

Fujimoto hangs on for title

Arvadan claims junior stroke play

By Todd Phipers

Denver Post Sports Writer

Jeff Fujimoto figuratively wound up with the laurels in winning the Colorado Junior Stroke Play title yesterday, but not until he literally had to deal with other vegetation near the end of the championship.

The 19-year-old Arvada golfer's tee shot on the final hole nestled into a leafy branch under a small tree, but he recovered for a bogey that was enough to stave off Travis Nelson and hard-charging John Segelke for a one-stroke victory in the 54-hole event.

Fujimoto, of Indian Tree Golf Course, finished the day with a par round of 72 and a three-day total of 211, 5-under par, at Willis Case Golf Course.

Segelke, of Cherry Hills Country Club, eagled No. 18 for a 68—212 total that tied him with Nelson, of Riverdale Golf Club, with three golfers another shot back.

Shawn Strohman of Cheyenne, who also shot 212, wasn't eligible for the Colorado title but led the group of three players who earned spots in the USGA Junior Amateur Championship beginning later this month in Milton, Mass.

Also in that trio, based on their scores for the last 36 holes of the tournament, are Tom Richardson of Inverness Golf Club and Cam Osler of Fort Collins, whose par on the first hole of a sudden-death playoff eliminated Mark Troyer of Boulder.

Fujimoto, a two-stroke leader going into the day, blamed nerves for a bogey to start Round 3. But an eagle at the par-5 sixth hole "really boosted my confidence," he said, and he was cruising comfortably until another foliage problem at No. 14 inched him back toward his nearest challengers.

His drive found heavy bushes for an unplayable lie and a bogey "that screwed me up," Fujimoto said, and he had to make gritty saves at both the 15th and 16th holes to maintain an edge with Segelke in at 212 and Nelson finishing up a round of 71 to also reach that figure.

Segelke, who will play for the University of Colorado this fall after transferring from UCLA, began the day five shots back and apparently was out of contention after a double bogey-bogey stretch on Nos. 7 and 8 put him at 2 over for the day.

"I didn't get in trouble. I just had a couple of stupid shots and lost my cool on eight," he said. "I knew I had to finish strong to even have a chance."

The big Cherry Creek High School product did just that, blistering the back nine with four birdies and a closing eagle for a 5-under 30 on his stretch run and a tie for second.

It looked like that might get him into a playoff as Fujimoto punched out from under the tree after his errant drive on the closing hole and put his third shot in a greenside trap.



JUST MISSES: Jeff Fujimoto grimaces as he misses a putt on the 17th green yes-

"I was fairly worried there for a minute," the Arvada West graduate said. "On that bunker shot, I was thinking, 'Just don't blade it.'"

terday in the Colorado Junior Stroke Play tournament at Willis Case Golf Course.

He didn't, blasting out to about 8 feet and two-putting for a bogey that was good enough to wrap up the championship.

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