

Three shoot 69 to take first-round lead in boys championship

Photo is volunteer Todd Adams going over rules to players at River's Edge



Three boys carded one-under par 69s Monday at the Walnut Creek Pecan Course in Mansfield to take a one-shot lead after the opening round of the FWJGA Boys City Junior Golf Championship.

Dustin Anderson of Granbury, Garrett Leek of Brock and Brendan Powers of Mansfield will head into Tuesday's play at Ridglea Country Club's Championship (South) Course leading five players -- Chris Berzina of Fort Worth, Trevor Mellott of Mansfield, Kyle Engelbert of Fort Worth, Pierson Farnell of Burleson, and Kevin Yang -- who shot 70 at Walnut Creek from modified White Tees.

Anderson, 16 of Granbury, had one of the more interesting rounds. He started on No. 1 in the shotgun start, and bogeyed his first three holes. He quickly began his rebound on the par-3 fourth hole with a birdie and made it three in a row with birdies on the next two. He finished the front nine with another bogey and birdie for an even-par 35. He continued his rally on the back when he carded a two-under 34. Anderson helped his Granbury High School golf team qualify for the State 5A tournament this past season

Powers, 16, of Mansfield who started on the third hole, notched the lowest front nine score with a 32. Accomplished he listed on his registration form included winning the 2015 Texas Cup at Mira Vista, and this year winning an NTPGA event at Tierra Verde, and a Legends event in Houston. Leeks a two-time 3A state champ, helped Brock take second in the 3A state tournament this year while he finished third in the individual race.

Berzina, 17, also has an impressive list of accomplishments, including being the two-time Mira Vista Junior Club champion, a two-time MVP at Trinity Valley and tying for second place in last year's FWJGA city championship. Engelbert, 18, played for Paschal, and Farnell, 17, was a Region 2 5K qualifier for Burleson and won a 2017 Hurricane Tour event at Southern Oaks. Yang, 16, played on the Southlake Carroll JV team this past season.

Six golfers are tied with 71s.

On Tuesday, the boys who qualify for Division I and Division II will continue stroke play with the Division I players going to the Ridglea Country Club's Championship (South) Course, and the Division II boys going to Mansfield National. After the second rounds, Division I will be split into the

Championship and First flights and Division II will form the Second and Third flights. The other boys will be split into Division III and Division IV (flights in these divisions will depend on number of players.) The Division III players will compete Tuesday at Pecan Valley Hills G.C. The Division IV boys will play nine holes at Sycamore Creek. The 11-13 boys will go to River's Edge and play nine holes while the 8-10 boys continue at River's Edge.

On Wednesday, the Championship and First flights will play at Shady Oaks Country Club to determine the approximate 15 in each flight who'll qualify for the final round at Colonial Country Club on Thursday. Also, the approximate top 15 in each of the Second and Third flights will qualify to play their final rounds at Colonial. Those players who survive second round cuts in Division II and IV will continue with stroke play within flights on Wednesday.

The 9-hole, 11-13 age division, played Monday at Sycamore Creek G.C. to determine their flights for single-elimination match play that begins Tuesday at the River's Edge course at Rockwood G.C., where they will play nine holes (three-hole loop will be added to the six holes.)

The low score Monday at Sycamore was posted by Kaelen Dulany, 13, of Keller. His 33 was a shot lower than Jackson Bobo's and Will Kuster's. Bobo, 13, is from Fort Worth and Kuster, 13, is from Westlake. Dulany's résumé includes winning the 2016 Summer Metro NTJPGA points challenge for 12-year-old players. Bobo's registration list of accomplishments notes that he has competed in and has won several times in Northern Texas PGA events.

In Monday's opening round at River's Edge, Logan Bettinger, 10, of Fort Worth birdied the final two holes on the short 6-hole course for a 17 to lead the 8-10-year-old players. Bettinger leads Solomon Wiertzema, 10, of Saginaw by three shots and Jack Vetere, 9, of Mansfield by five. According to his information, Bettinger has played about 70 tournaments since he was 6 and has won about half those in his respective age divisions. He also has twice advanced from local qualifying in the Drive, Chip and Putt competitions. Wiertzema has earned a second place in the Fort Worth Junior Golf Tour and has third-place finishes in Northern Texas PGA events.

The division was split into three flights. Will Johnson, 8, of Cleburne leads the First Flight with a 24 and holds a shot lead over Harris Soren, 10, of Trophy Club. Greer Haden, 10, of Fort Worth has a shot lead in the Second Flight with a 28. He's a shot in front of Alex Hall, 9, of Hudson Oaks.