held at Stoney Point with proceeds going to junior golf programs. Morning flight winners included (left - l-r) Steve Fennimore, Paul Clark, Sam Krugg, Steve Fitzgerald-Hobbs. Afternoon flight winners (right, l-r) Colby Pope, Gary Odom, Tommy Bridges, Patrick Wilson.

Friends remember "A" Coursey

Junior golf in the Lakelands to benefit from special event held in "A's" memory

It wasn't just his initial or the way he was referred to by many in and around Greenwood and the Lakelands.

Allen Coursey always had his "A" game. The respect he earned during his life in golf showed when many of his friends, family and fellow golf business professionals gathered to honor his memory.

"A" as he was known to countless golfers in the Lakelands passed away in 2015. His efforts made the golf experience better for the golfers who had the pleasure of meeting Coursey.

Longtime Greenwood area professional Tommy Pendley remembers "A" as a championship golfer at Ninety Six High School.

He also noted a quality in Coursey that would help set his course to becoming a club professional and eventually a course superintendent.

"The team was more important than what Allen did, he helped them all, that's what he was all about," said Pendley.

He began as an assistant pro at Star Fort and was the head professional at Hunters Creek before discovering what his friends and family refer to as his calling.

At Hunters Creek he began his transition from club professional to greens superintendent.

After some time at Hunter's Creek, Coursey was presented an opportunity to work at The Patriot. First as a machine operator and then as an assistant to Billy Ford. When Ford left The Patriot, Coursey took over as the club's superintendent.

It was Coursey's recommendation that brought Craig Malone to the club as the head professional.

"He was one of a kind. Not just on the golf course, but what he meant to the members. He was there whenever needed," said Malone.

Coursey was on his job at The Patriot when a heart attack took his life at the young age of 49.

Junior golf is where Coursey began his career's calling and Pendley, Malone and "A's" family have joined together over the last seven years to honor his memory to benefit his great love, Junior Golf.

"He truly cared about the people along with the game of golf especially Junior Golf," said Coursey's sister Angie Palmer.

The annual "A" Coursey Memorial Golf Tournament was played at The Links at Stoney Point on June 4th.

52 teams gathered to fill both morning and afternoon starting times in the captain's choice tournament.

Proceeds from the tournament will be used to benefit Junior Golf in memory of "A" Coursey.

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Overholt wins the Festival of Flowers

Greenwood Club member makes up two-shots in final round to win at home

Youth and enthusiasm wasn't quite enough to top age and experience at the Festival of Flowers championship played at the Greenwood Country Club.

Cambridge Academy High School golfer Spence Hagood carded a blistering opening round 8-under par 64 to leave a field of golfers with statewide accomplishments in his wake.

Hagood, isn't in short supply of accomplishments on the golf course himself.

The Class of 2023 junior won the SCISA 1A championship this past year and the Tee Off Classic at The Fort Club and won last year's Greenwood Club championship.

Rod Overholt, who is a little over twice the teen's age, trailed Hagood by 2-shots after the first round.

Hagood didn't have as good a day in the final round as he did to open the championship, but held a share of the lead until the 15th hole.

Overholt, who recently shot a round of 60 (12 birdies) at Greenwood while playing with friends, caught up with the first round leader by the 15th hole and took a 1-shot lead with a par and Hagood's bogey on number 16.

Both golfers parred their 17th holes to go to number 18 tied for the lead.



Rod Overholt shot a final round 3-under par 69 to win the Festival of Flowers championship at the Greenwood Country Club.

Misfortune caught Hagood when his second shot on the par-5 18th hole went out of bounds. The errant shot opened the door for Overholt and he took advantage.

"We didn't know it was OB when I hit my second shot," said Overholt. "I wanted to get it up close to the green for a pitch and chance to make a birdie. Nothing changed and that was what I did," he said.

Overholt's birdie attempt slipped by the hole, but

his par, while Hagood struggled to recover from the out of bounds shot wrapped up the win.

Patrick Stephenson started the final round in a third place tie with Jeremy Revis after both opened the tournament with 4-under par 68s.

Stephenson hung around the lead for most of the final round and was within 2-shots of the leaders when his second shot got to within 5-feet of the pin on the 515 yard finishing hole. He rolled in his eagle putt to finish second.

Overholt, who operates a masonry company in Abbeville, finished third last year, the first time he played in the championship and was happy with his winning effort.

"After my family and the business, I try to play as much as I can and anytime you can win at home you have to feel good about it," he said.

Robbie Biershenk and Kyle Bearden each finished at 138, 6-under par to tie for fourth place, with Revis shooting an even par 72 in the final round to finish in 6th place.

The Senior title looked like the leader board at the Festival not too many years ago.

Walter Todd shot rounds of 70-69-139 -4 under par to top Yancey Johnson by two shots and former Festival of Flowers champion Steve Liebler who finished in third.

The Club Division title was won by Bryce Whitmer who finished a shot in front of Shannon Sears for the Division Championship.

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Willow Creek's new pro Bridgeman...

Dale Heflin is the new PGA Professional at Willow Creek

Dale Heflin is going to save some gas every day as he commutes to Willow Creek instead of Cobbs Glen in Anderson.

Saving a few miles is nice, but isn't the best part of taking over as the head professional and manager at the club in Greer.

"It has been great to be welcomed back to Greenville by so many old friends and golfers I used to see at Bonnie Brae," he said.

Heflin came to the Upstate to work at the course near Mauldin and was on the staff for 28 years until the course closed with little notice.

Heflin has spent the last three years at Cobbs Glen, as the golf professional, but his duties at Willow Creek will involve much more than "ringing up" golfers.

"I'm really looking forward to working with everyone here. I know we have a very good staff and a wonderful golf course. I have some ideas I think will make it even better," he said.

Heflin had special praise for Willow Creek's long time superintendent Kyle Traynham and his staff for the great course conditions golfers experience every day.

"When I was considering the job I spent some time with Kyle and I learned some things I can do to help him and in turn be able to make things better for golfers here," he said.



One of the most immediate changes Heflin has implemented is extending the club's hours this summer.

"Our tee sheet started at 8 am, but that left a lot of daylight available to golfers so we are going to start our tee times at 7:30 am for the rest of the summer," he said.

The golf shop has also extended tee times later in the day till around 6:30pm for some quick nine-hole rounds.

In addition to the familiar faces Heflin has seen in his brief time back he has enjoyed meeting members and helping them understand some of the changes he has made to make for a better golf experience.

"Everyone who plays here knows this is a very playable and well conditioned golf course and we hope to keep making it better so it will be the premier semi-private golf club in the Upstate," said Heflin.

Bridgeman...

continued from page 13

A bogey on his final hole finished his day at 19-under par.

When Bridgeman signed his scorecard, he had not caught Shelton, but he left the course in second place.

"I expected to be in contention and I fell a little bit short," he said. "I expected a great week and I produced," he said.

Shelton went on to win the tournament in a two hole playoff with Ben Griffin.

Bridgeman finished in a tie for fifth place.

The exemption he earned by his second place finish on the PGA Tour University standings means he will play in all the remaining Korn-Ferry events.

"I'm just trying to put up some good finishes for my next seven events and hopefully sneak into the playoffs," he



said in a post round interview.

Bridgeman will have to earn twice as much in half the time as many of those already in "The 25".

"I have a short little season, but I think I can sneak up there," he said.

He does have a short season to play his way onto the PGA Tour, but after his weekend at Thornblade, Jacob Bridgeman is not going to sneak up on anyone.

BMW Grades... continued from page 13

shooting par you are getting left behind. In many ways the BMW is shooting par on the Korn-Ferry Tour.

In the early days the celebrities were the reason the Golf Channel broadcast the event every year.

This year, without a compelling celebrity contingent most of the tournament was on tape delay at odd hours.

Many years ago, the success of the Jay Haas Thornblade Classic showed a higher level tournament could be a success in the Upstate.

With BMW's support the old Upstate Classic advanced to become the celebrity driven pro-am of today.

With the celebrity feature of the event fading, maybe it is time to think of making a change.

Golf fans love the traditions of the game and those traditions come to life on the Champions Tour, where the players are already celebrities.

While the BMW sells out, is a financial success for charity and gives the Upstate a nice spring outing, how about this idea.

Maybe it is time for Carolina Charities, Inc. to see if it can once again advance PGA Tour golf in the Upstate, but this time to get a Champions Tour event. Just a thought.

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White and Smith win first USGA Four-Ball

Spartanburg golfer puts his name on top of the USGA's newest events trophy

The team of Todd White from Spartanburg and Nathan Smith of Pittsburgh won the first ever USGA Four-Ball Championship at the Olympic Club in San Francisco.

White and Smith topped North Carolina golfers Sher-rill Britt and Greg Earnhardt 7&5.

The Spartanburg golfer was excited knowing that he and Smith would be the first names on the new trophy.

"Great satisfaction. Great satisfaction, knowing that with Nathan here we're national champions," he said. "This event is good for the game," he said.

White and Smith got to the finals after a difficult morning semi-final match. The team beat Austin Connelly and Sam Burns 2&1.

The match was very close with White and Smith holding the lead. White made a 40 foot birdie putt on the 17th hole to close out the match.

The team never played the 18th hole in the match play portion of the tournament. The two made only one bogey in all of their matches and that came on the second hole of the first round.

The momentum carried into the team's final match with Britt and Earnhardt. White started off strong and



Spartanburg's Todd White and his partner Nathan Smith of Pittsburgh teamed up to win the first ever USGA Four-Ball Championship. White and Smith were Walker Cup teammates before competing in the Four-Ball.

Smith pitched in with a birdie on the fourth hole. The team had a 4 up lead that never shrank.

"Getting up early was a big, big help. It freed us up to not really take chances, because you can't do that here, but just knowing that we could play steady golf. It's difficult to make birdies out there, so it was going to be tough for them to catch up," he said.

White closed out the match with his tee shot on the par-3 13th hole. He was able to get within about three feet of the pin and didn't have to putt. Britt and Earnhardt conceded the putt and the match.

The two golfers were teammates on the 2013 Walker Cup team and had competed against one another for years. When the USGA announced the new Four-Ball event the two quickly decided to team up.

"When they announced the event I think it took me about 20 minutes to call him and say, hey, let's do this. I think we might be okay," recalled White. "I'm glad he did," added Smith.

Both golfers have had experience playing in USGA championships. Smith won four USGA Mid-Am championships. Leading up to the Four-Ball tournament White earned a win at the prestigious Azalea Amateur at The Country Club of Charleston.

The victory is one that both golfers say will always be a highlight of their amateur careers. The winners will always be the first names on the USGA Four-Ball championship trophy.



Golf Club
June 2015

Originally published in the June 2015 edition.

The first USGA Four-Ball championship was won by Spartanburg's Todd White and Nathan Smith from Pittsburgh.

White is a 5-time SCGA Player of the Year and currently is the golf coach at Spartanburg High School and a frequent competitor in CGA, SCGA and USGA championships.

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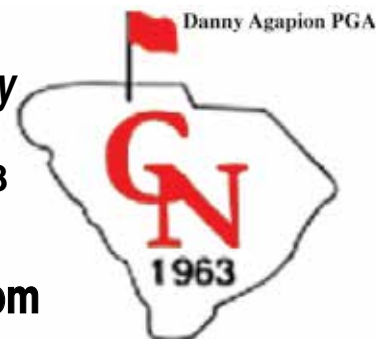
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WSCGA...

continued from page 5

two-shot swing and force a playoff.

"I feel really good about the win. It gives my confidence a boost and gets me into some good tournaments this summer," she said.

Vardas will return to Statesboro for her sophomore year after learning a lot in her first season with the Eagles golf team.

"It was the first time I was around girls who were not from Lexington. I learned a lot about practicing and I was also teaching one of my roommates English," she recalled about her freshman year.

Lee Ann Brown from the Bulls Bay Golf Club won the State Division championship with Kerry Rutan from Yeamans Hall in second.

Southern Oak's Pam Prescott was third in the division.

Louise Givens of the Debordieu Club won the Super-Senior title.



Georgia Southern's rising sophomore from Lexington Karlee Vardas won the 2022 WSCGA Amateur championship. (WSCGA Photo)

Spartanburg Jr... continued from page 11

The girls championship saw an amazing turn-around from the first to the second round by Olivia Ireland.

The Chapman High School golfer shot an opening round 6-over par 78 to trail defending champion Madison Dixon by 3-shots.

Ireland started her final round carding a 2-over par 37, while Dixon shot even par to hold her lead, but things changed on the back nine.

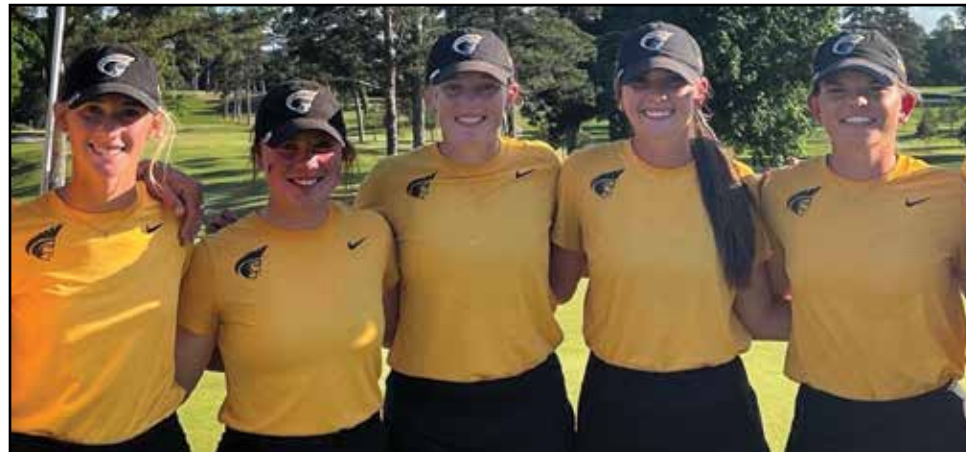
Ireland started the back nine with three straight birdies.

She made three more birdies in her last five holes to card a 6-under par 31 to improve by 10 shots and win the County Championship by 7-shots.

Eliza Whiteside finished a shot behind Dixon for third place.

The boys 10-12 year old championship was won by AK Milner who topped Kingston Linder by 3-shots for the win.

The girls 10-12 year old championship was won by AC Peake with Arley Jennings finishing second.



This year's Anderson University women's team became the first Trojan team to play in a NCAA National Championship. The team included Kennedy McGaha, Jessica Rathbone, Kerington Lamb, Emma Charles and Victoria Hall. Anderson's Director of Golf Danny Neal, who was named the SAC Women's Coach of the Year, and Associate Head Coach Denton Moore celebrated the Trojans South Atlantic Conference championship. (Anderson Photo)

Moore...

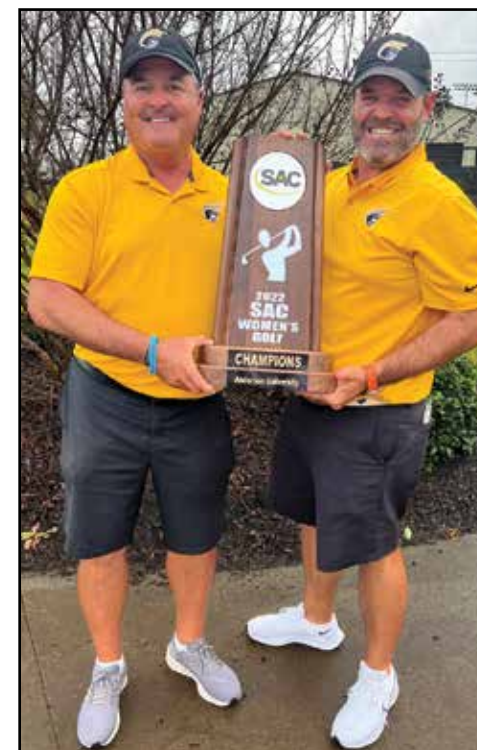
continued from page 15

Again, staying close to home Anderson has recruited another group of top state and area players to help the five returning players keep the program among the best in the country.

Kennedy Gooding from Gilbert is a past state champion, Paige Paolucci from Blythewood also has state championship experience.

Aly Francis from Stockbridge, GA, earned All-State honors in her school's classification and played on a state championship team.

"Not just this year, but in all the years past, the players have worked hard and bought into what we have been doing as we have gone from 158th in the country to 4th in just five years. We have the best group in the country and I'm looking forward to next year and hope we can bring it all home," concluded Moore.



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The Dunes to host the 2022 SCGA Amateur

Making the field to play at The Dunes will be a win in itself

When the South Carolina Golf Association announces the site of their annual State Amateur Palmetto State golfers are always looking forward to the championship.

This year even more so than usual because the state title will be contested on the legendary Dunes Golf and Beach Club in Myrtle Beach.

“We get great response for our state am where ever it is played, but there are some courses that are high up on just about every golfer’s list,” said Biff Lathrop, the Executive Director of the SCGA.

Entrys for the SCGA Amateur usually total around 300, but when the tournament is held at some courses the number goes way up and the Dunes is one of those courses.

“We have topped 400 entrants a few times. When we play at Chanticleer (Greenville Country Club), Thornblade or last year at Debordieu our qualifying tournaments fill up quickly because the possibility of playing a week of golf on these great courses is a rare opportunity,” said Lathrop.

The Robert Trent Jones designed course at the club has hosted a US Women’s Amateur, the PGA Professional National Championship and The PGA Senior Tour championship for six years in the 1990s.

This will only be the third time the SCGA Amateur will be played on the



The Dunes Golf and Beach Club in Myrtle Beach will host the 91st South Carolina Golf Association State Championship starting on August 4th. This will only be the third time the legendary course designed by Robert Trent Jones will host the state championship.

course that is annually on most lists of top-100 golf courses you can play.

The first time the State Am was played at the club was in 1954 when Preston Hennies won the championship.

The second SCGA Amateur played at the club was in 1987.

Retired Clemson golf coach Larry Penley won the first of what would be two straight state titles.

Penley, who has been honored by college golf coaches with Hall of Fame recognition, is also a member of the SCGA Hall of Fame.

While his outstanding coaching career played a major part in his HOF selection, winning two straight state Amateurs solidified his position among the SCGA’s all-time greats.

Penley remembers what a “big deal” it was just to play a championship event at The Dunes.

“It has always been one of the premier courses in the southeast. It is a great layout, the course just had everything and it was always a pleasure to play it,” he said.

Shortly after having his amateur status returned, Penley finished as the runner-up in the 1986 Amateur to Marion Dantzler at Cobbs Glen in Anderson.

Penley was looking forward to playing at the Dunes Club, but he wasn’t expecting much from his game.

Penley was just a few years into his return to Clemson as the coach. He came to Myrtle Beach to consult with one of the top instructors of the day Tom Tomasello.

“I was a young coach and my technical knowledge wasn’t very good. I needed some help so I could help my young players,” he recalled.

His session with Tomasello helped to

improve his technical knowledge and he also got a lesson himself before the State Am.

“I came down a day early to get a lesson and it helped. I didn’t see it coming. In the practice round I shot a 75, but it kicked in during the tournament,” he said.

Penley shot a 277 total for the championship..

“I kind of remember Kevin King, (1987 runner-up) and I were the only golfers to finish under par,” he said.

Penley won the State Am the following year at Turtle Point on Kiawah Island, but the win at the Dunes Club was a highlight of his amateur playing days.

“I was tickled to death to play there for five days and winning made it really special. The Dunes Club is special to me and lots of golfers. It has stood the test of time,” he offered.

This year’s field will include 144 players. Fifty-one golfers are exempt into the field leaving just under 100 places to be decided in qualifying tournaments around the state this month.

The defending champion, University of Indiana golfer Harry Reynolds, from Greenville, will try to back up his win at Debordieu last year.

Former champions Todd White, Lee Palms, Tyler Gray, Greg Jones, and Charles Warren have all entered to play this year.

“We are so thankful to have the opportunity to play our state championship at The Dunes. We know it will be an incredible experience for all the golfers,” concluded Lathrop.

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2022
Player of the Year

Spartanburg Am...

continued from page 12

championship caliber player.

"I managed to win on the third playoff hole, but it was really hard. When I won I thought I had really accomplished something and it helped me get the confidence I needed to do some of the other things I've done playing golf," he said.

Sill won the County Am again in 1985, the same year he won the National Left-Handers championship.

He has over a dozen SCGA Lefty titles to his name. He turned pro for a few years, but after regaining his amateur status, he returned to win three of the four county championships played between 1993 and 1996.

Sill's six County Championships are the most by any golfer in the history of the tournament.

The only way junior golfers under 18 could play in the County Amateur was to be among the top finishers in the junior championship.

Mike Byce, now the part-owner of The Creek became the first junior to win the junior championship and then go on to win the County Amateur.

He was the winner of the 1989 tournament between his junior and senior years at Spartanburg High School and before going on to play college golf at Clemson.

Byce was the first of what would be a number of young players taking on the older generation and coming away with wins.

The name most seen on the leader board at the County Amateur has been Biershenk and in 1990, 16 year old Tommy, Jr. followed up on his father's three County titles with a win of his own and became the youngest golfer to win the championship until his younger brother Nicky tied him in 2000.

"Our family has always been into golf. My father, George, had a par-3 course on the Westside for a long time and that is where the boys really learned the game," said Biershenk, Sr.



The Spartanburg County Amateur had a home at Lan-Yair from 1975 - 2003. Billy and Taylor Hough operated Lan-Yair and helped build the event until the course was closed in 2004. (GolfClub Photo)

They all learned it well, The family owns 10 county titles. Senior with three, Junior has three, Robbie won twice and Nicky also won twice.

The 36 hole format worked until Lan-Yair closed and when it came time to find a new course the decision was made to increase the event to 54 holes as other county and city championships were being played around the state.

The first 54 hole event was split between The Creek and the Carolina Country Club. Brian Kennedy became the first 3-day champion.

Byce, now an area professional helped the tournament begin a rotation to be played at several clubs in the county rather than just one.

In 2006 and 2007 Gravley, who played in the very first Spartanburg Amateur, won the Spartanburg Amateur two years in a row at Woodfin Ridge to go with his four Greenville Amateur championships.

The following year Newberry College golfer Daniel Stanley from Boiling Springs set the 54 hole scoring record at 15-under par to also win at Woodfin Ridge

Kevin Roberts has become the fifth golfer to win at least three championships with wins in 2013, 2016 and 2020.

Last year former Georgia golfer Trent Phillips won

his second county title with his victory at Woodfin Ridge.

In 2006 the First Tee Upstate began running the event. The tournament is once again being used as a fund raiser as it was in the beginning. Proceeds from the championships go to advance First Tee programs in Spartanburg and Cherokee Counties.

The popularity of the event among golfers is at an all-time high as the field of 144 competitors was filled weeks before the tournament.

The continued success of the tournament is built on the foundation that was set in place by Gaillard 50 years ago.

There are no more Luther Gaillards in the newspaper business, and if there are, the opportunity to make the same kind of impact on a community is now almost impossible.

Those of us who knew Gaillard knew him to be the classic old hard-bitten, hard-living, hard-drinking, guitar playing reporter you saw in old movies.

While it never showed up in print, his language included more four letter words than a boat full of drunken sailors, never meant for harm and always to emphasize one of his opinions.

Sill recalls he was practicing for the County Am on an oppressively hot day only to look up to see Gaillard.

"I remember telling him he was crazy, it was too hot to be out and asked him why? Luther told me he was here because he was getting a story and it was f---g important," Sill recalled with a laugh.

The Spartanburg County Am is still important and is a tribute to a one-of-a-kind journalist who did more than just report scores.

If the tournament ever establishes a permanent trophy, as Greenville has done with the Leon Gravley trophy to honor the founder of their county championship, the Luther Gaillard Trophy would be a fitting way to honor the memory of the man who started the championship 50 years ago.



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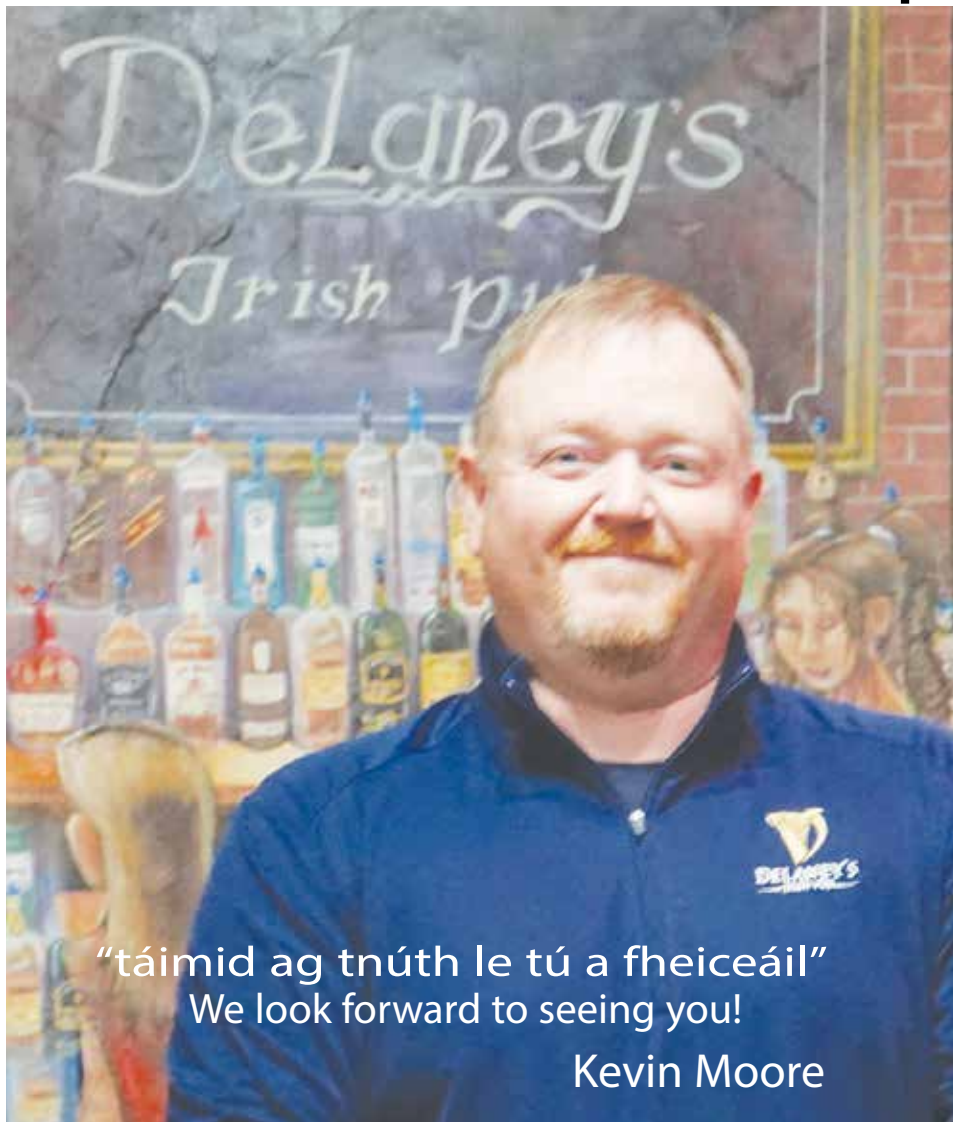
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