

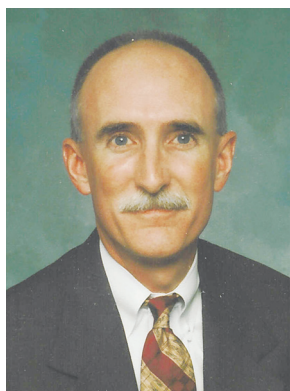
Inside the Ropes: Championships recap

By **CARR McCALLA**

Since we last reported on our 2009 Championship Season, we've conducted five Championships. Here's a quick rundown on how they came out.

NET AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP SANTA MARIA GOLF CLUB, BATON ROUGE

Barry Braud of Baton Rouge fired consecutive rounds of two-under-par 70 to win the 10th annual Net Amateur Championship by two shots over Slidell's William Johnson. Braud parred the final three holes to hold off the hard-charging Johnson. Finishing alone in third place was Jarrod Babin of Zachary, with William Duncan of Baton Rouge and Al Wyche of Shreveport tying for fourth to round out the top five.



Carr McCalla

AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP ENGLISH TURN, NEW ORLEANS

LSU golfer Andrew Loupe of Baton Rouge needed one extra hole to take home the 90th edition of the LGA Amateur Championship. Loupe made a huge 15-footer for par, getting up and down out of the back bunker on the last hole of regulation, and when Ken Looper of Mandeville, who plays collegiately for UNO, missed his 12-footer for birdie. Both completed 72 holes at 11-under-par 277. The playoff started on the par-4 16th with both players hitting their drives down the right side, Loupe's ball finding the short rough. Looper, however, found himself with an extremely difficult stance as his ball had ended up against the edge of the fairway bunker. He elected to chip out and attempt to get up and down to save par. Loupe's second shot ended 18 feet behind the hole, with Looper hitting his third to 12 feet. As Looper was lining up his par putt, Loupe ran his 18-foot birdie putt into the heart of the hole ending what had become a battle royale over the final two days of the Championship.

JUNIOR AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP ALEXANDRIA GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

Tyler Ledet had his sights set on winning this Championship from the time he heard that the 52nd edition of the LGA Junior Am would be held at his home course, Alexandria Golf and Country Club. Living just off the sixth tee, he probably knows the course as well as anyone alive, and his week only proved that statement to be correct. Firing a 5-

under-par 67 on day one gave him a four-stroke cushion, which he extended to six after 36 holes with his second round 72.

A conservative two-over 74 on Friday enabled Peyton Vitter to close the gap with a two-under par 70 of his own, but Ledet captured the championship by two shots over Vitter with a final total of three-under 213. He joins the ranks of former Champions David Toms and Hal Sutton in holding this prestigious Championship.

FOUR-BALL CHAMPIONSHIP TPC LOUISIANA, NEW ORLEANS

Another playoff seemed to be in the cards from the beginning of this event. Staged at the TPC Louisiana, site of the annual PGA Tour's Zurich Classic, the team of Garrett Westbrook of Baton Rouge and Blake Kelley of Mandeville teamed to outlast Darell Benoit of Belle Chasse and Scott Sterbcow of Metairie after four playoff holes. The two teams involved in the playoff, along with Robert Shelton and Ben Thibeaux of Lafayette, all shot 9-under-par rounds of 63 on Saturday to tie for the lead after 18 holes. The Westbrook/Kelley and Benoit/Sterbcow teams both shot 67 on Sunday to finish at 14-under par 130 and set up the playoff. After birdies on No. 1 by Kelley and Benoit, both teams parred Nos 2 and 3. Westbrook hit his second shot to three feet on the difficult par-4 fourth hole and rolled the putt into the back of the hole to end what was the longest playoff in the 26-year history of this Championship.

MID-AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP OAKBOURNE COUNTRY CLUB, LAFAYETTE

Returning to Oakbourne in Lafayette is always a treat. It's one of our players' favorite venues, and this year proved no exception. The golf course was in wonderful condition and, in spite of some challenges with the weather, we had another exciting championship. Matt Nicholas of Lake Charles won his first ever LGA Championship, but not before some excitement during final round play on Sunday. Lightning in the area of the course caused two suspensions of play on Saturday, but Sunday was the real doozy, weather-wise. The players were called in no less than four times (for a total of almost four hours) due to lightning. Nicholas started the day two shots ahead of Houma's Kevin Morvant, but by the time of the first suspension, they were all even, a consequence of a Morvant birdie on No. 2 and a Nicholas bogey on No. 5. After a bit more than an hour's delay, Nicholas resumed play like a house afire, with birdies on Nos. 7 and 8. A Morvant bogey on No. 8 gave Nicholas a four-shot lead with 10 holes to play. After Morvant deposited two balls in the water on the short par-3 9th and ended up making a quintuple-bogey eight, Nicholas's bogey there still meant he held an eight-shot lead on Morvant entering their final nine.

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