



# Golfers struggle at open

SAMMAMISH, Wash. (AP) – The fans following Fred Couples and Tom Watson early Thursday morning were sometimes six- and seven-deep, wedging themselves between tree trunks and ducking under limbs.

Very quietly, and without much attention, Bruce Vaughan was the player taking early control of the U.S. Senior Open.

Taking advantage of cool morning conditions and mostly avoiding the canopy of trees engulfing Sahalee Country Club, Vaughan opened with a 4-under 66 on Thursday to take a two-stroke lead.

The 2008 Senior British Open champion – his only victory on the Champions Tour – made just two bogeys in a steady round, while favorites such as Couples and Watson were far more shaky.

“It’s just the first day. I mean, there is a lot of golf left and a lot of trouble out there for the next three days,” Vaughan said.

Trouble seemed to be the story of the day.

Whether it was the firm greens sending irons from the fairway hopping 2 feet in the air, or the sprawling limbs in the sea of cedar, fir and pine trees gobbling up wayward shots, the U.S. Golf Association made certain Sahalee was no easy hike through the woods.

Only eight players finished under par, just two in the afternoon – Calcavecchia and Bernhard Langer at 69 – after the morning clouds disappeared and the sun made Sahalee even firmer and faster. It was the fewest sub-par scores in the first round since 2003 at Inverness when there were four.

Couples, the hometown favorite playing 20 miles east from where he grew up, nearly saw his round unravel when a blocked tee shot on No. 1 – his 10th hole – plugged in a fern bush at the base of two cedars. After taking an unplayable lie, Couples managed a bogey, but made another two holes later to fall to 3 over.

Then came Couples’ one run. The 50-year-old star, playing in his first U.S. Senior Open, strung together three straight birdies to salvage an even-par round of 70.

“I think the score I shot is phenomenal,” Couples said. “I would have taken 70 before the round started. ... I was very, very mediocre. I don’t know what else to tell you. I can tell you I birdied three holes in a row, three good holes.

While Couples was riding a roller coaster of bogeys and birdies, Vaughan was steady. He birdied the 16th and 18th holes – the 18th a brutal, uphill 465-yard par 4, converted from a par 5.

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## Ready to race



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press  
Tucker Branum, 9-year-old son of Travis and Amy Branum of Colby, got some advice from his dad before the Flat Track Motorcycle Heat Races on Thursday at the Thomas County Fairgrounds.

# Former Eagle shines in tourney

Ryley Haas, a May graduate of Colby High School, took second out of 17 golfers with a score of 141 in the West Junior Sectional Team Championship sponsored by the Kansas Golf Association.

The tournament ran from Monday through Wednesday at Eagle Bend Golf Course in Lawrence. Haas was in the 18-and-older division. Players shot a practice round on Monday, then played 18 holes on Thursday and Friday.

Haas shot a 72 the first day and a 69 the second for a score of 141, according to the Kansas Golf Association website. The winner in his division shot a 137 and third was 145.

There were five age divisions in the tourney: 16-17, 14-15, 12-13 and 11 and under.

Casey Old, director of rules and competition for the association, said players basically had to place in the top three in four one-day events earlier this summer to be invited. One event was held in Garden City on July 1, one in Hays July 5 and two in Dodge City June 3 and 21. He said about 90 golfers from the five age divisions competed in each tournament. The association has been holding the sectional championship for about 25 years, Old said.

He said six sectional championships are played in different parts of Kansas each summer: southeast, northeast, north central, south central, metro and west.

## Rockies lose again

DENVER (AP) – Garrett Jones homered twice and Pittsburgh overcame an early injury to starting pitcher Ross Ohlendorf to hand Colorado a 6-2 defeat. It was the Rockies’ eighth straight loss.

Ohlendorf left after being hit on the right side of his face by Troy Tulowitzki’s line drive in the first inning. He was checked at a hospital and was back at Coors Field before the game ended.

The Pirates are 13-38 on the road. They had not won consecutive road games since mid-May at Chicago.

Colorado last lost eight straight in June 2008. One bright spot: Carlos Gonzalez homered for the Rockies.

Sean Gallagher (1-0), acquired July 7 from San Diego, pitched three hitless innings. Five more relievers finished it out for the Pirates.

Jones drove in three runs with his third career two-homer game and second this season.

Neil Walker singled home two runs in a four-run third.

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- Brenda McCants has worked in healthcare, education, owned businesses and understands the need to create jobs and preserve jobs in Northwest Kansas. Brenda is pro life and wants to preserve the quality of life for the citizens of Northwest Kansas.
- Brenda McCants will support legislation that will put dollars back into the local economy to create jobs. Brenda will vote for legislation to keep our schools and colleges from further and harmful cuts that would have detrimental effects on our students and jobs in Northwest Kansas. Brenda has talked with school superintendents, teachers in the six school districts as well as college administrators and board members and she knows what further cuts would do to our schools.
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