

# Barber dominates the St. Augustine Amateur

With a distinguished player alumni that includes recent Walker Cup contestants, national collegiate champions and PGA professionals, this year's St. Augustine Amateur lineup included players from across the country and 7 foreign countries. Before play started, players, event staff and committee members all joined forces by wearing green ribbons in support of Co-chairman and event founder Jay Jennison's battle with cancer. It was a moving show of support by everyone for Jay's challenge as well as the appreciation of what he has accomplished to develop this great event in just 6 years. It set a mood amongst all the players for "Let's win one for the Gipper". The Gipper and spectators saw some great golf.

Round 1 was typical summer weather with scores going low the first day. Early excitement was provided by Zhong Yang Fu of China who went 6 under after 12 holes. A course record was in the works until he reached #13 where he ran into a train-wreck quadruple bogey. A double bogey followed along with another ended his chase of the course record and sent a message to all the players just how tough the course could be. Kevin Grabeman and Mu Hu tied for the first round lead with 2 under 68's followed by Auburn's Blayne Barber and Wesley Graham with a 69.

Day 2 saw wind conditions increase but it didn't slow down Blayne Barber from taking a whopping 5 stroke lead while shooting a wind blown 3 under 67. Mu Hu remained steady during round 2 but Barber's "go low" day separated him from the rest of the field. Sunday's final round would test Barber's character to not protect his lead by changing his game strategy because there was a gang behind him who all could go low and sneak into the lead.

The only thing that went low on Day 3 were the temperatures going into the 40's with 15MPH+ winds. Players grabbed anything they could find to keep warm. Barber's challenge was to hang on and



Winner Blayne Barber and caddy with a "Catch Me If You Can" look



Bill Jones finished 3<sup>rd</sup> and came close to catching the leader on Sunday



2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher Wesley Graham didn't know about the cold weather

make no major mistakes and to force the suitors to gamble. Conditions couldn't have been more difficult. Contestant Tim O'Neal of St. Augustine, who has played the course since it opened 18 years ago said, "With the deadly combination of high winds, thick Bermuda rough, and difficult hole locations, it was by far the most challenging round of golf that I've played on the St. Johns Golf Club. It was US Open-like conditions with British Open weather.....I need a vacation after today."

Blayne Barber's methodical play was too much for the field to catch him. Although going 4 over on the front nine, no one was making any moves in the difficult condi-

tions. It was a day of survival, not going low. Steady and flawless golf provided Barber with an even par 3 stroke victory over Wesley Graham of Port Orange, FL.

<b>FINAL TOP 10</b>	Blayne Barber	EVEN
	Wesley Graham	+3
	Bill Jones	+4
	Mu Hu	+5
	Namsub Padung	+5
	Hap Kaufold	+7
	Jake Amos	+7
	Eric Downs	+7
	Don Sciotto	+10
	Hojin Kang	+11