DiBitetto, Schwert, Claim RDGA Junior, Sub-Junior Titles

BY DAVE EATON

For three days last week, junior golf took center stage at Midvale Country Club as nearly 100 of the top juniors in the area met for the annual Rochester District Golf Association Junior Championships.

What transpired was more like a junior Olympics of golf, with no less than six separate competitions taking place for both boys and girls, in three different age categories from 17-year-olds, to 11-year olds and younger.

The most noticeable change in format from previous years was the expanded competitions available for girls — one of the RDGA’s primary goals in recent years. This year’s RDGA Girls Championships even featured match play competition for the first time.

Leading the way was the Boys Junior division for 15-to-17 year-olds, which began on Monday, July 30, with a 32-player match-play bracket, seeded according to a stroke-play qualifying round held at Chili Country Club last month.

Junior Match Play Finals Featured Surprises, Close Contests

The largest RDGA junior division, the Boys’ Juniors, featured a few interesting matchups and a few surprises.

In the first round of match play, many of the pre-tournament favorites claimed victory, including Andrew DiBitetto of Ridgmont, Thomas Mayberry of Blue Heron Hills, last year’s Sub-Junior champion Mike Colosi of Wild Wood, and last year’s Junior match play runner-up Chris Agostinelli of Penfield.

Also making their way into the second round of match play were brothers Josh and Joel Sandman of Bristol Harbour.

Ironically, the Sandman brothers would also advance to play each other in round two, where Josh defeated Joel by a 6-and-5 margin.

Other second-round match winners of note included Wild Wood’s Colosi, Mayberry of Blue Heron, DiBitetto, and Kevin Kaye, also of Wild Wood.

In the quarterfinal round of the Junior Division, Josh Sandman defeated Colosi in a close, 2-and-1 contest, while DiBitetto outlasted Mayberry, 3-and-2.

Kaye defeated Irondequoit’s Jonathan Umanski, 2-and-1, and Oak Hill’s Mark Leonard downed Brandon Lawatsch of the Country Club of Mendon, 5-and-3, in the other two quarterfinal matches.

On Tuesday afternoon, Kaye edged Sandman, 2-and-1, while DiBitetto narrowly escaped his match against Leonard, 1-up, to set up the RDGA Junior Final on Wednesday.

In the Junior Championship final, DiBitetto, 15, easily han-
dled Kaye by a 5-and-4 margin to win his fourth career RDGA title, having already claimed championships in the RDGA’s Sub-Junior and Pee Wee divisions. This was his first year of eligibility in the Junior division.

Close Competition Featured in Other Junior Championships

In the Boys Sub-Junior division for 12-to-14 year-olds, the match play competition began with a 16-player field on Tuesday, with seeding based on a stroke-play qualifier held at Silver Lake Country Club on July 20.

Wednesday’s Sub-Junior final match came down to J.P. Kircher of Monroe Golf Club and Mike Schwert of Lakeside Country Club.

Unlike the Junior division final, this match was close from the start. Kircher — the son of two-time RDGA Ryan Memorial Champion John Kircher — was the decided favorite going into the match, having qualified for this year’s Ryan Memorial in July, as well as having posted the medal round of 67 in the Sub-Junior qualifier on July 20.

Favorite or not, Kircher was upset by Schwert in the Sub-Junior final by a 2-and-1 margin of victory.

The Pee Wee division, for 11-year-olds and under, took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, with the field playing nine holes each day in stroke-play format.

Dominic Bozelli of Locust Hill Country Club earned medalist honors in the Boys’ Pee Wee with a 7-over-par score of 79 for the two days. Chris Valle of Cobblestone Creek Country Club was runner-up this year with a score of 81.

The Girls’ Pee Wee competition featured one of the most notable performances of the entire Junior Championships, as 11-year-old Tessa Teachman of Webster Golf Club earned her second consecutive title in the division, posting the low score of all Pee Wee golfers — a 3-over-par 75 — on the strength of a 33 on the back nine.

The Girls Junior and Sub-Junior Championships were held on Tuesday and Wednesday, with each division competing in a match play format for the first time.

The Girls junior division final pitted the winners from each of the Junior and Sub-Junior divisions last year — Maggie Ward of Lake Shore, who won last year’s Girls junior title, and Melissa Agostinelli, winner of last year’s Sub-Junior title.

In the final, Ward held on for her second consecutive RDGA Girls Junior Championship last week, defeating Penfield Country Club’s Melissa Agostinelli (left) in the final match.

The RDGA Girls Pee Wee Championship was won by Webster’s 11-year-old Tessa Teachman (left), who posted the week’s low score among all Pee Wees, a 75. The Pee Wee runner-up was Joelle Sacheli (center); trophies were presented by Ann Guiberson (right), the USGA Women’s Regional Director for the Northeast.
Results from the 2001 RDGA Junior Championships:

Junior Division (ages 15-17)

First Round:
Scott Harris, Jr. (Clifton Sp.) def. Kevin Brockman (Webster) 1-up
Jonathan Umsky (Iroquois) def. Mike Dugan (Oak Hill CC) 2-up
Ben Dobrinsky (Monroe) def. Mike Alexander (Cragie Brae) 1-up
Kevin Kaye (Wild Wood) def. Jordan Zwick (Webster) 2-up
Joel Sandman (Bristol Harbour) def. Zac Fuller (Stafford CC) 2-up
Josh Sandman (Bristol Harbour) def. T.R. Eckler (Blue Heron) 1-up, 19 holes
Mike Colosi (Wild Wood) def. Clay Hilleger (Clifton Sp.) 6-up
Dale Stoker (Bristol Harbour) def. Ryan Brown (Ridgemont) 1-up
Andrew DiBittetto (Ridgemont) def. Craig Burdulis (Cragie Brae) 5-up
Chris Agostinelli (Penfield) def. Chris Ladd (LeRoy C.C.) 5-up
Joe Pagliaro (Centerpointe) def. Blake Gianniny (CC of Roch.) 4-up
Thomas Mayberry (Blue Heron) def. George Haag (Deerfield) 2-up
Mark Leonard (Oak Hill) def. John Gillette (Locust Hill) 3-up
Ryan Minnehan (Lake Shore) def. Greg Stanton (Livingston) 4-up

Brandon Lawatsch (CC of Mendon) def. Cody Clemente (Lake Shore) 2-and-1
Andrew Burke (Lake Shore) def. Conner O'Neil (Oak Hill) 1-up

Second Round:
Umsky def. Harris 2-and-1
Kaye def. Dobrinsky 7-and-5
Josh Sand d. Joel Sand 6-and-5
Colosi def. Stoker 3-and-2
DiBittetto d. Agostin 7-and-6
Mayberry d. Pagliaro 6-and-4
Leonard d. Minnehan 3-and-2
Lawatsch d. Burke 1-up, 20 holes

Quarterfinal Round:
Kaye def. Umsky 2-and-1
Sandman def. Colosi 2-and-1
DiBittetto d. Mayberry 3-and-2
Leonard def. Lawatsch 5-and-3

Semifinal Round:
Kaye def. Sandman 2-and-1
DiBittetto d. Leonard 1-up

Finals:
DiBittetto d. Kaye 5-and-4

Sub-Junior Division (ages 12-14)

First Round:
J.P. Kircher (Monroe) def. Mike Toner (Genesee Valley) 5-and-3
Greg Merz (Webster) def. Don McClintock (Shadows) 4-and-3
Eliot Dolby-Shields (Deerfield) def. Chris Bzdach (Silver Lake) 7-and-6
Adam Yeoman (Deerfield) def. Jonathan Pecor (Webster) 5-and-4
Mike Schwert (Lakeside) def. Pat Connolly (Durand East) 5-and-4
Scott Brugler (CCR) def. Chris Kavanaugh (Oak Hill) 4-and-2
Nathan Minnehan (Lake Shore) def. John Ryan II (Oak Hill) 7-and-5
Brandon Nunn (Oak Hill) def. Sean Pender (Oak Hill) 2-and-1

Second Round:
Kircher def. Merz 2-up
D-Shields d. Yeoman 2-and-1
Schwert def. Brugler 7-and-6
Minnehan d. Nunn 4-and-3

Semifinal Round:
Kircher d. D-Shields 8-and-7
Schwert def. Minnehan 2-and-1

Finals:
Schwert def. Kircher 2-and-1

Pee Wee Division (ages 11-under)

Top-5 Final Results:
1) Dominick Bozelli (Locust Hill) 41-38-79
2) Chris Valle (Cobblestone Creek) 41-40-81
3) Kevin Lewis (Lima G. & C.C.) 42-40-82
4) Max Beurman (Webster GC) 41-41-82
5) Tom Janosky (Cook-Bray) 44-44-88

Girls Sub-Junior Division:

Finals:
Christina Pachuta (Silver Lake) def. Jessica Signorelli (Locust H.) 5-and-4

Girls Pee Wee Division:

Top-5 Final Results:
1) Tessa Teachman (Webster GC) 42-33-75
2) Katie Shill (Oak Hill CC) 66-59-125
3) Joelle Sachell 74-67-141
4) Emily Kelly (Locust Hill) 69-73-142
5) Greta Beurman (Webster) 79-76-155

Girls Junior Division:

First Round:
Maggie Ward (Lake Shore) def. BYE
Laura Seidberg def. Leigh Remizowski (Locust Hill)
Jessica Piurkoski (Webster) def. Julie Labonowski
Melissa Agostinelli (Penfield) def. Brianna Blaney

Second Round:
Ward def. Seidberg
Agostinelli def. Piurkoski

Semifinal Round:
Ward def. Agostinelli 6-and-5