



Trans-Miss Transcript

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2012 Trans-Mississippi Senior Championship Duncan Sr. Seizes Title on Final Holes





Dear Trans-Miss Supporters,

May was a great month for the Trans-Mississippi Golf Association. A great venue for our senior championship and some exciting news from the golf industry combined to give us a real lift to the spirit!

Just prior to our arrival at La Jolla Country Club, one of the most scenic golf venues in the country, the Trans-Mississippi Golf Association finalized a corporate support arrangement with a golf industry leader – TaylorMade-Adidas Golf! We are pleased and proud to announce that TaylorMade-Adidas, based in Carlsbad, California and one of the most recognized brands in golf worldwide, has agreed to financially support the Trans-Miss through 2014 in a significant way. Players in all three Trans-Miss championships will receive a tee gift from TMAG along with Trans-Miss volunteers and staff wearing the brand. Most exciting is the annual donation by TMAG of \$50,000 to the Trans-Mississippi Turf Scholarship Fund!

We are pleased to include TaylorMade-Adidas Golf as a “presenting supporter” of the Trans-Mississippi Golf Association! Our thanks to Sean Toulon, TaylorMade-Adidas Golf executive vice president, for seeing the value in supporting the Trans-Miss, its programs and our players.

Locals in La Jolla talk about “May gray” but the weather there for our Trans-Mississippi Senior Championship was exceeded in quality only by the

warm greeting and hospitality of our host club, La Jolla Country Club.

Pete Coe, head golf professional, had his staff always at the ready for our 120 players and Dennis Fowler, golf course superintendent, had the golf course in absolutely perfect and pristine condition. The clubhouse staff took great care of us during our four day escape to the “great life” in La Jolla!

It was a great senior championship, played this year over 54 holes of stroke play, where both divisions had local area champions. Prior experience on the putting greens of La Jolla CC was definitely an advantage! Congratulations to Patrick Duncan, Sr. and Michael Mahoney, our 2012 champions. Read all about it in the following pages of the Transcript.

Our next event is the Trans-Mississippi Championship, July 9-12 at Oak Tree National in Edmond, Oklahoma. The 156-player field will be tested by one of the most difficult golf courses in the land. But the field is impressive and I have no doubt that our next champion will become another well-known name in American golf! Follow the action at www.trans-miss.com.

Thanks for your interest and support!

Best regards,

John Pigg
Trans-Miss President



2012 Trans-Mississippi Senior Championship



When the 2012 Trans Senior Championship became surprisingly winnable during the final round at La Jolla Country Club in May, Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.'s Patrick Duncan Sr. was more than happy to step in and pick up his first Trans title.

Trailing by eight shots when the round began, Duncan managed a 1-over 36 on La Jolla's first nine, made two late birdies and his final-day, 1-over 73 was good enough to win the second Trans Senior – and first conducted under the stroke play format – by one shot.

"It was always one of my goals to win this thing... I kind of wanted to do it in the regular division," the 56-year-old landscaping contractor said after a long day that included more twists and turns than a California coastal highway. "It's great...it's really my profession. Out of college I wanted to be in the golf industry. It's just always meant a lot to me and always been something that I wanted to win.

"Unfortunately I never won it as a 'regular' guy. I had my chances. But to win here today is big for me, especially here at home. They have great people here. We've had (three Trans championships) here and I've played in all three of them."

Runaway becomes wild final round

Headed into the final day at La Jolla, Duncan Sr.'s chances of an elusive Trans title appeared slim – as they did for anyone in the championship division not named Kevin Hayes. The nine-month La Jolla Country Club member had been dominate the first two days, turning in

rounds of even-par 72 and 3-under 69 to take a whopping seven-shot lead.

But something unthinkable happened on the way to Hayes' coronation. Four straight bogeys to open his final round, followed by two double bogeys and bogey in his final four holes on the front side left Hayes at 6-over par, tied with Duncan Sr. and trailing La Quinta, Calif.'s Bob Kain by one shot.

"I really didn't (think I had a chance)," said Duncan Sr. of Rancho Santa Fe Golf Club. "I didn't until we turned nine holes. Bob had a one-stroke lead but I really didn't know where anyone stood. I just kept trying to make good shots, good putts, good everything. I really focused on that."

But Duncan Sr. suffered bogeys at Nos. 10 and 11 to fall four behind Kain, who'd recovered from two early bogeys to shoot even-par 35 on the front and added birdie from 18 feet at the 10th.

Duncan Sr. bounced back a key 6-footer for par at No. 13 and his round improved from there.

"(My) putter started feeling good and I never missed a golf shot after that," he said.

At the par-5 15th, he hit a 3-wood from about 230 yards to 15 feet and two-putted for birdie and his first lead of the day. At the par-3 16th, he drilled his tee shot to 12 feet and made the birdie putt for a three-shot margin.

"I hit a great, great 5 rescue on 16...and made that," he said. "I got a really good break on 17. I hit in the trees and had an open shot and two-putted that (for par). Then I hit probably my best shot of the tournament at 18. I hit an 8-iron in there about 5 feet."

Duncan Sr. didn't make the birdie putt at the last but his 1-over 73 gave him a 6-over 222 and that was good

enough to hold off a fast-charging Kemp Richardson of Laguna Niguel, Calif. Richardson, a two-time U.S. Senior Amateur champion, had rebounded from a difficult four-putt bogey at the par-5 eighth with birdies on his final three holes for his second 75 in as many days.

"We played awful then I back-tapped one on (No. 8) that I shouldn't have done, but it was there and I did it and I missed it so that was pretty foolish. I guess I'm not old enough to learn yet," lamented the 66-year-old Richardson, an investment advisor playing out of El Niguel Country Club "Then I played a little bit better and I finished strong. I just didn't hit the ball very good today or putt very well. I guess the ending was a little too little, a little too late."

The Quarry Golf Club's Kain, whose championship hopes got derailed when he suffered a double bogey at the par-4 12th after a recovery shot from under a tree found the ice plants, carded his second 76 of the championship in the final round. Playing in his first Trans event, his 225 total tied him for third with Scottsdale, Ariz.'s Tom Phillips (75-77-73).

"Today I played a great front side...I made three birdies and I was leading," said the 63-year-old Kain, who also plays at The Country Club in Cleveland. "Then I kind of limped in a little bit. I pulled a drive on 12 and ended up underneath a tree, right on a root. I was kind of afraid to hurt myself...I flipped it out. It hits a tree and ends up going in the ice plant. I was just trying to get a bogey and I make double."

Hayes, a real estate investor, still had a chance to win the event even after his front-nine 44. He stood even with Kain at 6-over when the latter found his trouble at No. 12.

But Hayes saw his title hopes fade with bogeys at Nos. 13 and 14, a triple on 15 and another bogey at the 16th. His final-round 87 put him in a four-way tie for 10th place at 228.

"I came out here today expecting to stay near par and keep the field away from me...and I let them back in early. Right off the first hole I hit a tee shot that I thought was going to be okay and I get an unplayable lie," said Hayes, 56.

After watching his big lead slip away, then still having a chance to claim the title before another rough patch snuffed out those hopes, Hayes plans to build on what became a difficult learning experience – even for a senior player. He took it all with class, and even a little humor...

"I still feel like my best golf is ahead of me," he said.

"I don't feel like my skills have diminished much since my 'theoretical' prime. To a certain degree, days like today make you better, and hopefully make you smarter. If anybody asks why I shot an 87 today it's because I birdied No. 10."

La Jolla player is super senior

Even a triple bogey in the final round couldn't keep La Jolla Country Club's Michael Mahoney out of the winner's circle in the super senior division at the 2012 Trans Senior Championship. The 70-year-old Mahoney, also a member at Desert Mountain and Whispering Rock in Scottsdale where he now resides, had been cruising along at the top of the leader board for most of the event when





Michael Mahoney



Chris Maletis



Steven Hakes



Kevin Hayes



Bob Kain



*Michael Cavanaugh
Director & Co-host*

he made a 6 on the par-3 16th hole, his sixth of the day as the super seniors began their round at No. 11.

"I was even par for the day and I took a triple bogey," said Mahoney, who won a Trans Senior Four-Ball title with partner Al Sharpe at Desert Forest Golf Club in 2006. "I hit a sand shot, tried to be cute and didn't get it out. (I) hit the next one on the green and three-putted for a six. That diminished the lead substantially."

Mahoney parred the par-5 17th, only to record bogeys at Nos. 18, 1 and 2. But he said he "held it together" despite being 6-over for the round with a triple bogey. He parred the remainder of the front nine and turned in a final-round 79 to win another Trans event, this one by three shots.

"It's absolutely wonderful. I haven't won a tournament in a long time so it was very nice to do this," Mahoney said. "Now that I'm in the super senior category at 70, it's a lot of fun to play with my old buddies. I'm getting to be an old guy in the super seniors..."

Mahoney, retired after owning a stairway lift manufacturing business, got off to a fast start in the 2012 championship birdying four holes on La Jolla's front side in his first round. He added a birdie on the back and his 1-under 71 was the only round in either division in red figures. "The putting was good that day. I think I only had 28 putts for 71," Mahoney recalled. "That was nice."

In round two, Mahoney shot 75. But his lead went from three shots over Mountain City, Texas's Larry Walsh to five over Dallas's James Martin by day's end.

"The second day was one double bogey, three birdies and a lot of ups and downs...but I held it together and was pleased with the 75," Mahoney said. "I felt pretty good. I was five up going into today. I was playing with the second-place (player) and the two guys that were seven back. So I had a little cushion going into it."

"I was just trying to play down the middle and on the green, which was the strategy I employed the first two

days...make sure the ball was in the fairway so I could hit a second shot on the green and hopefully two putt or one putt."

Two players shared second place in the division, including Danville, Calif.'s Bob Rowland (77-80-71) and Oceanside, Calif.'s Jim Myers (79-74-75). Fort Worth, Texas's Denny Alexander (77-76-77) was fourth, a shot ahead of Martin (79-72-80) and two ahead of Walsh (74-80-78).

La Jolla provides stiff test

Bright sunshine and relatively calm conditions greeted Trans Senior competitors as they opened play in the 2012 Championship. But scores remained high. In the championship division, only one player matched par in the first round and no one was in red figures.

After consulting with La Jolla Head Professional Pete Coe, and having the length of his clubs adjusted, Hayes began striking the ball better. With about 30 rounds on his new home course under his belt, he shot an even-par 72 the first afternoon and stood atop the leader board.

"It was pretty uneventful. I played solid. I hit 15 greens and had 32 putts," he recalled. "That kind of tells you the story. I was hitting my irons very accurately and wasn't making very many putts. But it was good enough."

In the second round, Hayes says he cut his putts down to 27 for the round and that enabled him to shoot 3-under 69. The score was one of only two sub-par rounds during the entire competition in the championship division (Colorado Springs, Colo.'s David Delich had a 70 in the second round).

"A little better day...I was just relatively solid," Hays said. "I made a couple long putts and that made the difference. I should certainly know the course a little bit better than most of the guys here. I had an advantage. The greens here are tricky and sometimes deceptive in terms of uphill and downhill. Some of the breaks that look subtle are actually more severe than they look."

Duncan Sr. said he "hung in there" during the first day. His five, birdies, four bogeys and a double got him to the house in 1-over 73.

"I knew something around par was going to be good," said Duncan Sr., who lost to Ed Gibstein in the Trans finals at The Farms Golf Club in Rancho Santa Fe in 1995 and was medalist at Denver's Cherry Hills in 1998.

In his early-morning round of day two, he suffered bogeys at Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 "right out of the hopper" to go four-over through six holes. But he steadied himself and managed a 76 on the day.

"I hung in there...I knew I was hitting it good," he said. "My son, Buddy, was caddying for me and he said 'Just be patient.' I got it to 3-over coming into 18 and bogeyed 18 to shoot 76 and 149."

Kain, who worked for IMG in the sports management business for 31 years and now serves as a creative arts advisor for an L.A. advertising firm, said he was striking the ball well his first two trips around La Jolla CC.

"I had trouble putting, but was hitting a lot of fairways and greens...didn't make many birdies but I just played pretty solid tee to green," he said. "And the scores were high because it's a hard course and the wind and elevation. So I hung in."

Richardson, who won U.S. Senior Am titles in 2001 and 2003, was playing in his first Trans Senior. He'd finished runner-up in the Four-Ball on a couple occasions.

"I played pretty good...I just goofed up a couple times the first two days," admitted Richardson. "I had a few boo boos...played about my age, 66. The greens are difficult. You have to get the ball on the right place on the greens. You can't be above (the hole)."

Houston's Mohr has fifth ace up his sleeve

La Jolla's tricky greens proved quite a challenge for Trans Senior Championship competitors. But Houston's Wes Mohr found a way to avoid those difficulties at the par-3 16th hole in the final round.

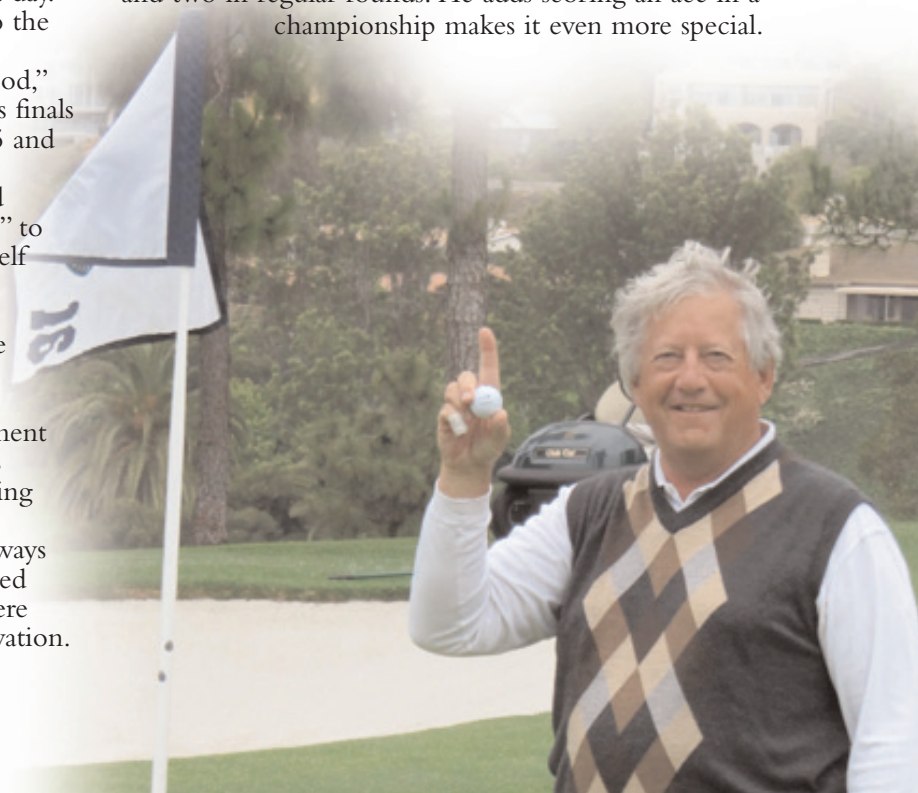
The 10-time club champion at Champion's Golf Club in Houston recorded his fifth career hole-in-one.

"...it was uphill, we had it at 172 (yards), something like that," said Mohr, 65 and playing in the super senior division at La Jolla. "It was uphill, a little bit into the wind and I hit a rescue 4-iron. It had a little hook and was right on the target I was aiming at. It was right on line and I said I needed a 'one' after a couple of bad holes."

But Mohr and his three playing companions didn't see the ball go in the hole.

"Sure enough, when we got up there, there was one ball about 6 feet and then two pitch marks and then two balls right and left of the front part of the green," he recalls. "...so I thought mine probably went over. I thought I'm going to have to get it up and down and as I walked to the back part of the green I looked in the hole and there it was. So I put my arms and up and I said 'It's in the hole!' and jumped up and down. It was good."

Mohr, who'd made bogey and par at the hole in the first two rounds, says his five career aces include one at Champion's, a couple in San Diego tournaments and two in regular rounds. He adds scoring an ace in a championship makes it even more special.





Fowler builds team at La Jolla CC

Trans seniors greeted with perfect playing conditions

The Trans-Mississippi Golf Association has great tradition and making frequent trips to San Diego for its championships has become a key part of that. For the third time since 1989, the Trans called on highly regarded La Jolla Country Club for one of its events as the second Senior Championship was contested in May.

That rich history was not lost on La Jolla Superintendent Dennis Fowler as he and staff prepared the La Jolla track to host a tournament for an organization that benefits his profession through its turf scholarship program.

"I think it's a great tradition," the 55-year-old Fowler says of his club's tie to the Trans. "I think anything that we can do as superintendents and turfgrass growers to pay back to our industry and golf in general... I think it's wonderful that the club was able to host it."

Afternoon sun

Fowler, a veteran of more than 30 years in the business, says he thinks building a maintenance staff is sort of like building a winning sports team – "you build from the clubhouse down....but you can't build a championship team on one key player." At La Jolla, he enjoys a staff that numbers 27 full-time employees, including two dedicated to the clubhouse, two mechanics, a first assistant and a second assistant. The staff maintains all areas of the 95-acre property.

Storied La Jolla Country Club, with its tree-lined holes and incredible vistas overlooking the Pacific, utilizes over-seeded Bermuda on tee tops, kikuyu grass in fairways, a mix of rye/kikuyu in the rough and Poa annua greens. The course has 72 bunkers and no water hazards.

Fowler says his coastal climate can be good and bad for growing turfgrass.

"We don't get the big hot days...we do have some days in August that are humid," he says. "I think that makes it easier to work in and a little bit nicer. We have lots of air flow and it's hard to beat the view. I think it's a great climate for what they have here which is kikuyu grass. It does well coastal."

Fowler says the challenges at La Jolla come with what's under the turf.

"...the ground that's underneath it is mainly clay and cobble," he says. "So it's pretty hard to get infiltration as far as water and it's tough to aerify it; it's tough to dig. It's a real tight soil that doesn't percolate well. It's hard to irrigate. I think the biggest challenge here is irrigation because of the trees and the soil types."

Since the course is kept in "championship form" throughout the year, little special work had to be done to prepare it for the Trans Senior Championship. Fowler says the green speeds may have been increased slightly.

"...just a smidgeon...they'll be quicker tomorrow," Fowler said as he awaited the San Diego sun's appearance to aide in his green speed. "A little bit more than regular play. But nothing really...we just try to stay out of their way. We just rolled (greens) a little more. We started rolling them earlier and tried to dry them down and firm them up. But (cloudy) days like today don't help."

Working way up

Fowler, who first worked on a golf course in 1979 and spent about 10 years at Mission Valley's Stardust (now Riverwalk Golf Club), moved with the superintendent to San Diego Country Club. He was the assistant there for 10 years, before taking the superintendent position at Country Club of Rancho Bernardo.

He spent about nine years at Rancho Bernardo when the chance to take over at La Jolla Country Club was offered four years ago.

"I kind of started at the bottom and worked my way up," he says. "During that time period I put myself through a two-year turf degree program."

Fowler admits his real education came on the course. "...working for a superintendent who would give you enough responsibility to run the course under his direction (and) guidance," Fowler says. "Starting you off in charge of the crew and then letting you make more and more decisions as time went on and as he felt more confident in your decision making."

In 2012 though, Fowler says he values the importance of education to his profession and its future. He even received scholarship support from his local GCSA chapter at one time.



"I think it's very important and I've been fortunate enough to have guys work under me. (At Rancho Bernardo) I had an intern there who left and became an assistant superintendent," Fowler recalls. "I had a guy here that was the second assistant who went on to become a superintendent. So I think education is important."

But Fowler stresses the importance of learning on the job and mentoring the next generation of superintendents.

"...I think it's important for superintendents to remember we were all there once," he says. "I was fortunate enough to work for a guy who was confident enough in himself to not be threatened by someone working underneath him who was learning more and more."

la jolla

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Officers and Directors for 2012

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Information

Trans-Miss Transcript is a publication of the Trans-Mississippi Golf Association.

Founded in 1901, TMGA is one of the oldest and most prestigious golf organizations in the United States. Through its Turf Scholarship Program, the association perpetuates the training of qualified young people to become responsible for any golf facility's greatest physical asset - the course itself.

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2013 Trans-Miss Senior Championship
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