

# Dogwood History Year by Year

## 1941 - Tommy Barnes

Tommy Barnes, with a 72-hole score of 4 over par, 292, won the first Dogwood Tournament over the Druid Hills links on April 25, 26, and 27, 1941.

Sportswriter Al Sharp described Barnes and his remarkable showing: “Needing a 2-under-par 34 on the back nine to beat Gene Gaillard, the happy-go-lucky man in the lucky green hat shot exactly that for victory. One over par through the fourteenth hole and knowing what he had to do, Barnes rolled two birdies in a row into the fifteenth and sixteenth cups for a stroke lead and held it to the finish. He got down a six-footer at the fifteenth after a beautiful iron to the par three hole, and then hit the par five sixteenth in two shots to land another birdie.

“Barnes had moved into third place at the three-quarters mark with a 71 for 221, five strokes back of Dr. Julius Hughes, the medalist, and one behind Bill “Dynamite” Goodloe. The winner carded a 37-34-71 on the final round.

There had been some innovations for the tournament. In particular, prior to 1941 the accepted amateur tournament was medal qualifying and match play elimination. It was an accepted fact that the lack of experience in medal play was responsible for many fine amateur golfers failing to qualify in various tournaments. A medal competition better prepared amateurs for the following qualifying rounds in regularly scheduled state and local tournaments. Medal competition also was regarded as a more valid method of establishing the best golfer during the event.

The stated purpose of the Dogwood Tournament was to share with fellow golfers the fun of the best in competition on a fine layout at a time when the course’s inherent beauty had been showered with the profusion of white dogwood blossoms and Azaleas.

## 1942 - Dan Yates, Sr.

Dan Yates, former Georgia State Amateur champion and brother of 1938 British-Amateur champion Charlie Yates, won the second Dogwood Invitational Tournament held May 1-3, 1942. His total of 285 was three strokes better than par, six strokes ahead of his nearest rivals, and seven strokes better than the excellent 292 that won the same event for Tommy Barnes in 1941.

Yates received a handsome silver platter and a \$75 War Bond; the top prize for what O. B. Keeler called “an almost startling successful Dogwood Tournament” in a field recruiting 132 contestants – four more than the first Dogwood a year earlier. Arnold Blum, of Macon and the University of Georgia, and Dave Mitchell tied for second place.

Dan Yates years later recalled the victory “There was a great group of people in

the Dogwood Tournament, and it surprised me to win. It just happened. I had just finished Georgia Tech in 1941 and the Club treated us like royalty.”

### **1943-1945 - No Tournament held during World War II**

#### **1946 - Gene Dahlbender, Jr.**

Gene Dahlbender, Jr. won the 1946 Dogwood Invitational with a record 278 when it was played for the first time since 1942. That amazing young sportsman won the dogwood six more times, and his tournament record included the low score of 278 (10 under par) and the best single round, a score of 63. Tommy Barnes came in second with 291, and Dan Yates third with 292. Yates had carded a 285 when he won the Dogwood in 1942.

#### **1947 - Gene Dahlbender, Jr.**

Gene Dahlbender, Jr., again won the Dogwood Invitational in April 1947. It was a “strictly invitational affair” with a “large but select entry list.”

#### **1948 - Tommy Barnes**

Tommy Barnes won the 1948 Dogwood in an exciting play. According to sports writer Ed miles: “Word had drifted back that Barnes finished the last two in par figures catches the woods from the tee of the 18 th and being forced to chip out safely. Dahlbender, needing two birdies to tie, hit a fine shot to the green of the 190-yard 17 th, but the shot failed to squat, rolling over instead to a hanging lie on the bank. This tore it, as the British say.

“Gene finished with a 4-6 and a 285, 4 strokes back of winner Tommy Barnes, who thus started auspiciously in the golf season in which he says he will win himself national prominence or else.

“Barnes now is thirty-three, the father of two children, and hard bent on a successful business career.”

Dahlbender, by the way, made his first record breaking 63 during the third round of the 1948 Dogwood. He shot his second 63 in Dogwood competition in 1954 but still did not win.

#### **1949 - Tommy Barnes**

Tommy Barnes won the Dogwood Invitational for the third time in 1949, edging out Gene Gaillard. Barnes hit a 68 to increase his lead and shot a 70 to win.

#### **1950 - Arnold Blum**

Arnold Blum, a future member of the U.S. Walker Cup team and a former holder of the Southern Amateur crown, won the Dogwood Invitational in 1950. Many believed Blum made the greatest play in the Dogwood up to that time when he

shot a nine iron third from behind Charlie Miller's old wooden pro shop over the tall trees and on the green of the 72nd hole to clinch the victory.

### **1951 - Tommy Barnes**

Tommy Barnes won the 1951 Dogwood Invitational and donated the Dogwood trophy to Druid Hills Golf Club.

According to Barnes, the Dogwood trophy had been donated by Club treasurer Herman Dixson and board director James Flowers, Jr., who stipulated that anyone who won it three times, got to keep it. Since Barnes had one it three times prior to the 1951 win, the big trophy was his. Barnes took it home, but a week later he returned it and donated it as a permanent trophy for the Druid Hills Club. Barnes would win the Dogwood again in 1955.

Although the Dogwood in 1951 was considered a success, "both from a financial and interest standpoint," there was considerable criticism expressed at the April board meeting over the "large entry" (425 entries) and for allowing too many players from public links to participate. The Club President appointed an advisory committee of five to make necessary changes that would assure a more representative private club invitational tournament in 1952.

### **1952 - Harvie Ward**

Harvie Ward won the 1952 Dogwood played April 10-13 and then went on to capture the British Amateur.

Harvie described the Dogwood as "a classy tournament on a great little golf course." "The people from the Club were always so nice," he said "and they had a great dance on Saturday night for us. It was always fun."

That year at Druid Hills, after a practice round and a few beers, Harvie Ward recalled arranging a nine-hole match with Hobart Manley, who said he could beat Ward from his knees.

"I had to give him a stroke a hole," Ward remembered. "Him playing every shot, including putts, on his knees, me on my feet. He got in trouble on the second hole when he got into a greenside bunker and couldn't get out. We ended the match and went back to the clubhouse."

According to golf writer James Y. Bartlett, there was gambling back in those days, including big Calcutta and late-night poker games in the card room upstairs in the old clubhouse. One older club member remembers that after the Club got stuck with a five figure bad check from one of those games, poker was banned and gin rummy became the game of choice.

### 1953 - Harvie Ward

Harvie Ward repeated as Dogwood Champion in 1953. It was said to have been the best Dogwood up to that date. Ward led Tommy Barnes and Gene Dahlbender by only one stroke, coming into the 72 nd hole, but Ward had a sensational chip shot to within three inches of the cup for a birdie and a win.

### 1954 - Frank Stevenson, Jr.

Frank Stevenson, Jr., the tall, handsome, and slender twenty-two-year old University of Georgia senior who captained the undefeated Bulldog links squad, won the Dogwood Invitational on April 24, 1954. He checked in under the finish wire in the 72 hole medal play tourney with 70-64-72-73; 279 to edge out favored Gene Dahlbender, Jr., of Meadowbrook Country Club, by two strokes. Out of an original entry list of 417, a field of 238 players opened play for the Dogwood on Thursday after four days of qualifying ended Wednesday.

Stevenson shot a sensational eight under par 64 only to lose a stroke off his lead to Dahlbender. This 63 by Dahlbender was his second in Dogwood competition, but he didn't win the tournament either time. His first record breaking 63 came in the third round of the 1948 tournament when he finished second to Tommy Barnes. He picked up eight strokes on Barnes.

"Stevenson, whose best previous victory was the 1951 Golden Isles at Brunswick, was a front runner all the way," wrote Bert Prather. "His opening round two-under-par 70 gave him a one stroke lead Thursday. Then he came through with a sensational 64 to stand off Dahlbender's 63 Friday to lead Gene by five strokes, 134 to 139.

*The 1954 Dogwood Invitational Tournament proceeds despite intermittent rain on April 25, 1954. Doug Sanders (left) putts and Tommy Barnes (middle) figures score. Frank Stevenson leans on the putter.*

### 1955 - Tommy Barnes

For the fifth time, Tommy Barnes with a score of 291 won the annual Dogwood Invitational played March 31 – April 3, 1955. His rounds were 74, 73, 70 and 74. He snatched the lead from Arnold Blum, and both posted 74s on the final round. Blum's 293 was good for second place silver. Barnes was co-chairman of the Dogwood that year.

### 1956 - Gene Dahlbender, Jr.

Gene Dahlbender, Jr., won the Dogwood Invitational in 1956, as he had done ten years earlier in 1946 and 1947.

### **1957 - Gene Dahlbender, Jr.**

Gene Dahlbender, Jr., captured his fourth Dogwood crown on April 14, 1957, with a 69-71-72-70-282. Tommy Barnes, a five time Dogwood Champion, finished second with 73-71-71-77-292, while Charlie Harrison placed third with 74-73-74-73-294. All three were former Southern Amateur Champions.

According to sportswriter Bert Prather, Dahlbender shared the opening day lead with Gene Gaillard but with four strokes took the lead at the end of 36 holes and was out of danger from then on.

Druid Hills took the team championship with a score of 295. Barnes, Gaillard, Joe Summers, and Lanier Cobb (all Druid Hills members) composed the team. Joe Summers was chairman of the Dogwood committee.

The tournament drew 334 entries. Scores of 77 or lower were required to land in the championship flight of 32 and ties. Counting former champs Dahlbender and Barnes, who were exempt, the championship flight started with 39 players.

The month after the Dogwood, one of the Druid Hills Members brought up the question as to whether the Dogwood should be continued, but Club President Norman Williams asked the board to delay any discussion on the subject until the next meeting when chairman Joe Summers would be present. In June, the board decided to continue the Dogwood in 1958 and gave the golf committee authority to operate it and make whatever changes they believe were necessary, subject to board approval.

### **1958 - Gene Dahlbender, Jr.**

Gene Dahlbender, Jr., claimed his fifth Dogwood Invitational crown on April 13, 1958, tying Tommy Barnes for the most Dogwood Championships. He took the event that year with a six over par 294. There were a total of 231 entrants for the tournament.

There was continued talk among a few of the Druid Hills members to halt the Dogwood. It seems their concerns were over the amount of players in the event, the course being taken from their play during tournament week, and the lack of quality club membership participation.

### **1959 - Jack Penrose**

Jack Penrose of Miami won the Dogwood Invitational in 1959, which was called "by far the best ever held at Druid Hills" by one of the officials. Tommy Barnes served as Dogwood Tournament Chairman that year. The low medalist trophy was named after Bert Prather, a local sports writer in Atlanta. There were 113 members of Druid Hills Golf Club entering the tournament, 16 juniors, 138 invited guests, making 267 total entries.

A month after the tournament ended, the Dogwood committee met and drew up a proposal for the board's consideration in reference to a Dogwood for 1960. "The conduct and prestige of these tournaments have been highly praised by our membership in general as well as the press, radio, television, participants, spectators, critics, etc.," the committee reported. The committee believed that the value of the tournament had been successfully established, and in order to progress, the committee pressed the board to give "definite assurances as to the future of the tournament." They also proposed a motion "to establish the Dogwood on a more permanent basis than the present method of deliberating its existence from year to year."

The Board of Directors heard the proposal and voted to establish the Dogwood as a permanent annual event.

### **1960 - Charles "Chuck" Kocsis**

Charles "Chuck" Kocsis, of Royal Oak, Michigan, won the 1960 Dogwood Invitational. A former National Amateur finalist and Walker Cup player, Kocsis shot 280, 8 under par for 72 holes.

Lester Kelly was medalist with a 69 and won the Bert Prather Trophy. And, for the first time in history, the Dogwood was televised "live." Georgia Governor Ernest Vandiver had described the Dogwood as "the outstanding event occurring in Georgia each year."

### *Spectators at the 1960 Dogwood Invitational*

*The 1960 Dogwood was covered by the local newspapers, the wire services, most of the local radio stations, and the television stations. Four radio stations and one television station covered the event live direct from the golf course.*

### **1961 - Gene Dahlbender, Jr.**

Gene Dahlbender, Jr., grabbed his record 6th Dogwood Invitational champion's trophy.

### **1962 - Gene Dahlbender, Jr.**

Gene Dahlbender, Jr., took home another champions trophy for his seventh Dogwood title. This would be the last Dogwood win of his career. 361 players attempted open qualifying, with 224 getting into the tournament.

Mr. Dahlbender is remembered as a solid, if streaky, player, who's main drawback was a somewhat uneven temperament. Furman Bisher, the well known Atlanta sportswriter noted "He was a great driver of the ball, who in many ways resembles today's John Daly. He never got beyond the ranks of first-class amateurs."

### **1963 - Marvin M. "Vinny" Giles**

The 1963 Dogwood Invitational Tournament trophy went to Vinny Giles, a then relatively unknown young amateur, who took on the whole field of experienced players and won. Mr. Giles went on to become the U.S. Amateur Champion in 1972, and was a three time Walker Cup player, being Captain in 1993.

A student at the University of Georgia, Giles played what was said to four of the finest rounds of golf ever witnessed during the history of the tournament. He outplayed big name players Jack Penrose, Tommy Barnes, and Gene Dahlbender. The unassuming young man with a shock of flaming red hair, freckles, and a winning smile surprised everybody as a long hitter who took the measure of every golf hole. Giles would return in 1965 and win the Dogwood again. Giles had transferred to the University of Georgia from the University of Virginia in 1963, the first year he played the Dogwood, and had been forced to sit out the year.

"Nobody knew who the hell I was," he told a golf writer in a 1994 interview. "I carried my own bag for the first three rounds. I remember on Sunday Furman Bisher wrote a column in the paper talking about hotshot golfers who fold in the last round. After I won, I went up to him and apologized for messing up his story line!"

The gallery was the best ever. Thousands of spectators followed the event play by play, and thousands more watched the live week long coverage on television.

Some of the best amateurs in Georgia and 16 other states participated in the Invitational tournament. The dogwood blossoms were never more beautiful, contrasting their full blown whiteness against the banks of colorful azaleas.

### **1964 - Jack Penrose**

The 1959 Dogwood Champion repeated his feat by winning the '64 Dogwood Invitational, edging the great Tommy Barnes for the champion's trophy.

The tournament was designed to be a part of the first annual Atlanta Dogwood Festival, at that time the city's only annual trade and cultural promotion, climaxing a week of tour of homes and other entertainment. The first in a series of Dogwood balls during the festival took place atop Stone Mountain when guests boarded the new ski lift to reach their destination.

Mounting unrest by some Senior Resident members in 1964 resulted in a resolution being put before the Druid Hills GC board to address the continuation of

the Dogwood. The Dogwood committee went forward with plans for the 1965 tournament regardless.

### **1965 - Marvin M. "Vinny" Giles**

University of Georgia student, Vinny Giles won the 1965 Dogwood Invitational for his second champion's trophy, taking the crown with a 2-under 286. His first win was in 1963.

### **1966 - Charlie Harrison**

Charlie Harrison, a thirty-four year old insurance man from Atlanta, won the Dogwood Invitational in 1966 with an even par 288. Harrison had previously won the Georgia State Amateur and the Southern Amateur and by 1966 had won five Atlanta City Amateurs, and qualified for the U.S. Open. A photo of him appeared in the Sunday newspaper the next day as Dogwood Queen Marsha Platt presented him a bouquet of dogwood blossoms.

After the 1966 Dogwood, the continuing unrest driven by a few Senior Resident members resulted in the mailing of a letter of pros and cons of the Dogwood. Included was a ballot on which the members could vote for the continuation of the tournament. The letter mentioned both favorable and unfavorable aspect of the tournament. Among the favorable were 1) publicity for the Club due to popularity of the largest annual golfing event in Atlanta, 2) desirable participation of approximately seventy Druid Hills members at their own club, 3) increased business in the clubhouse and bar, realizing additional revenue during tournament week, and 4) beneficial effect of young golfers to tournament play since the basic precept of the Dogwood is promotion of amateur golf in Atlanta.

Among the unfavorable aspects was the fact that during tournament week some members could not have access to the golf course and were unwilling to sacrifice the use of the Club, even though there were several other clubs where privileges to play were granted on a reciprocal basis.

### **1967 - Bill Harvey**

Bill Harvey, a real estate executive from Greensboro, NC, fit perfectly into the green sport coat presented to him by the Club after he won the 1967 Dogwood Invitational.

The Dogwood Tournament executive committee had made some changes in an effort to placate a growing number of members who objected to the annual inconvenience of the week-long event. For one thing, members were allowed to play on Saturday and Sunday in the final two rounds after the last tournament player had teed off – approximately 2:30.

When the Dogwood was over, Druid Hills Golf Club President Dave Davidson

explained that a questionnaire would be mailed to all members for comments and criticism of the annual Dogwood Tournament, and the board in May discussed whether the Dogwood was a “marginal or profit-making” venture. Their conclusion was not recorded.

At a special meeting in October of that year, a motion passed unanimously to “abandon” the Dogwood Invitational for 1968 and investigate the possibility of another club’s taking it over.

### **1968 - Dogwood Called Off**

Although the board of directors of Druid Hills Golf Club had voted unanimously to call off the Dogwood in October 1967 and look for another club to hold it, the new board passed the same motion in February 1968. The announcement in the newspaper the next day called attention to the construction underway and delays caused by inclement weather as reasons for discontinuing the tournament. Another club in the Atlanta area, The Standard Club, had considered the tournament on a one time basis, but they eventually declined.

A hint of disenchantment with the Dogwood was apparent in September when a motion to hold the Dogwood Invitational during the spring of 1969 failed to carry.

### **1969 - No Dogwood Invitational Held**

The Druid Hills Golf Club Golf committee commented in February of 1969 on the favorable national recognition which the annual Dogwood Invitational had received in the past. The board approved a plan to write all past participants explaining that no Dogwood was to be held, but that plans were underway to reinstate it in 1970.

### **1970 - Allen Miller**

Allen Miller won the Dogwood Invitational in 1970, bringing home an eight under par total of 280, including a final day 69. Miller later turned pro, just as Harvie Ward had done earlier. Miller and Ward were the only two Dogwood champions to date who turned pro and made it stick.

While the tournament was a success, there was concern over having too many players that created a problem, and that it may have been a mistake to open up such a large field. A vote was taken in October of that year to hold the tournament in 1971, and the result was 10 to 1 in favor of holding the annual event.

### **1971 - Bill Harvey**

Bill Harvey won his second Dogwood crown in 1971. He had an exciting battle with the younger players who had tied him through seventy one holes. In the final play he deliberately chipped short, and then with a cross handed grip, putted the ball into the hole for a 69, three under 285.

Other players in the Dogwood included Walker Cupper Jim Gabrielson, Druid Hills Club champion and Georgia State University golf captain Ed Sabo, young Danny Yates of the Georgia golf team, and public course player Bob McLeod, Jr. Tommy Barnes, Sr., playing in the senior division for the first time, won that division with an even par 144, and was also first day senior medalist with a 72.

The Bert Prather trophy medalist for the championship was Bo Medders of Resaca, Georgia, with a 69 on qualifying day. The tournament had good radio and television coverage by the local stations.

### **1972 - Tom Evans**

Tom Evans, a twenty three year old five foot nine inch, 145 pound golfer from Dallas, Texas won the Dogwood Invitational in 1972 with a final round 67. His first three rounds were 73-69-76.

The bad weather and complaints from out of town amateurs made the springtime event forgettable. An all-night rain Friday night soaked the course, and those showing up for the tournament the next morning played in a downpour. Tournament chairman Hal Cook said to a reporter: "We've got people here from 19 states, and they didn't come all this way to sit around the club house. They came to play." Evans said at one green he had to drop of the submerged surface and wedge it up close, then he two putted in submarine fashion.

Additional unrest about the annual golf tournament surfaced in a comment by Teague Jackson: "The truth is, the Dogwood has been trying to walk a tight rope for years between being a strictly social tournament for fun and games and a tournament which would draw the top amateurs from around the country. In the latter, it has had only limited success. One top amateur said, 'The word is out. The top guys don't want to come and play in a tournament with 290 players. That's no fun for them.' On the other hand, it's the bulk of the 290, the social players, who pay the bills."

At the end of the day on Saturday one of the players from Florida said, "There are two words to describe to day play: unplayable and unfair." Another chimed in, "When every tee is underwater and every green is underwater, there's no way to play."

### **1973 - 1993 Dogwood Abolished**

In 1973, there were attempts to move the Dogwood to another month, preferably in the summer, to allow for better weather conditions. But with the disaster of the 1972 rainy Dogwood, the board voted to abolish the Dogwood.

The Dogwood would be dormant for twenty-two years until it was resurrected in 1994 with a new format.

## The Modern Dogwood

A field of players from around the world descended on Druid Hills Golf Club on June 27, 1994 for the beginning of the new Dogwood Invitational Tournament. Bjorn Norgaard of Denmark, a mid-amateur, came as did Mauricio Muniz of Puerto Rico. Also playing in the “new” Dogwood were Georgia mid-amateur champion Danny Yates of Atlanta, first Dogwood champion Tommy Barnes, Sr., and other former Dogwood champions Charlie Harrison and Fran Stevenson.

Players came from California, Ohio, Virginia, Maryland, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Kansas, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania. Druid Hills Golf Club members Ben Raney, II, and Cliff Cleveland vied for the championship together with 93 amateurs playing a course of 6,600 yards for the tournament. Nearly a third of the competitors came from Georgia.

Dogwood Tournament chairman Bob Earnhardt conveyed his thoughts on the tournament: “In this highly competitive world of amateur golf, it is an honor for Druid Hills Golf Club to host such an event. It enhances the tradition and the great history of Druid Hills. The tournament has a positive impact on the community and helps define Druid Hills as a club with a passion for the game, a commitment to the physical beauty and condition of its course, and a continuing involvement to the Atlanta fraternity of golf through our involvement with and commitment to the Atlanta Junior Golf Association [AJGA], which is the sole beneficiary of the Dogwood Invitational.”

The AJGA was selected as the beneficiary of charitable proceeds for its superb program of learning for junior golfers. Atlanta Junior Golf serves more than 1,400 of Atlanta's kids, ages 7 to 18. It has served Atlanta for more than 25 years and provides a variety of programs from rules seminars to course competitions throughout the playing season. AJGA provides an environment where kids can progress at their own rate from beginner to proficient level, while promoting and preserving the traditions and integrity of the game.

## 1994 - Allen Doyle

Allen Doyle, a forty-five year old veteran amateur player and owner-operator of a driving range in LaGrange, Georgia, won the 1994 Dogwood with a birdie on the 54th hole to avoid a three-way playoff. Doyle came from two strokes behind in the final round play with Tennessee amateur Danny Green and Jason Walters of Georgia Tech to chip within two feet of the hole on the eighteenth. Green had a nine footer to tie, but lipped out the putt to place as runner up with Joe Ogilvie from Duke University.

Rain washed out the first round of the '94 event, and had some executive committee members thinking back to 1972, and hoping there would be no repeat. All the players and spectators hailed the event as a great success, even though the rainy start hampered some planned events.

During the closing ceremony Allen Doyle capped off the event with these words: "While this is a new event on the amateur circuit, it clearly is one of the best-run and best-planned tournaments around. My congratulations to everyone involved. I'm proud to be the champion of this great tournament."

### **1995 - Justin Roof**

A Wake Forest University junior, who attended the school on an Arnold Palmer scholarship, Justin Roof, won the 1995 Dogwood Invitational. His final score was 274, and incredible 14 under par. In the field for the '95 event were some top-name players, including Danny Yates and Jim Stuart, both former U.S. Mid-Amateur champions; Charles Harrison, former Dogwood, Southern Amateur and Georgia State Amateur champion; Randy Sonnier, an airline pilot and Walker Cup team member; and Bob Young, three-time Atlanta Amateur champion.

Roof, who hails from Conway, SC, was a Junior All-American three times; World Junior Cup medalist, and freshman of the year in the Atlantic Coast Conference. The smallest player in the field at five feet and weighing 155 pounds, Roof said the Dogwood was the most important tournament he has ever won. "It means I can play at another level, and that's important," he said. "I've won before, but nothing like this."

Druid Hills' club member Eddie Kropp finished in the top thirteen, at four under 284. Four other club members were also competitors: Ben Raney and Bill Hodges are past club champions, and also playing were Doug Dillard and 18 year old Hank Randolph.

### **1995 SPECIAL GOLF EXHIBITION AT DRUID HILLS GOLF CLUB**

The Dogwood Invitational sponsored an exhibition match on March 29, 1995 between Stanford University and Georgia Tech. Two long-time friends, Georgia Tech coach Puggy Blackmon and Stanford coach Wally Goodwin, who played in the Dogwood Invitational as a young golfer, had coordinated the match.

Stanford freshman and golf team member, Tiger Woods, the 1994 United States Amateur champion, faced Stewart Cink of Tech, who had been ranked as the number one amateur in the country in the fall season. Cink held a 2-1 record against Woods in competition. To the delight of approximately 1,500 spectators, Tech won the match as All-American Cink bested Woods 3 and 2.

### **1996 - Robert Floyd**

Robert Floyd led or shared the lead throughout the tournament. Through two rounds he was 14-under-par. Tied Friday by an eagle at the 18th hole, he came out Saturday and convinced himself not to change his game. Doing exactly that, Floyd, 22, a University of Florida junior-to-be from Miami, shot a final-round 71 Saturday at Druid Hills Golf Club and turned it into a five-shot victory with a 72-

hole total of 17-under-par 271. Tying for second at 276 were Australian Brett Partridge, who slipped to a 76, and Miami's Carlos Rodiles, who moved up Saturday with a 5-under-67.

It was Floyd's first win in a non-college amateur event. "Obviously, this is a great confidence boost for me," said Floyd, who has played in seven PGA Tour events, but has not made a cut. Angered by his failure to hold a five-shot lead Friday as Partridge roared back with a 65, Floyd came to the course Saturday with things in perspective. "To play three rounds like that and be tied," Floyd said, "I was a little hot. I really didn't do anything wrong and I lost a five-shot lead."

Things evened out in the final round. Going to the back nine with a one-shot lead over Partridge, Floyd showed his fortitude with two solid putts for par -one from 15 feet on the 13th and another from 12 feet at the 15th. They kept Floyd at 17-under through 15 holes as Partridge bowed out of the picture, missing a two-footer for bogey when a birdie had appeared likely.

Although Partridge wilted in the Atlanta humidity, saying, "I was sweating so much, I could hardly hold the club," his game just wasn't as sharp as the three previous days. The frustration showed at the 12th, when Partridge topped a drive that barely got down the hill off the tee. "I hit good shots most of the day, but I just couldn't make any putts," said Partridge, 24, of Scottsdale, Tasmania.

Defending champion Justin Roof of Conway, S.C., tied for 16th at 282. Ashburn's Jay Hobby shot a 69 Saturday and tied for 23rd at 284. He got a four-shot penalty Friday for playing two holes with an extra wedge that had been placed in his bag by mistake. 2

Tommy Barnes, the first winner of the Dogwood was the tournament honoree. Barnes ranks as one of the elite among Atlanta golfers and, for a time, held the East Lake Golf Club course record having bettered Bob Jones's long-standing 63 by one stroke. Housing for the participants in 1996 was complicated because of the Druid Hills' proximity to the Summer Olympic Games held in Atlanta that year, which made accommodations a challenge. As an incentive to house players in their homes, members providing housing were designated "Friends of The Dogwood" and given tournament sponsorship privileges.

### **1997 - Steve Scott**

Steve Scott, a nineteen year old student at University of Florida, won the 1997 Dogwood Invitational with a final round four under par 68. The nations number one ranked amateur was at 15 under 273 for the 72 hole event. The 30th annual Dogwood Invitational was held June 25-28.

In his quest to be known as something more than "the guy who was five up to Tiger Woods and lost the U.S. Amateur," Steve Scott made some serious headway on

revising his resume Saturday. Closing solidly with a 4- under-par 68 at Druid Hills Golf Club, the 19-year-old Scott won the Dogwood Invitational by two shots over Jeff Klauk.

"Last year I had runner-up finish after runner-up finish," said Scott, of Coral Springs, Fla., whose 72-hole total came to 15-under-par 273. "I'm kind of over the hump now. I knew I was going to crack through sooner or later." The crack didn't widen until Scott, the nation's No. 1-ranked men's amateur, was touring the 15th hole Saturday and then-co-leader Justin Roof was back on the par-5 14th. Roof made a judgment error with his second shot that turned into total disaster.

Trying to hit an 8-iron over the trees instead of something safer after a drive into the right rough, Roof clipped the trees and dropped into a thick bunch of bushes. Taking a rip at the ball, Roof only mashed it further into the thicket. After taking an unplayable lie penalty, Roof punched out; found the front of the green and two-putted for triple-bogey 8. The 1995 Dogwood champion from Conway, S.C., Roof dropped three strokes to 12-under and never recovered.

"I gave it to him," said a shaken Roof. "I made the stupidest play I've ever made in competition. I could have thrown it out to the 160-yard mark. I never should have tried to go over the trees. "I don't mind playing bad," Roof said, "but when you give somebody a golf tournament, there's no excuse for that. Steve played a great round, but he shouldn't have won." Not wishing to be termed the recipient of charity, Scott said, "It didn't fall in my lap. I played very solid. I made some key putts." No bigger one emerged than an 18-footer for par at the 14th, which had followed a semi-chunked chip. Scott pumped his right fist to punctuate the clutch putt.

After Roof stumbled, Scott's only obstacle became third-round leader Jeff Klauk. At 14-under with two holes to play and aware that two birdies would have a real shot at winning, Klauk, of Florida Southern University and Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., left his tee shot short at the par-3 17th and bogeyed. Failing to hole out for eagle at the 18th from just right of the green, Klauk finished second with a 73 at 13-under 275. Roof tied Georgia Tech's Bryce Molder for third at 276. Tech's Matt Kuchar was fifth after a 69, a stroke ahead of Georgia's Mark Northey of Roswell (67) and Augusta's Charles Howell III (68).

Scott, of the University of Florida, was added to the Dogwood field when he failed to get a sponsor exemption to the PGA Tour's St. Jude's Classic in Memphis and Texas' Brad Elder withdrew. "I've got to kind of let this soak in," Scott said. "This is very satisfying."<sup>3</sup>

### **1998 - Michael Kirk**

A dramatic finish to the Dogwood Invitational ended Friday when South African Michael Kirk tapped in for par to claim the first playoff victory in this major amateur

event.

Kirk, the national junior college champion, defeated John Engler of Augusta, who caught two bad breaks in the playoff on the 440-yard 10th hole at Druid Hills Golf Club. While Kirk hit driver-wedge to the back fringe, the left-handed Engler watched a gust of wind drop his 9-iron approach into the front bunker. Left with a sand shot that required him to stand with both feet outside the hazard, Engler felt fortunate to get the ball on the green and have a 15-footer for par. Meanwhile, Kirk nearly holed out his chip, and Engler missed his putt. "If I had 10 balls to hit from there, I might not do any better than that," said Engler, 19, a Clemson sophomore who shot a final-round 66. "I'll just learn from this and go on."

For Kirk, the victory over the field of 90 was a huge confidence-builder as he leaves the junior college ranks for NCAA champion UNLV this fall. "Just seeing all the great players here pumped me up," said the 21-year-old from Johannesburg.

Both players tied the tournament record of 17 under and could have won the title outright if their sand shots on the 18th hole had ended up differently. Engler played the par-5 first, and his effort to reach the green in two ended up in the left bunker. With little sand under his ball, his shot rolled 15 feet past the hole. His birdie putt was so firm that the ball popped off the back of the cup before rattling in the hole.

That put the pressure on Kirk to birdie the hole for the win, and he was just short of the green in two shots. "I think I fell asleep," he said later of the lob wedge that he chunked in the front sand bunker. He took a couple of deep breaths, blasted out and made a downhill 8-footer to shoot 69 and force the playoff.

University of Georgia sophomore Ryuji Imada finished third, two strokes back, after a closing 69. Jeff Klauk, the 1997 Dogwood runner-up, shared the lead on the back nine before three-putting the 17th hole. He shot a 67 to finish fourth, tied with Vaughn Taylor of Augusta and John Bloomfield of Jamaica.

No one made much of a move Friday until the back nine. Engler pared the first eight holes and told his playing partners he didn't think he'd ever birdie. Then he strung together five of those in six holes beginning on No. 9.

Kirk hit most of the greens, didn't make any putts and was feeling a bit forlorn, too, until the par-4 15th hole. He chipped in from the back of the green for birdie, made a 6-foot birdie on 16, and then saved par on 17.<sup>4</sup>

### **1999 - Chris Morris**

Chris Morris picked a fine time to leave the rest of the Dogwood Invitational field Friday. Among the onlookers at Druid Hills Golf Club was Atlanta's Danny Yates, the 1999 Walker Cup captain, and Morris clearly got his attention. If Morris' putter stays this hot all summer, there might be only question worth asking: Will that be

a window seat on the flight to Scotland this summer with the U.S. squad, or an aisle?

With a tournament-record 72-hole score of 20-under-par 264, the 21-year-old Morris won his first amateur tournament of any kind by five strokes, turning the Dogwood into a putting clinic with a closing 65. "I hadn't even heard of him before this week," said Yates, whose Walker Cup team should take shape by early August, "but I know who he is now." "It was a surprise to me that he (Yates) was even here," Morris said. "I didn't know he lived here."

A senior-to-be at the University of Houston, Morris originally had planned to attend summer school and make the Dogwood his final tournament before trying to qualify for the U.S. Amateur. However, with the points gathered this week, there could be a schedule re-evaluation.

"I may change my plans," Morris said. "I may try to get in the Western Amateur and the Porter Cup, and then see what happens. To make the Walker Cup team obviously would be a dream come true."

Morris had not previously displayed enough game to dominate a birdie-fest at Druid Hills, which became defenseless this week after rains softened the greens. Morris finished 35th at last week's Northeast Amateur, but felt comfortable off Clifton Road from the start. Without seeing the back nine at Druid Hills before Tuesday's first round, he toured it in 31.

Even at the finish, when pars were the goal, the birdies kept coming. Morris drained a 35-footer at the 16th to widen his lead to six shots at 21-under. After a rare bogey at the 17th, where he missed the green and pitched long, Morris sank a 15-footer at the 18th for par.

"Everything," said Morris, a Tyler, Texas, native, "just went in."

After a 54-hole leader board that had four University of Georgia players in the top eight, nobody got close enough to Morris to read the name on his bag. A 7-under 64 by Australian Adam Scott of Nevada-Las Vegas landed second place at 15-under 269, but was five shots short. Georgia Tech's Mike Pearson (67) tied for third at 271 with Charley Hoffman (69) of UNLV, Chris Mundorf (69) of N.C. State and UGA's Eric Compton of Miami (71).

Georgia 's Justin Bolli of Roswell (69) tied for seventh at 12-under 272 with David Eger (69), the former PGA Tour and USGA official from Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., who clearly has the connections to enhance a Walker Cup opportunity. Georgia's Nick Cassini of Roswell, who shared the 36-hole lead, stagnated Friday with a par-71 and tied for ninth along with teammate Michael Morrison.<sup>5</sup>

## 2000 - B.J. Staten

B.J. Staten saved his "A" game for the last 20 minutes of the Dogwood Invitational Friday at Druid Hills Golf Club. Even with some of the nation's best college players chasing Staten, who had faltered some on his final nine holes, he ended the discussion with a birdie-eagle finish. "Boy, I'll take it," Staten said. "It was a struggle all day."

Trailing by a stroke entering Friday's play after a 64, the University of Houston player finished with a flourish, posting a 5-under 67 for a 72-hole total of 19-under-par 269, beating Carl Petterson (70) of North Carolina State by a stroke. Georgia's Nick Cassini, with a closing 68, finished third at 15-under 273. Georgia State's Jack Croyle was fourth at 14-under on a 66. Bryce Molder of Georgia Tech, had a 70, and tied for fifth at 12-under with Australian John Sutherland (66).

After a few loose shots on the back nine, Staten, who will turn pro after the U.S. Amateur, pulled it together at precisely the right time. At the 207-yard, par-3 17th, "the smoothest swing I made all day" produced a perfect 6-iron that landed 18 feet right of the hole. A few moments later, it was holed for birdie, breaking a tie at 16-under with Petterson. "I got over the putt, and said, 'This is what we play for; this is what I practice for'" said Staten, who plays left-handed and putts right-handed. "I had the line and I just had to hope I hit it hard enough."

Then, at the par-5 18th, a 521-yard hole where eagles are common for the long hitters, Staten smacked a 255-yard three wood to 45 feet from the hole and drained the putt for eagle.

If Staten caught a break on the final holes, it came at the par-5 14th, when he snapped a drive into the trees, but watched the ball kick straight down into the light rough. He played his second shot way left, into the 15th fairway; hit the green with his third and two-putted for par as Petterson birdied.

"I had put myself in a bad position off the tee and I said, 'Five's not a bad score here; I'll take my chances on the last four holes,'" Staten said. "Sometimes that's all you can ask for. You don't want to shoot yourself out of the tournament by hitting one stupid shot or making one bad decision."

One of the nation's top amateur tournaments, the Dogwood represented the biggest win of Staten's career. While the medalist at a qualifier for the U.S. Public Links two weeks ago, Staten had not won a tournament since high school.

"It's amazing," Staten said, following Cougar teammate Chris Morris, last year's winner. "I haven't won in a long time. I've never come into a tournament like this and really kind of done what I did the last two days. I'm just really excited. . . . It's great for me and it's great for the (Houston) program."

Petterson, who 24 hours before shot a 10-under-par 62 that tied the course and tournament record, said, "I figured 18-under would win it. I guess he did one better. He played really good coming down the stretch. He's a nice guy, I didn't mind losing to him."<sup>6</sup>

## 2001 - Kyle Thompson

'In one week Kyle Thompson has gone from being a possible burnout victim to a potential Walker Cup member. The recent South Carolina graduate, competing for the sixth straight grueling week, shot a final-round 65 and beat Jason Hartwick in a one-hole playoff to win the 34th Dogwood Invitational at Druid Hills Golf Club.

Thompson, the No. 14-ranked amateur by GolfWeek Magazine, hopes the victory will be enough to help him secure one of the final spots on the U.S. Walker Cup team.

"My goal is to make the Walker Cup, but the last couple of weeks it didn't look good," Thompson said. "This should shoot me up in the top 10 rankings. They might not take me, but they'll have a hard time ignoring me."

Thompson and Hartwick tied at 18-under 270. Hartwick, who will be a sophomore at the University of Texas, shot a 64 in the last round, including a 30 on the last nine. Thompson lipped out a 6-foot birdie putt on the last hole to force a playoff.

On the sudden-death hole, Thompson put his drive in the fairway and his approach about 20 feet from the pin. Hartwick drove into the left rough and plopped his second shot in a bunker. Hartwick's sand shot fell 15 feet short, and he missed his par putt, giving Thompson -- who had two-putted for par -- the victory.

"I can't complain because I played well," Hartwick said. "I played the same all week, but I made my putts today." Hartwick bogeyed the first two holes of the final round but picked up momentum when he knocked a lob wedge into the third hole for an eagle. He made another eagle at the 14th hole.

Thompson had a great start to his round. He birdied Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and was 5-under after seven holes. He was 16-under at the turn. "I had really struggled the last two weeks (he was 18 over at last week's Northeastern Amateur), so I spent Monday really working on my swing," Thompson said. "It started to click, and I was striking the ball well all week long."

Australian Jason King shot a 68 and finished 17-under, one shot out of the playoff. King needed a birdie on the final hole but skulled his third shot 35 feet past the hole and didn't make the long putt. Bill Haas of Wake Forest shot a 67 and finished at 15-under. "I played with Kyle, and it seemed like every time I'd make a birdie,

he'd make one, too," Haas said.

Georgia State's D.J. Fiese shot a 66 and closed at 13-under. Ramon Bescana of the University of North Carolina, Walker Cup member Danny Green and TCU's Andy Doeden finished at 12-under. Third-round leader Lee Williams of Auburn had five putts hit the hole and pop out. He finished with a 79 and wound up 7 under.<sup>7</sup>

### **2002 - Andrew Buckle**

'With his last swing of the day, Andrew Buckle ended what breath of suspense remained in the Dogwood Invitational on Friday. Completing a scorching week at Druid Hills Golf Club, the 19-year-old from Brisbane, Australia, punctuated his performance perfectly.

Chipping from the rough just to the right of the 18th green, about 70 feet away, Buckle owned a two-shot lead. If Buckle birdied the last hole, even Arizona's Chris Nallen could not touch him.

With an eagle, everything was over but the official etching of Buckle's name on the trophy. When Buckle pitched crisply and the ball tracked into the cup for a final-round 64, the Aussie secured a Dogwood victory and a 72-hole tournament record at 23-under-par 265. "I was just trying to get up and down," Buckle said. "That was definitely a bonus."

A co-leader with Augusta's Cortland Lowe through 54 holes, Nallen finished three shots back at 20-under 268 with a 68. Lowe struggled to a 76 and tied for seventh at 276 with Tucker's Zane Goldthorp (68). First-round leader Tim Wilkinson of New Zealand finished with a 67 for third at 19-under 269. Buckle's countryman, Adam Groom, was fourth at 269 on a 68, hurt by a bogey at the 17th.

All week the players enjoyed perfect scoring conditions. Friday some showers entered the picture, but the greens only became softer and more scoring-friendly. Buckle knew it would be a birdie-fest from the start -- Wilkinson set the early pace with his opening 64.

"When it's like this, you've just got to be patient," Buckle said. "If you miss a 6-footer for birdie, you can't let it worry you. You know there are going to be more opportunities."

Buckle, a renowned player before this week -- he tied for seventh in the 2000 Australian Open -- did not waste many of them, especially when it counted Friday. He played the last six holes in 6-under for a back nine of 30.

Only a winning lottery number might make Buckle's American visit more of a success. He has played in three tournaments and made it to the final group for all of them. Prior to the Dogwood, Buckle finished third at the Monroe Invitational and

tied for fifth at the Northeast Amateur. Four more events are on his U.S. schedule. A pro career awaits, but Buckle will not rush the process regardless of the low numbers that have dominated his summer vacation. "I don't think I'm really ready yet," Buckle said. "My putting's very on and off, and my wedge game is not the best."<sup>8</sup>

### 2003 - Lee Williams

'Auburn's Lee Williams was determined to finish things off properly Saturday in the final round of the Dogwood Invitational. Not just because he shot a final-round 77 as the 54-hole leader in this year's NCAA Championship, but even more because he led the 2001 Dogwood with a round to play and squandered his opportunity. "I really wanted to come out today and play well because I came so close before," Williams said, "and I really felt pretty relaxed out there all day."

He had a three-shot lead over Auburn buddy Stuart Moore of Gainesville with three holes left, but the lead dropped to one after a three-putt at the 17th hole. Williams, 21, steadied himself at the Chateau Elan Legends Course's 18th hole. He found the green with a 6-iron from the left rough, nearly draining the 30-footer for birdie, and won by two shots at 16-under 272 with a closing 71.

Moore, his college roommate, miss-hit his 3-wood off the tee at 18, leaving an uphill, 190-yard shot to the green of the 418-yard par 4. Three strokes behind Williams through three rounds, Moore came up slightly short with a 4-iron and bogeyed for a 70.

University of Georgia-bound Brendan Todd of Cary, N.C., shot 73, regrouping for a back-nine 32 after an opening 41, and finished third at 12-under 276. Alpharetta's Robert Castro, who will play at Georgia Tech, finished fourth at 8-under 280.

The outcome determined, Williams patted Moore on the back as they walked together to the scoring tent. Their comfort zones were obvious. Both players had their fathers on the bag and played the final 36 holes together. "I play with [ Moore] every day," Williams said. "Having him there in the last group definitely made it more comfortable."

Moore birdied the 16th to reach 15 under, then got up-and-down for par at the 17th, where Williams bogeyed. While disappointed with his own tee shot at the 72nd hole, Moore said of Williams, "He played great. He played fairways and greens. That's what you've got to do to win."

Said Williams: "When I was 3-up with three to play, I was just trying to be conservative. I figured if I pared the last three, he was going to have to birdie the last three."

One of the nation's most prestigious amateur tournaments, the Dogwood was

played away from its customary home Druid Hills Golf Club because of course construction.’<sup>9</sup>

## 2004 - Chris Nallen

From The Atlanta-Journal Constitution, by Glenn Sheeley:

Chris Nallen looked the part all week. Even while toting his own USA Walker Cup bag, he dressed like a tour player, sharply outfitted in long pants, mock turtlenecks and fitted Nike caps.

On Friday at Druid Hills Golf Club he also played like a tour player, turning the Dogwood Invitational into a Chris Nallen clinic of dead-center drives and pin-seeking irons, eventually coasting to a four-shot win at 18-under-par 270 with a closing 66.

He's a nice kid, too. Stature-wise, kind of a Casey Wittenberg-type, but a little taller, more muscled and definitely much friendlier.

When Nallen, a Hackettstown, N.J., native, turns pro after the U.S. Amateur next month, seeking sponsor's exemptions, very little is likely to change in his game. The bag will be bigger and a caddie will accompany him, but the swing is as solid as Stone Mountain.

"There are still a couple of things I need to tweak here and there," said Nalley, 22, "but it's getting there. I've been working hard."

With rounds of 69-68-67-66, Nallen, who played for the University of Arizona, made two bogeys in four days. He went on cruise control on the back nine, especially after the 11th, where he cut a short iron perfectly to a foot. By the 14th hole the 2003 Northeast Amateur champion led by five and all but officially in possession of another prestigious amateur title.

"It means a great deal, definitely," Nallen said. "I've come here for four years, and I was close two years ago, finishing second. To finally get a win here is really nice. The tournament is run very well. It's just a first-class event."

Clemson's Brian Duncan, who led for two days, finished with a 69 and tied for second with Jay Reynolds of Austin, Texas, who fired a course-record 64 for 14-under 274.

Georgia senior David Denham, who shared the 54-hole lead with Australian Andrew McKenzie, never got enough putts to drop during a 73 and finished fourth at 13-under 275. McKenzie (72) slipped a bit with his ball-striking, which was deadly with a player of Nallen's talents playing so in sync.

"I just tried to force some putts on the back nine," Denham said, "but I knew I had to get some birdies the way Chris was playing."

Defending champion Lee Williams of Auburn finished strongly with a 67 that tied for seventh at 8 under.

It was the first year for the Dogwood on its new, Bob Cupp-restored Druid Hills course, which received hugely positive reviews from all the players and takes the tournament to an even higher level.

By GLENN SHEELEY The Atlanta Journal-Constitution Published on: 7/2/04

## **2005 Dogwood Invitational Champions**

**Amateur Division: Stuart Moore of Auburn University Senior Amateur Division: Johnny Dennis, Greenville SC**

The final round of play Friday, July 1 was halted after 63 holes when severe weather hit Druid Hills Golf Club. After a harrowing half an hour of tornado winds and destruction, all players and spectators were evacuated off the course while the winds crashed trees and debris onto the course. Once everyone was accounted for, the Dogwood Executive Committee, GSGA Officials, and Course Superintendent, Bill Hirschert decided to resume play Saturday morning at 9:30 with approximately 27 players yet to complete their rounds.

The grounds crew and superintendents called in over 25 employees and worked through the night to clear the course of the downed trees and loads of debris left from the storm. The course was in fantastic condition all week, and was restored over night by the hard working crews to the point no one could believe the course looked like it had the evening before.

Playing from the positions their balls were marked the afternoon before, the Dogwood players made the most of the softer, more receptive greens. Stuart Moore from Auburn University (2001 Champion and Walker Cup Team Member Lee Williams, was also a War Eagle) completed his final round of 66, with a bogey on #10, but finished it with an eagle at 14, and two birdies coming home on 17 and 18. Georgia Amateur Champion and UGA national championship team member David Denham, second round leader and trailing Moore by two beginning the final round Friday afternoon, shot a final round 73 and fell to a tie for fifth with Garret Osborn from University of Alabama Birmingham for the final. Osborn was the first round leader with a 65 and shot in the sixties all but the final round.

Brent Stegmaier from the University of Florida fired a final round 67 to join UGA's

Kris Kirk in a tie for runner up. Webb Simpson of Wake Forest fired a course record 63 in the second round to finish in 4th.

The Senior Division, a first for The Dogwood since the 70's, had a great battle between Spencer Sappington, reigning Georgia State Senior Amateur Champion and 2004 Tommy Barnes Award Winner, and Johnny Dennis of Greenville, SC, 2004 South Carolina Golf Association Senior Player of Year and 2004 SCGA Senior State Amateur Champion. Dennis was one behind going into the final round, and took the lead in the final 9 Saturday morning on holes with an eagle on the par 5 14th and a birdie on the par 4 16th to over take Sappington who bogeyed 17 and 18 coming home.

The players in The Dogwood gave high praises to the golf course, the volunteers, superintendent and staff, and all the members of Druid Hills for holding such a top notch tournament. Many players are hoping that they will be invited to play in 2006, as they called this one of the best run amateur events they play.

### **Hudson Swafford 2006 Dogwood Champion**

Hudson Swafford recently signed to play for the University of Georgia Golf Team and on Friday June 30, he signed for a final-round 66 for a Dogwood Tournament-total 16-under 272 and was crowned the 40th Dogwood Invitational Champion. A three-shot victory over Webb Simpson, the leader heading into the final day, who shot a 1-under 71 Friday and finished in second.

Hole 14 was the turning point, as Swafford made eagle on the Par 5 dogleg right and Simpson took another bogey. The rest of the match, Swafford kept his game on track and made birdie at the final 585 yard Par 5th to make his statement.

Swafford's first-round 77 began the tournament, then he came back in Wednesday's round to fire 63. Following that up with back-to-back 66s to over take Simpson and take the title. The second-round 63 was the tournament low.

The Dogwood Invitational, Druid Hills Golf Club, par-72, 6,833-yards Atlanta, Ga

## 2007 - Simpson's second 63 nets Dogwood

**GOLFWEEK STAFF** Webb Simpson shot a second consecutive 8-under 63 to win the Dogwood Invitational June 30 at Druid Hills Golf Club in Atlanta. Simpson finished at 19-under 265, four shots ahead of Danny Lee, a 16-year-old from New Zealand. It was the second major victory of the year for the Wake Forest senior, who is No. 4 in the *Golfweek*/Titleist Amateur Rankings. He won the Azalea Amateur in April. Simpson has been runner-up in the Dogwood twice. It appeared this might be his week when he shot a course-record 60 in the am-am before the start of the tournament. Simpson started the day in fifth place, four shots behind Chris Kirk. Simpson shot 5 under on the front nine Saturday to get to 16 under par and take a three-shot lead at the turn. Kirk, who was 2 over par on the first nine, fell to 13 under. Clemson's Luke Hopkins (70) finished third at 13 under par, while Kirk (74) was fourth at 12 under par. Brian Harman (73) finished fifth at 10-under 274. Lee, the 36-hole leader, is the New Zealand Amateur champion and has won back-to-back New Zealand U-23 championships. He was a quarterfinalist at last year's U.S. Junior. Last year, Lee was the first New Zealander since 1999 to qualify for the U.S. Amateur. Dustin Johnson, winner of consecutive starts at the Monroe Invitational and Northeast Amateur, finished T-13 at 5 under par.

## 2008 Champion - Rory Hie

Rory Hie finished 21 under par for a total of 267 for 72 holes. He tied the Dogwood Tournament Scoring Record with a final round 62, finishing with 6 straight birdies and a back nine score of 29 on the Par 72, 6850 yard Druid Hills Golf Club course. Jonathan Hodge had a two under par 70 in the final round to be Runner up. Sharing joint first runner up were Hudson Swafford, Harris English, Carlton Forrester and Mark Strickland.

## 2009 Champion -- Brian Harman

Brian Harman shot a final-round 66 Saturday at Druid Hills Golf Club in Atlanta to win the Dogwood Invitational and help his candidacy for the Walker Cup.

Harman (66) finished at 18-under 270, four shots ahead of former Georgia teammate Russell Henley (67). Adam Mitchell (71), who like Harman finished his eligibility at Georgia earlier this year, finished third at 12 under.

After opening with a 1-over 73, Harman was 19 under par in his final three rounds. He closed with rounds of 67-64-66.

It was Harman's first major amateur victory since the 2007 Porter Cup. Harman, a member of the '05 U.S. Walker Cup team, has remained amateur this summer to try to make this year's team. Mitchell, the '08 Porter Cup champ and a semifinalist at last year's U.S. Amateur, has also said he has his eyes set on this year's team.

## **2010 Champion – Andrew Yun**

### **Yun holds on for Dogwood Invitational win**

After making history at [Druid Hills Golf Club](#) earlier in the week, Andrew Yun held on for a one-shot win Saturday at the Dogwood Invitational.

Yun, a rising sophomore at Stanford, shot a second-round 10-under 62 at the Atlanta course, which ties the competitive course record set by Tour player Webb Simpson at the 2008 Dogwood Invitational. The round gave Yun the lead after his first-round 66, and he never looked back.

It's the second week in a row a Stanford player has won big on the amateur circuit, after recent graduate Joseph Bramlett's [Northeast Amateur victory](#).

Yun, of Chandler, Ariz., closed the week with two more rounds under par (71-69) to get to 20-under 268 for the championship. His win comes on the heels of a T-4 at the Northeast Amateur.

Anders Albertson, of Atlanta, finished one shot behind Yun after carding nearly identical rounds. Albertson's best effort was a first-round 9-under 63 that gave him the early lead. He followed with rounds of 66-71-69. Albertson has committed to Georgia Tech.

Bryden Macpherson, a rising sophomore at Georgia, and Connor Arendell, a rising junior at UCF, tied for third at 15-under 273.

Three more players were at 14-under 274, including Sihwan Kim, Yun's teammate at Stanford.

Cory Whitsett, the 2007 U.S. Junior Amateur champion who will play for Alabama in the fall, finished T-8 at 13-under 275.

The 2010 Dogwood Invitational came down to the 72nd hole to determine its' Champion. Andrew Yun of Stanford University hit his approach shot to the par 5 18th at Druid Hills Golf Club to 3 feet for birdie to win by one shot at 20 under par. Atlanta's Anders Albertson, who will be a Freshman at Georgia Tech in

January fired a 69 on the final day but it was one shot short. The tournament turned into a final day "match play" finish between the two with the turning point being Yun's chip-in eagle on the par 5 fourteenth. When Albertson bogied the 235 yard par 3 seventeenth, the event was all square at 19 under and a playoff seemed likely. Albertson's long birdie putt on 18 just missed, leaving Yun with a tap in win to close out the championship.

Finishing at 15 under was University of Georgia's Bryden Macpherson and University of Central Florida's Connor Arendell, 5 shots off the pace. Georgia Tech's J.T. Griffin shot the low round for the day of 64, finishing at 14 under for the tournament, six shots off the Champion.



- By [Golfweek Staff](#)
- July 3, 2010 5:34 p.m.

### **2011 Champion - Nate McCoy**

## **Nate McCoy closes with 65, grabs Dogwood title**

ATLANTA - Nate McCoy birdied four consecutive holes just before the turn in a final-round 7-under 65 that lifted him to the Dogwood Invitational title July 2 at Druid Hills Golf Club.

McCoy, a senior at Iowa State and the son of top amateur player Mike McCoy, finished with a 22-under 266 total, two shots better than Alabama sophomore Bobby Wyatt, who also had a final-round 65. Illinois senior Luke Guthrie (72) finished third at 16 under.

McCoy birdied the par-3 eighth, and Guthrie made bogey for a two-shot swing that put McCoy in the lead. McCoy then notched consecutive birdies on Nos. 14-16 to hold off Wyatt, who made his own charge with four birdies and an eagle on the back nine.

Guthrie – coming off a breakout All-American season during which he posted four victories, including the Big Ten Championship and an NCAA regional title –

took the lead with a second-round 65 but had trouble with his putting in the final two rounds.

“It was a frustrating day for me,” Guthrie said. “The last two days, I couldn’t get any putts to go in.”



By [Golfweek Staff](#)

July 3, 2011 9:51 p.m.

The Dogwood Invitational came down to the final shots to determine the 2011 champion. Nate McCoy of Iowa State University needed a final round score of 65 to win the 45th annual Dogwood Invitational by two shots. In second was Bobby Wyatt, a student at University of Alabama, who matched McCoy's 65 score. Third place went to University of Illinois' Luke Guthrie, who had started the day in first place, falling behind the torrid pace with a 72.

Nate McCoy, who hails from West Des Moines, Iowa, spent time throughout the Dogwood week working on papers and preparing for final exams from the summer semester. Hanging out in the press room to finalize his work, McCoy as cool with his studies as he was on the field, "Its all about balance, said Nate, "my fiancé played soccer for Iowa and we've both learned that tenacity is the key in sports and in life."

Local standouts, and crowd favorites, including multiple time players Georgia Tech's Anders Albertson and University of Georgia's Russell Henley as well as recent British Amateur winner Bryden Macpherson, made a good showing, falling just short of the eventual champion. The low round for the day, 64, was shot by Michael Hebert and Jorge Fernandez Valdes, tying for 12th.

“It’s been another great week of exciting amateur play here at Druid Hills,” said Edward Toledano chairman of the Dogwood Invitational. “With a field full of aspiring PGA professionals, it’s exciting to watch such sensational golf on our home course and know that we are not only enjoying the best of golf, but also sending our 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Reynolds scholars to universities of their choosing. The Dogwood thrives because it’s the best of everything: volunteerism, competition, philanthropy, and America’s greatest game - golf.”

- The top ten players were as follows:

- Nate McCoy(1)
- Bobby Wyatt (2)
- Luke Guthrie (3)
- Taylor Floyd (T4)
- Alexander Kang (T4)
- Michael Kim (T4)
- Brooks Koepka (T4)
- Vince India (T8)
- Jeffrey Kang (T8)
- Paul Haley(T10)
- Justin Thomas (T10)

### **2012 Champion – Ben Kohles**

ATLANTA - Ben Kohles, a Virginia graduate, finished the final round of the Dogwood Invitational at 17 under with a score of 67, securing his win by two shots.

Michael Kim, a student at California, came in second, just one shot behind Kohles. Third place went to Virginia graduate Bruce Woodall, who had started the day in first place. Both Kim and Woodall finished the final round 15 under.

### **2013 Champion – Michael Johnson**

6-29-13 - The Dogwood Invitational came down to the final shots to determine the 2013 champion. Michael Johnson, a junior at Auburn University, finished the final round at 28 under with a score of 64 securing his title as champion of the 47th annual Dogwood Invitational by seven shots and shattering Andrew Buckle's 2002 record of 23 under.

In second was Oliver Schniederjans, a junior at Georgia Tech who fired a 68 on the final day, but was four shots short of Johnson. Third place went to Benjamin Griffin, the 11th ranked junior golfer in the country, from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, who also broke a tournament record with a 61 in round one. Davin White, a junior at Georgia State University, finished the final round in fourth place at 15 under.

Local standouts, and crowd favorites, including returning players Georgia Tech's Anders Albertson and University of Georgia's Keith Mitchell as well as Wyndham Clark, a freshman at Oklahoma State and Sam Daley, a sophomore at Iowa State made a good showing, falling just short of the eventual champion. The low round for the day, 64, was shot by Michael Johnson and was comprised of six birdies and an eagle on the 7<sup>th</sup> hole –par 5.

“As more and more of our players leverage their experiences here, to join the ranks of professional golf programs around the world, we have truly become the crystal ball of golf. And what seals the deal is that the Dogwood thrives because it’s the best of everything: volunteerism, competition, philanthropy, values and America’s greatest game – golf” said Edward Toledano – chairman, the Dogwood Invitational.

The top 10 players were as follows:

- Michael Johnson (1)
- Oliver Schniederjans (2)
- Benjamin Griffin (3)
- Davin White (4)
- Wyndham Clark (T5)
- Sam Daley (T5)
- Michael Garretson (7)
- Ricardo Ceila (8)
- Peter Williamson (9)
- James Gibellini (T10)
- Zack Jaworski (T10)
- Jimmy Beck (T10)
- Anders Albertson (T10)
- Joey Garber (T10)

### **2014 Champion – Trey Rule**

June 30 - It took two holes longer than expected, but Trey Rule won the Dogwood Invitational with a birdie on the second hole of sudden death Saturday at Druid Hills Golf Club. He finished 21 under, in a tie with Zach Seabolt.

Rule, an Eatonton native who plays at Mercer, seemingly had the tournament won with a two-stroke lead at 22 under and his ball just a few feet away from the flag on the final hole of regulation. Playing partner Seabolt, who was chasing him the final four holes, was in the rough off the green, 30 yards away.

“I honestly didn’t think it would go to a playoff,” Rule said, but things weren’t over. Seabolt’s chip in for eagle on No. 18 skirted a few inches past the hole as patrons watching from the clubhouse politely said, “Go in.”

“When I hit it I thought it had a chance,” said Seabolt, a native of Raleigh, N.C., who plays at Winthrop. He tapped in the next putt for birdie to fall to 21 under.

Rule, using a long putter and a putting stroke with his right hand on top of the club and his left hand far down the club, subsequently left his birdie putt two feet short. It’s a stroke he has used for the past 1 1/2 years because he said he was really bad with a traditional putter and stroke.

It took two holes longer than expected, but Trey Rule won the Dogwood Invitational with a birdie on the second hole of sudden death Saturday at Druid Hills Golf Club. He finished 21 under, in a tie with Zach Seabolt.

“Got a little shaky,” Rule said after watching Seabolt’s chip. “I felt like I hit it with the putter cover on.”

Suddenly, things were interesting again.

Just needing a par to take the tournament, Rule’s next putt lipped out for a bogey, dropping him to 21 under and sending the Dogwood to a playoff for the third time in 20 years.

Both players parred the first playoff hole, No. 1, a 467-yard par 4.

Drama returned on the second hole, the same one where the drama began: the par-5, 579-yard No. 18. Seabolt hooked his drive left into the trees, where it landed in the rough yards away from reaching the beginning of the fairway. “I don’t like that tee shot,” Seabolt said, referencing the trees that line the left side of the fairway and are in the golfer’s vision as he looks up the fairway toward the clubhouse.

Rule slammed his drive up the left side, where it came to rest inches from the fairway.

Seabolt’s next shot again went left, landing in the rough 210 yards away from the green and with trees blocking his line of sight. Attempting to punch out, Seabolt instead topped his third shot, sending it 30 yards closer, but still in the rough and still with trees in the way.

Meanwhile, Rule’s second shot flew up the fairway, landing in a similar spot as his second shot when he played the hole earlier in the day.

Seabolt’s fourth rolled into the rough a few yards away from the green and in a similar spot from where he almost chipped in. Rule again hit another good chip with his third shot, putting the ball a few feet away from the flag. Seabolt’s fifth landed several feet below the pin. His bogey putt rolled several feet past the hole.

Rule didn’t miss with his putt this time, rolling in the birdie to take the Dogwood.

“It was nice to have a 4-footer again on 18 to get back at it a little bit,” Rule said.

**2015 Champion – Dawson Armstrong**

ATLANTA, Georgia (July 4, 2015) -- A day lost to rain did nothing to deter 36-hole leader Dawson Armstrong, who posted 66 today to capture the Dogwood Invitational at Druid Hills Golf Club.

After Friday's round was rained out, the Lipscomb University golfer bogeyed his opening hole, but birdied holes 7-9 to post 2-under on the front. He added four more on the back to shoot 66 and win by two at 16-under.

"This was a great experience for me," Armstrong told the tournament committee after the round. "Five days ago I was not thinking I would be standing here as champion of The Dogwood Invitational – and here I am!"

Ashton Van Horne, who seemed to be running away with the tournament Thursday -- when he got to 13-under after 27 holes -- finished with a solid round of 67 to take solo second at 14-under. Van Horne's final round run was derailed by a double-bogey at the 16th.

A shot back were Oklahoma commit Brad Dalke, and South Africa's top ranked junior, Paul Boshoff, who posted the lowest round on Saturday with a 65.

### **2016 Champion – Charles Huntzinger**

ATLANTA, GA (July 2, 2016) -- Rising Penn State sophomore Charles Huntzinger fired a closing 4-under 68 and finished 17-under to win the Dogwood Invitational. A trio of golfers finished 16-under and tied for second place at Druid Hills Golf Club.

Huntzinger began the day 13-under and one shot off the lead held by top Australian golfer Anthony Quayle. It wasn't a smooth start to the final round for Huntzinger as he bogeyed the 3rd hole, but he was then able to turn things around with birdies on Nos. 4, 5 and 9. The run brought him to 15-under with nine holes remaining.

On the back nine Huntzinger rolled in two more birdies on holes 15 and 16 to reach 17-under. However, by paring the final two holes the Penn State golfer had left the door slightly ajar.

54-hole leader Anthony Quayle reached 16-under with a birdie on the 14th hole and had four chances to tie the lead but he parred to the house. Quayle put together a 2-under 70 on Saturday with four birdies and two bogeys.

Raul Pereda, a junior at Jacksonville State, started the day in third place before making his final round move with a bogey-free 4-under 68 to reach 16-under.

Pereda, who finished in a tie for second, birdied holes 4, 7, 9 and 14 but couldn't find the birdie he needed on the closing stretch to force a playoff.

The biggest move of the day came from defending champion Dawson Armstrong as he fired a 7-under 65. Armstrong, heading into his junior year at Lipscomb, bogeyed two of his first three holes to fall to 7-under for the week and at that point was seemingly out of the picture. That quickly changed as Armstrong responded with birdies on 4, 7, 8 and 9 to reach 11-under.

On the closing nine the torrid pace continued with a bird on the 12th setting the stage for four consecutive birdies from holes 14-17. The birdie on No. 17 gave Armstrong nine for the day. However, a closing hole par left Armstrong one-stroke short of a potential playoff.

LSU sophomore Luis Gagne made a run as well, putting together a bogey-free 5-under 67 as he reached 15-under. His run came to end following his final birdie on No. 14 and Gagne ended up finishing alone in fifth place.

02 Jul 2016

by [AmateurGolf.com Staff](#)

## **2017 Champion – Lloyd Jefferson Go**

Lloyd Jefferson Go goes eight under on his last twelve holes to edge Luke Schniederjans by one shot at Druid Hills GC  
By Yianni Gogonas AmateurGolf.com

ATLANTA, GA (July 1, 2017) - After weeks of threatening leaderboards on Callaway's [One Epic Summer](#) Tour, Seton Hall's [Lloyd Jefferson Go](#) from the Philippines was able to put the pieces together and break through with a win on Saturday in Atlanta. The 2017 Dogwood Champion fell behind early but made a furious charge that would be just enough to edge ahead of the field, winning by one shot over Georgia Tech golfer [Luke Schniederjans](#).

**Related:** [Dogwood Invitational Daily Video Coverage](#)

Go would begin the day in a three-way tie for the lead, shared with former champion [Dawson Armstrong](#), who has had plenty of experience at Druid Hills, winning The Dogwood in 2015 and finishing in a tie for second in last year's championship; and Campbell's [Gaston Bertinotti](#) from Argentina who was hoping to cap off an impressive 66-68-67 performance with a big win.

Unfortunately for Armstrong and Bertinotti, neither player would be able to conjure the sort of play needed to win in such a strong field, shooting 71 and 72, respectively.

Go would begin the day slowly, giving shots back with bogeys on 3 and 5, the only mistakes he would make on Saturday before catching fire. Birdies on 7 and 8 would take him back to 15-under-par, and one more on the 9th would bring Go into the red numbers for the day.

"I came off a rough start," said Go to AmateurGolf.com's Kevin Cassidy. "I was two over after five holes...hitting it everywhere. But I turned it around, birdied 7, birdied 8, birdied 9, came alive."

Schniederjans, who shot 66 in his final effort was making some noise of his own, playing one group ahead of Go. After starting the back nine with a bogey, Schniederjans would go on to make a birdie on the 12th, following it with an eagle on the par-5 15th. Unfortunately, after another birdie on the 16th, he would stifle his chances greatly with a costly lip-out bogey on the long par-3 17th. He made par on the 18th to finish at 20-under-par.

When asked about his round Schniederjans offered, "It was a great round. I made two eagles. If you would have told me that at the start of the round, I would have been really happy, so I played good golf, just came up short and missed a few putts."

Go continued his torrid pace on the back nine, coming home in 31, ignited by an incredible hole-out for an eagle 2 on the 432-yard 11th hole. Go racked up three more birdies on 14, 15, 17, before making a par on 18 that would wrap up 6-under-par 66, the best of 21-under-par week that he began with three straight rounds of 67.

Go was not looking at the leaderboard as he played the back nine, so he was not aware of his standing as he was making his run. "I holed out for eagle on 11 and I thought the put me in the lead," he said. After making two more birdies and as he was walking off the sixteenth green, he asked where he stood.

Still assuming he was in the lead, he was surprised to hear that he was tied with Schniederjans. But he immediately told himself "I've got to birdie 17 or 18."

His 4-iron on the long par-3 17th settled to within fifteen feet, but it left him with a sharply breaking right-to-left putt.

"I said to my caddie, 'I've got to make this putt. This putt is big. And I drained it.'"

"It's definitely one of the biggest moments of my life."

Go will play in three more major amateur tournaments this summer before returning home to the Philippines and attempting to play his way onto the Japan Tour.

Armstrong would finish in a three-way tie for third with Austin Fulton and [Steven Fisk](#), who both closed with a five-under 67.

Bertinotti fell into a tie for sixth with first-round leader [Bryson Nimmer](#) and [Benjamin Shipp](#), who had the low round of the tournament, an eight-under 64 that included an eagle and seven birdies.

Last year's winner [Charles Huntzinger](#) closed with a 69 to finish tied for ninth at 14-under.

A rain-softened Druid Hills course allowed for low scoring all week, as an amazing 22 players finished the tournament in double-digits under par. All 42 players who made the cut finished the tournament under par.

### **2018 Champion – Ashton Poole**

A year after friend, former champion and Walker Cupper Vinny Giles helped him get in the field, Ashton Poole wins by 4

By Stan Awtrey for AmateurGolf.com

ATLANTA, GA (June 9, 2018) - [Ashton Poole](#) might not have been in the position to win the 52nd Dogwood Invitational if it hadn't been for an old friend back in Charlottesville, Va.

Poole got a little nudge to get in the field a year ago from former U.S. Amateur and British Amateur champion [Vinny Giles](#), who had been a two-time winner of the Dogwood.

"When a former champion calls, you listen to what they have to say," said Dogwood Tournament Chairman Edward Toledano.

With a boost from Giles, Poole got in the field a year ago and missed the cut by two shots. This year he returned and scorched the field for a four-shot win. Poole, a native of Charlotte who will be a junior at Virginia in the fall, had rounds of 69-66-64-67 for a 22-under 266.

Giles, who played at the University of Georgia and attended law school at Virginia, was a two-time winner of the Dogwood (1963 and 1965) and requested a spot for young friend a year ago.

"Vinny is a buddy of mine and he helped me get in the tournament," Poole said. "To win the same tournament that Vinny won, with his career, means so much."

[Chandler Eaton](#), a junior at Duke, shot a 65 on Saturday and made a valiant

push. He finished alone in second at 18-under 280, one shot better than Palmer Cup player [S.M. Lee](#) of Dalton State, who closed with a 68 and finished 17-under.

“I’m super proud,” Eaton said. “I didn’t really know where I was at the end. I knew I was doing really good. I knew I was making putts and hitting fairways and that adds up in the end.”

[Jacob Solomon](#) of Auburn and [William Nottingham](#) of Clemson tied for fourth. Solomon finished with a 69 and Nottingham shot 72, as the pair finished at 15-under 273.

Poole had a three-shot lead at the turn, but saw it dwindle to one after Eaton made a birdie at the par-4 16th hole. But the tide turned quickly; Poole birdied the 16th and minutes later Eaton doubled the 17th, restoring Poole’s three-shot lead.

Poole said he was nervous, despite the big lead coming down the stretch.

“It’s by far the biggest win of my career,” Poole said. “I was nervous. At some point on the first tee, I’m thinking, ‘I’m good, I’m good.’ And when I teed the ball up and stood up, I couldn’t feel my legs. So anyone who says they’re not nervous coming down the stretch with the lead is lying. You just have to stick to your game plan and play to your strengths.”

The defending champion [Lloyd Jefferson Go](#) of the Philippines shot a 72 to finish T35 at 1 under.

Guilford College coach [Justin Tereshko](#) was the low mid-amateur, finishing in a tie for 8th at 12-under 276.

Canadian mid-amateur [Garrett Rank](#), who will compete in next week’s U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills, closed with a 70 to finish 34th at 2 under.

## 2019 Champion – Brandon Mancheno

# WORTH THE WAIT: MANCHENO STAYS COOL FOR DOGWOOD TITLE

08 Jun 2019

by [Julie Williams](#) of AmateurGolf.com

ATLANTA – Before Brandon Mancheno could claim his Dogwood trophy, he had to stand around and think about it for half an hour. Some players may not do very well with that, but to Mancheno, that’s what teammates are for.

Including Mancheno, there were four Auburn players in the Dogwood Invitational field. When the horn blew Friday afternoon to call players in for lightning, Mancheno had just hit his tee shot on the par-3 17th. He was playing in the final group, and he was tied for the lead with Isaiah Jackson, who had just signed for a final-round 63 when the storm hit.

The Auburn contingent huddled, chit-chatted and tried to keep their blood pressure down. Mancheno returned to the course and two-putted from 45 feet for a par at No. 17.

On the par-5 closing hole, he left his approach about 10 yards off the green, used a utility club to get it on and made the 8-footer for birdie. His first thought?

“Relief,” he said with a big smile. “It’s over.”

The Dogwood victory represents a lot of firsts for the 19-year-old. It’s his first big win, his first time having to sit around in a weather delay before completing said big win, and the first time he had to get double digits under par to contend. Mancheno won at 21 under.

“I like to play aggressive,” Mancheno said, which is a good thing considering that you have to play Druid Hills Golf Club that way if you’re going to contend at the Dogwood. It sets up well for that.

“The greens are so good, you’re going to make a bunch of putts and it’s not long,” he said.

Mancheno spent the first part of the day chasing Isaiah Jackson, a rising senior at Memphis who transferred in this year from Meridian Community College.

Jackson was 10 under through 15 holes before making his first and only bogey at No. 17. His final-round 63 got him to 20 under. Mancheno was three groups back, but knew he needed to start making some birdies.

He was 7 under, and bogey-free, for the day. That final-round 65 got him to 21 under.

For the week, Mancheno had a fellow 19-year-old on the bag. Logan Epstein is a rising sophomore at the University of Indiana who has been a caddie since he was 15. He’s working the summer at nearby East Lake Golf Club, and got the call that an Auburn player needed a man for his bag at Druid Hills.

Epstein is a proud New Yorker (he flashed a muddied towel from the Tuxedo Club, where he mostly worked throughout high school) who played a few tournaments in high school himself.

He mostly spent the week getting numbers for Mancheno.

“More strategy before the greens and then confirmation on the greens,” Epstein said of his role. “He’s very good on the greens.”

A year ago, Mancheno’s summer began with a runner-up finish at the NCAA Championship. He played four major amateur events last summer, with his best finish a top 5 at the Players Amateur. Mancheno missed the cut at the U.S. Amateur.

The Dogwood win won’t change his schedule, but it will change his mindset.

“Confidence for the rest of the summer,” he said.

Mancheno is a man of big game but few words. The non-golf part of all this was put to the test earlier this year. Mancheno’s Auburn team was in the spotlight for Golf Channel’s docu-series, *Driven*. It focused on the Iron Bowl rivalry between Alabama and Auburn.

Mancheno tried to get used to the cameras through that process, but often it was hard to relax.

“It was a little bit exhausting because they were always there, they were always around us hanging out and doing whatever so it was good practice for being in front of a camera all the time,” he said.

As for Jackson, his learning curve came with his scoring clubs. The small-town Mississippi native has doubled down on wedge work since arriving at Memphis. He’ll hit as many as 100 wedge shots on the team TrackMan just as a warm-up to a practice session.

That paid off in spades at the Patriot All-America in December, which was a breakthrough win for Jackson. It nearly paid off again at the Dogwood.

“I’ve got a wedge game now,” said Jackson, and he leaned on it hard at Druid Hills.

A renewed confidence with his scoring clubs should keep Jackson hanging around the top of leaderboards all summer.

## **FOR ALEX ROSS, LIGHTS-OUT 57 ENDS A LONG DAY AT THE DOGWOOD**

06 Jun 2019

by [Julie Williams](#) of AmateurGolf.com

ATLANTA – Alex Ross had talked it over with his caddie. When the third round of the Dogwood Invitational began on Thursday afternoon – the second of a double-round day forced by impending weather – he just wanted to make the cut. Marc Mitchell, Ross' bagman and lifelong golf buddy, suggested trying to birdie every hole.

“Let's shoot 60,” Mitchell said over lunch.

Turns out, that was the course record at Druid Hills Golf Club, a hilly little gem tucked into a neighborhood near downtown Atlanta. Ross knows that because he asked the starter on the 10th tee, where he started his afternoon round.

“I don't remember what I said after that,” Ross said.

Understandably, there were chunks missing from Ross' memory of an afternoon 15-under 57. That's a number unheard of in golf, let alone amateur golf.

Ross, who just finished his sophomore season at Davidson College, had opened this tournament with rounds of 75-73. He was middle-of-the-pack at best.

After he had joked about shooting the course record, Ross opened his afternoon round by missing the green on his approach into the par-4 10th. He chipped it in for birdie, then he made three more birdies. He eagled No. 14 to go 6 under.

“I'd say after I made the eagle putt, that was when I kind of knew something was up,” Ross said.

Druid Hills is a course that forces decision making – and accuracy. The par 5s are gettable, though, and there are opportunities to score, depending on your confidence level.

Thus, Ross had a decision to make on the 16th tee. It's a 352-yard par 4 that curls left with the green tucked over trees. Many players go for it despite the high risk. Ross was already 7 under by that point, but he pulled driver and landed on the green for the third time this week. The hole just fits his eye, Ross said – that, and he just put a new TaylorMade M5 driver in the bag last week.

Ross could feel the pressure after that, but even after turning in 9-under 27, he kept rolling with birdies at Nos. 1, 3, 4 and 5.

Mitchell, a collegiate golfer himself at Denison College, had all but stopped giving advice at that point. He has carried Ross' bag a few times before but was a last-minute – albeit enthusiastic – add for the Dogwood.

“I always try to stay calm myself so he has someone to be calm with,” Mitchell said of his role on Thursday afternoon. “When you’re 13 under, there’s not much calm you can be. He was reading every shot right, he was hitting every shot correctly, so on the greens I wasn’t doing anything.”

Ross missed a 10-footer for eagle on No. 7, a par 5, after hitting a 7-iron in from 188 yards – into the wind. It is not Ross’s usual selection from that distance.

“My caddie was trying to give me all these numbers – what it is to cover, how far you want to fly it, I was like, ‘Look, I can’t focus on that right now. I’m just going to hit 7-iron and swing it hard.’”

After hitting the green on the par-3 eighth, Ross blew his uphill 30-footer past the hole by 3 feet. With members starting to collect on a hillside behind the hole, the comebacker was perhaps the most nerve-wracking of the day. Mitchell called it Ross’ best shot.

Ross made it. He went to the ninth tee at 14 under.

With one last birdie on No. 9 (he had an eagle putt from the front of the green there), Ross shattered the standing Dogwood course record of 60, which had been held by Webb Simpson. His 57 matches the score that Bobby Wyatt, a former Alabama player, posted in the 2010 Alabama Boys Junior.

Ross struggled to process it after signing his scorecard. He’s gotten hot in smaller stretches – even shooting 28 on nine holes once at his local muni, the Golf Course at Chastain Park in Atlanta. That round included a bogey.

Mitchell, however, says this is typical Ross and that potentially, he needed that punch in the gut that came courtesy of his not-so-stellar opening.

Get him down, Mitchell says, and he’ll come back to beat you.

“It’s annoying,” Mitchell said, albeit with a serious amount of respect.

“He’s this good at golf. He really is just this good.”

Dogwood officials grouped players into foursomes for Thursday’s double-tee, double-round day. It was impossible for the other three players in Ross’ group to ignore what was going on. Owen Burden, a Furman freshman who has played lots of rounds beside Ross, said he thinks he spent more time thinking about Ross’ game than his own. Burden had 76.

“He was talking about it, which was good. He was like, ‘I’m really nervous,’ which is understandable,” Burden said. “I feel like if you keep to yourself, it could be

worse.”

Interestingly, Ross tried to qualify for the Dogwood a year ago, only to hit his closing tee shot into the driving range right of 18. He made bogey and missed qualifying by a shot.

There are some other highlights in his amateur career – a handful of runner-up finishes in Georgia State Golf Association events and a near-miss in the A-10 Conference Championship as a freshman – but nothing like this. After his 57, Ross had moved inside the top 10 through 54 holes.

He made the cut with five shots to spare.

<sup>1</sup> All Dogwood history from 1941 to 1996 is from "Druid Hills Golf Club in Atlanta: The Story and the People", copy write Druid Hills Golf Club, Dr. James C. Bryant, Club Historian

<sup>2</sup> Glenn Sheeley, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "Floyd Stays Cool to Win Dogwood by five strokes", June 30, 1996

<sup>3</sup> Glenn Sheeley, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "Scott steadies, wins Dogwood", June 29, 1997

<sup>4</sup> Michelle Hiskey, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "South African wins Dogwood Playoff", July 4, 1998

<sup>5</sup> Glenn Sheeley, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "Morris blisters course to take Dogwood title", July 3, 1999

<sup>6</sup> Glenn Sheeley, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "Staten wins Dogwood with flourish at finish", July 1, 2000

<sup>7</sup> Stan Awtrey, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "Dogwood winner has Walker Cup on his mind", June 30, 2001

<sup>8</sup> Glenn Sheeley, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "Buckle takes Dogwood", June 29, 2002

<sup>9</sup> Glenn Sheeley, Atlanta Journal Constitution, "Williams assures there's no repeat of '01 Dogwood", June 29, 2003