

Bellis edges Hoos in CGA Public Links playoff

By ED WERDER
Camera Sports Writer

Nothing seemed to go according to plan.

The Colorado Golf Association's Public Links Championship was a stroke-play tournament with an unplanned match-play finish Sunday.

Also, what was supposed to be a 54-hole tournament at Lake Valley Golf Club was decided in 56.

Those responsible for the changes are Shawn Bellis and Boulder's Eric Hoos who tied Sunday at par-210 after 54 holes of stroke play.

Two holes later, Bellis won the match-play portion, more commonly known as sudden death.

Using a sand wedge, Bellis, who shot a 68 after starting the final round two shots behind Hoos and Rick DeWitt, chipped in from 15 feet for a birdie to beat Hoos on the second hole of a sudden-death playoff.

Bellis, Hoos and Brad Penfold earned trips to the USGA Public Links Championships to be played in Spokane, Wash. July 16-21 for having the lowest scores over the final 36

holes. Hoos, who shot a 70 in the final round, had a 139 total. Bellis and Penfold, who had a 69 Sunday to finish third, shot 140.

For awhile it appeared Bellis would be victim rather than victor.

On the first sudden-death hole, Hoos barely missed a 30-foot birdie putt after hitting a fairway shot short of the pin.

And Bellis seemed in trouble on the second hole as well.

He hit his tee shot far right and into the rough on the No. 2 hole. Hoos was in the fringe to the left.

Then Bellis hit an 8-iron. "A real crappy 8-iron," his caddy, Bob Weaver said.

Bellis had another name for it. "Grounder to third," he yelled as his low drive landed on a knoll short of the green.

Hoos, who plays out of the Flatirons Country Club, hit his second shot on the green, about 35 feet right of the pin.

Bellis pulled the flag and stood over his ball. "Pull a Fuzzy," Weaver said in reference to Fuzzy Zoeller.

He did.

Hoos then left his birdie attempt right of the hole and shook hands with Bellis.

The victory seemed to leave Bellis, who spent parts of seven years on the mini-tour and professional tours in Asia and New Zealand, in good humor.

Nothing, however, seemed funny to DeWitt, who finished at 6-over for the day and 216 for the tournament.

He was tied for the lead with Hoos going to the seventh tee. DeWitt, Hoos and Bellis stopped after the sixth hole because the threesome ahead of them was still in the fairway.

DeWitt put his golf glove and ball in his bag and sat down. When DeWitt reached into his bag for the glove and ball he pulled out the right glove but the wrong ball. Hoos noticed the unintended exchange and DeWitt suffered a two-stroke penalty that put him 4-over. It also cost DeWitt a chance to a playoff with Bellis and Penfold for two berths in the national tournament.

"It's the very first rule on the sheet they hand out," Hoos said.

"I felt empty," said DeWitt, who won a playoff on the first hole over Randy Winn to be an alternate to the national tourney.

Officials of the CGA tournament said DeWitt was the only player of a field of more than 100 who played three days to make such a mistake.

DeWitt, who had a 66 Saturday for the best round of the tournament, had four bogeys, a double bogey and no birdies Sunday and tied for fifth with Longmont's Dan Thompson and Winn.

The next hole was eventful for Bellis, who birdied to tie for the lead with Hoos, who parred.

Hoos and Bellis led the rest of the way, neither able to get more than one stroke ahead during the remaining 10 holes.

Bellis, 29, made the turn in 2-under-33, while Hoos played par on the front.

Bellis had birdies on Nos. 13 and 15 to lead for the first time. That lead lasted until the next hole when Hoos tied.

It stayed tied until the second hole of the playoff.

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Final standings Sunday in the 54-hole Colorado Golf Association Public Links Championship at par-70 Lake Valley Golf Club:

- 210 — Shawn Bellis, Aurora Hills GC (70-72-68); Eric Hoos, Flatirons CC (71-69-70).
- 211 — Brad Penfold, Riverdale GC (71-71-69).
- 215 — Doug Maddox, Meadow Hills GC (70-74-71).
- 216 — Rick DeWitt, Indian Tree GC (74-66-76); Dan Thompson, Twin Peaks GC (69-74-73); Randy Winn, Lake Valley GC (74-71-71).
- 217 — Joe Pinson, Overland Park GC (74-70-73); Stan Vanscoy, Loveland GC (73-72-72).
- 218 — Chuck Melvin, Lake Valley GC (73-70-75); Jerry Kidney, Overland Park GC (75-72-71).
- 219 — Ron Kosmatka, Colorado GC (74-73-72).
- 220 — Larry Wright, Hyland Hills GC (72-74-74); Bob Stallman, Inverness GC (76-71-73); Ron Maxfield, City Park Nine GC (74-75-71); Dave Martindale (77-73-70).
- 221 — Bob Lowry, Overland Park GC (73-74-74).
- 223 — Rick Merino, Overland Park GC (73-76-74); Tom Krause, Flatirons CC (80-71-72); Kevin Bolles, Flatirons CC (76-76-71).
- 224 — Ron Speaker, Highland Hills GC (79-71-74); Steve Murphy, Riverdale GC (74-77-73).
- 225 — Derik Bricton, Applewood GC (73-74-78).
- 226 — Murl Hendrickson, Flatirons CC (77-69-80); Blake Stirling, Wellshire GC (75-76-75).
- 228 — Steve Norman, Valley HI GC (75-77-76); Bill Shakespeare, South Suburban GC (75-77-76).
- 229 — Rob Sessions, Hyland Hills GC (70-78-81); Jim Gwinn, Eisenhower GC (76-76-77); Mike Musgrave, City Park Nine GC (77-75-77).

USGA Publinks Qualifying

Final standings Sunday in the 36-hole USGA Publinks Championship qualifying (three spots available). Round-trip airfare and \$20 per diem paid. Qualifying is final 36 holes at par-70 Lake Valley Golf Club:

- 139 — Eric Hoos (69-70).
- 140 — Shawn Bellis (71-69); Brad Penfold (71-69).
- 142 — Rick DeWitt (66-76); Randy Winn (71-71).
- 143 — Joe Pinson (70-73); Tom Krause (71-72); Jerry Kidney (72-71); Dave Martindale (73-70).
- 144 — Bob Stallman (71-73); Steve Vanscoy (72-72).
- 145 — Doug Maddox (74-71); Ron Speaker (71-74); Chuck Melvin (70-75); Ron Kosmatka (73-72).