

Web.com qualifying comes to PGA



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With the PGA Tour having done away with its Q School in 2012, there is no bigger qualifier in golf than the Web.com Tour Qualifying Tournament. That six-day event comes to the Champion and Fazio courses at PGA National in Palm Beach Gardens this year from Dec. 11-16.

The more than 150 entrants will have taken a variety of paths in getting there. Some will be coming off disappointing seasons that cost them their cards on the PGA Tour, some failed to finish high enough on the Web.com Tour to keep those cards, and some have worked their way into the field through the early rounds of Web.com qualifying.

The top 50 finishers earn a Web.com Tour card for the following season, with the rest of the field gaining conditional status. At last year's tournament, held at PGA West in La Quinta, Calif., three area players – Ryan Armour and Daniel Berger, both of Jupiter, and Jon Curran of Tequesta – finished in the top 45, earning at least eight Web.com starts.

Of that group, Curran, 27, has made the most of his opportunity; he won a Web.com event in Brazil and ranks fourth on the money list. Berger, 21, ranks 10th, while Armour, 28, is 36th.

Honda Classic Exec-



Old Marsh Director of Golf Tom Dyer (left) and member Chuck McGarrity were the first team to finish the Hundred Mike Hike last week to raise money for charity. CONTRIBUTED

utive Director Ken Kennerly called the qualifier “another feather in the cap for Palm Beach County.

“It’s not PGA Tour Q School, which we’ve had in the past, but it is on the only Q school there is, so it’s significant. What it does for our community is it further identifies South Florida as a tremendous place for competition.”

Kennerly said the renowned “Bear Trap” – holes Nos. 15-17 at the Champion course – should make for a pulsating finish.

“This is going to be the hardest six days of competitive golf in these guys’ careers, the pressure cooker of all pressure cookers. And to add in the difficulty of the ‘Bear Trap,’ which is now recognized as a phenomenal stretch of holes for our Honda Classic, that will make for an even bigger test.

“It’s hard enough on a normal course. Now you’re going to see kids for whom getting a card

is going to depend on how they handle the last four holes. It’s going to be terribly exciting in that sense.”

Dyer goes extra mile(s): Old Marsh Director of Golf Tom Dyer had no idea how long his day would be when he showed up at his job at 4 a.m. Monday to ready the West Palm Beach course for the Hundred Mike Hike.

Starting at first light around 6:30 a.m., Dyer went out and played 129 holes, by far the most of any participant. Fifteen players finished; Tom Rooney Jr. dropped out after 48 holes and his brother, Chris, completed another 27.

Playing with Old Marsh member Chuck McGarrity, Dyer said he had already completed his 100 holes at about 4:30 p.m. when he got word that the Rooneys had dropped out, leaving FPL President Eric Silagy without a partner in the alternate-shot format. So he headed back out and played another 20-plus to

bring him in, finishing at about 7:40.

“It makes it go faster with two guys playing alternate shots,” Dyer said. “One can be hitting his drive and the other is already well down the fairway. It doesn’t shorten the walk, but it does reduce the amount of shots you hit.”

Volunteers drove the clubs of the participants in carts.

With the pace being so high – Dyer played more than seven 18-hole rounds in about 13 hours, covering in excess of 30 miles – Dyer said he encountered one problem he didn’t expect.

“It’s very difficult to hole short putts when your heart rate is so high,” he said. “It’s very different from sports like football or hockey; your heart is normally not racing in golf. I could even feel my heart pounding on some tee shots.”

The goal of the Hike was to raise as much as \$100,000 for Bella’s Angels, which aids families with children with life-threatening illnesses. No total was yet available; donations will be accepted through June 19 at www.hundredholehike/golfers.

Cantlay moving in: Add another PGA Tour member to the ever-expanding roster of pros living in northern Palm Beach County. Patrick Cantlay, whose back issues had kept him off the Tour all year before he finished T-71 at the Byron Nelson Championship in Dallas last week, told PGATour.com afterward he’ll moving to the Bear’s Club in Jupiter so he can get some top competition and get his game back in shape.