

The 68th AI Simpson Tournament of Champions

March 4th and 5th 2023

Lake Charles Louisiana

The "AI" is a two day, 16 round tournament on both the Lake Charles Putt-Putt courses. The first four rounds are on course 1, the next four on course 2. The next day it is four rounds on course 2, then finish with four rounds on course 1. Each set of four rounds is a tournament, plus the overall score for the 288 holes is a tournament. Prize money is also given for the low 18-hole score each four round set.

The weather was beautiful both days. The first set in the PPA division was won by Brice Bergesen with a 104, five ahead of Geoff Mosk's 109, and Jody Kimble was third at 111. In the amateur division Charles Tarbell was low with a 112, closely followed by Charles Cox at 113 and Mike Huckaby at 114. The low 18 hole score for the set was Geoff Mosk with a 23 in the PPA and Steven Yancey with a 24 in the amateur division.

Tournament director Cindy Simpson and course owner Greg Simpson provided some delicious pulled pork sandwiches for lunch in between sets. All the players made sure their score cards were 100% accurate, Cindy does not like messy cards. Everyone did good, no scoring penalties were given.

Rainey Statum won the second set in the PPA with a 103 and took the halfway lead at 215, along with Jody Kimble. Second place was a tie at 105 between Don Parker and Jody Kimble. Third overall at the halfway mark was Don Parker and Geoff Mosk at 216. The first set leader Brice Bergesen fell all the way to fifth place at 219. In the amateur division Bryan Gentry shot 105 to beat Charles Tarbell by ten. Charles was at 115 and third place was Mike Huckaby at 120. Bryan Gentry was the halfway leader after 8 rounds at 226, one ahead of Charles Tarbell. Mike Huckaby was third at 234. The low round in the PPA division of the second set was the weekend low round by Jody Kimble, a brilliant 21. Brian Gentry had the low amateur round with a 25. Actually three of his four rounds were 25's!!

The third set was on course two and started right at 9am. Brice Bergesen made up for his poor set on course two the day before by shooting the low set score of the weekend with a 98. Lee Messinger had the second low set score of the weekend with a 101 and Rainey was third with a 104. In the amateur side, Charles Tarbell shot a 113, barely beating Greg Simpson's 114. Third was a tie between Charles Cox and Mike Huckaby at 120. The low score in the PPA was a 23, by Brice Bergesen, and twice by Lee Messinger. Scoring was very tight after 12 rounds, Brice went back into the lead at 317, Rainey was at 319, very steady Don Parker was third at 321, Lee Messinger was at 326, and Geoff Mosk was at 329. The low amateur score in the third set was Greg Simpson with a 25, and the leader after three sets was Charles Tarbell at 340, fourteen shots ahead of Mike Huckaby at 354 and fifteen ahead of Charles Cox at 355. So, going into the final set, Charles Tarbell is in great shape and any of six could win in the PPA division.

In between sets Cindy and Greg Simpson treated all the players to delicious pizza, chips and beverages. They know how to do real southern hospitality.

The fourth PPA set was won by Geoff Mosk with a 103, second went to Don Parker with a 106, edging Jeff Smith at 107. In the amateurs, Bryan Gentry, recovered from a disastrous 9th round (45) that cost him any chance of winning the AI and won the fourth set with a 121. There was a three way tie for second at 122 between Adam Sahmel, Charles Cox and Greg Simpson. The low round in the PPA was Brice Bergesen's final round, a 22, and the low round in the amateur division was also the final round for Adam Sahmel, a 26.

The AI championship went down to the final putt in the PPA. Going into the 16th and final round the leader was Rainey at 400, Don Parker was 401, Geoff Mosk was at 403, Brice dropped to fourth at 405, and Lee was at 408. Before the last round Brice told Pat Simpson that it would take about a 22 to even have a chance, and that is what happened as Brice shot 11-11, and then watched as Don calmly aced 17 and 18 behind him to tie at 427. In the 18 hole playoff Don got a bad break on the fifth hole and made a 3 while Brice aced, and when Don made another 3 on hole 10, Brice had a three shot lead and went on to win his fifth AI championship. Don was looking to win his third and the man, Rainey was gunning for his 9th!

There was not much drama in the amateur division as Charles Tarbell walked the dog, entering the last round with a 14 shot lead over Charles Cox and a 20 shot lead over Mike Huckaby. Charles ended with a 464 total, Charles at 477 and Mike at 483.

This is always one of the premier PPA events of the season, and I am sure everyone will be looking to come back and play in the 69th edition next year.