

Collin Clark stretches boys lead



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For the first time in three rounds, Collin Clark slipped to an over-par round, but he still was able to stretch his lead in the FWJGA's Boys City Junior Golf Championship. Collin, 16, carded a three-over par 74 on his first trip across the Mira Vista course on Wednesday, which gave him a 54-hole 213 total after rounds of 69 at Meadowbrook G.C. and 70 at River Crest C.C.

Collin heads to Colonial C.C. Thursday packing a seven-shot lead over his nearest challengers, Clark Dennis, 18 who shot the tournament's low score with a three-under 68, and Jorge Morillo, 17, who shot a 72. Turner MacLean, who was five shots behind and in second place after the second round, had to withdraw from the tournament when he woke up with a high fever and sore throat Wednesday morning and stayed home.



Clark Dennis

"Having a seven-shot lead like this is nice," Collin said. "I've never played Colonial before either, but I've walked it twice so I know the layout."

He isn't complacent with his lead and said "I still will try the best I can. My goal (now) is to win by 10 shots. The (high school) tournament I won in March was by nine shots."

Dennis, 18, said he won't be holding back as he tries to win the boys championship in his last eligible year. "I was really disappointed after my first two rounds. Anything can happen, though, and I'm going out to attack the course. I'm going for it all. Second or last doesn't matter."

Both he and Collin had shaky starts. Dennis topped his opening tee shot, had to lay up to a creek and flew the green with a 7-iron into a back bunker. Despite a downhill lie, he managed to blast out to within three feet to save his bogey. He got back to even with a 10-foot birdie putt on No. 4, one of five birdies he carded. "My longest birdie putt was about 12 on No. 18," he said.

Dennis is quite familiar with Colonial because his dad, who has played the PGA Tour, and he have played it often.

Collin had a shaky start by stumbling to three bogeys on the first four holes. "I was struggling with my chipping and putting," he said. On the fifth hole, a good up-and-down after he missed the green short and to the right helped end the slide. "I made about a five-foot putt for par and that let me know I could make some putts on these greens."

He proved that by sinking a 25-footer for birdie on the short No. 8. One of his biggest breaks came on the par-5 17th hole when his drive hit a cart path and he finished about 130 yards from green, setting up his second birdie on the back. "I figure it was about a 370-yard drive," he said.

After not hitting his driver at the shorter River Crest C.C. course on Tuesday, he said he hit it a "record high for the week" six times. "It was either a driver or 3-iron off the tee today," he said.

Morillo said his big shot of the day came on the short par-4 No. 8 when he holed out from a greenside bunker for a birdie. "If I had bogeyed that hole I would have been three over, but that got me back to one over." From there, he was fairly solid and he's looking forward to the challenge at Colonial. He echoed Dennis' by saying "Anything can happen. Last year, a lot of guys shot high numbers and some shot some low ones."

The Championship, First, Second and Third flights were cut for the final rounds at Colonial. The Fourth through Eighth flights, each down to the final six match-play survivors, finish at Diamond Oaks C.C. and will compete in stroke play. The 11-12-13 boys will decide the champions and runners-up at Sycamore Creek G.C. and the 8-9-10 will play their final rounds at River Edge.