



Smitty Smith and Mike Greenfeld Claim 2017 Wilshire Invitational

Smitty Smith and his partner Mike Greenfeld from El Caballero captured the 2017 Wilshire Invitational by the narrowest of margins as Smitty defeated Dirk Gaudet in a chip-off by one inch to claim the title. The duo faced one another as both teams made net pars on number eighteen to force the chip off from the tenth tee down to the back right pin on number eighteen. Smitty would hit first and after a number of practice swings he hit a beautiful lob that landed just past the fringe and trickled down toward the pin and kept rolling and rolling until it came to rest just on the fringe about 15 feet away. Gaudet hit next and hit a nearly identical shot that seemed to check up when it first landed but it did the same thing and kept rolling and rolling and when it came to rest it was a mere inch further away than Smitty's ball which sealed the victory for he and his partner Mike Greenfeld. The Derby kicked off with the ten flight winner's and two wild card teams. The first wild card was the team with the most points that did not win their flight over the whole field, Steve Cohen and partner Sidney Allen. The second wild card bid, Bob DiMeo and Rolo Iglesias, was the team that had the most points in the last match of all teams in the field. The teams went out in two waves of six teams and once they all played number ten, five of the twelve teams were eliminated including Bruce Taylor and Steve Solomon, Michael Kropf and partner John Skubic, Bob DiMeo and Rollo Iglesias, Steve Cohen and team mate Sidney Allen and JB Roberts and partner Joe De Marco whose bunker shot on number ten sailed over the green and got lost in the tree behind the green. Seven teams moved on to number eleven where three teams were scheduled to be eliminated. Derek Haas and partner Jeff Lowell spent a little too much time in the right bunker and were sent packing. John Shipka and partner Mike Rooney made a net 3 which advanced them. Smitty and Greenfeld advanced with a net par and Frank Moser and partner Barry Pressman moved on with a net bogey leaving three teams to chip off for the last spot. The teams of Zach Kuperman-Kevin Goldfein, Dirk Gaudet-Greg Lumsden and Skip Irwin and partner Dana Saraceno would chip off from about 50 yards on number 11 with Kuperman, Lumsden and Irwin the designated chippers. Kuperman hit first and struck an uncharacteristic pitch shot and left it short in the front bunker. Lumsden then hit a solid pitch to about 12 feet putting the heat on Irwin. Irwin hit a nice shot into the green but it failed to check and rolled out to 15 feet meaning Gaudet and Lumsden would move on to number eighteen. Mike Rooney led the parade off eighteen and didn't hit his best shot as it barely cleared the barranca in front of the forward tee. Mike Greenfeld hit a nice shot about 215 form the green. Barry Pressman hit a nice tee shot but it kicked dead right and found the barranca. Greg Lumsden cut it a little too close down the right side and it found the barranca but the ball was sitting up. Shpka then chose to go down the seventeenth fairway and his shot left the team about 195 yards away. Moser took a penalty shot and hit his shot down the left about 170 away. Smitty went next and hit it about 50 yards short of the green. Gaudet hit a great shot out of the barranca and left Lumsden about 50 yards. Rooney hit an aggressive third shot that finished right of the barranca pin high on eighteen about 15 yards away. Moser and Pressman took themselves out of the picture with a chip out a ball in the water and an eventual nine. Greenfeld went next and he hit a hosel rocket that darted into the barranca and took a very fortunate kick out of the barranca to about 10 feet over the green. Lumsden then played a solid pitch that checked up about 12 feet away from the pin. Shipka

went next and hit a great flop shot that unfortunately hit the collar and released about 20 feet away. Rooney went next and hit a nice putt but it slid by about 10 feet away where Shipka calmly knocked it in for a net 5. Smitty was next and from behind the green he hit a soft little chip shot that skirted the edge and finished 5 feet away. Gaudet was next and his twelve footer looked like it had a chance but it slid by about 4 feet away. Greenfeld rolled his 5 footer and looked like Jordan Spieth as it hit dead center with nice pace. Lumsden then made the four footer setting up the chip off between Smitty and Gaudet. With the field reduced to 60 teams this year the pace of play was much more bearable and the field was treated to some of the best conditions ever for the Invitational. Chef Daniel and his team did a fantastic job with all the food and beverage and a number of participants said it was their best experience ever for the Wilshire Invitational. The flight winners included Zach Kuperman and Kevin Goldfein from Brentwood ruling the Pine Valley flight with a score of 29.5 points. Gaudet and Lumsden were tops in the Muirfield Village flight with 32.5 points, and Skip Irwin and Dave Saraceno from Annandale tied for the most points of any flight winners with 33 points. Oakmont flight winners Bruce Taylor and Steven Solomon from Palos Verdes went into a playoff (the third tie-breaker) with Steve Cohen and Sidney Allen from the Country Club of Jackson to decide their flight as they each finished with 31 points and tied their 9-hole match. John Shipka and Michael Rooney from Butler National finished with 33 points to win the Augusta National flight. Smitty Smith and Mike Greenfeld won the Merion flight as they beat Ric Flores and Mike Lebbin head to head in the last match to decide their flight as they both finished with 28.5 points overall. Michael Kropf and partner John Skubic from Redlands Country Club won the Pebble Beach flight with 29.5 points. Derek Haas and his team mate Jeff Lowell from Farmington Country Club prevailed in the Olympic Club flight with a score of 28 to edge Kent Keller and Steve Klein of Oakmont by one point. Winged Foot flight winners JB Roberts and partner Joe DeMarco of Wakonda Club won a tie-breaker over Alan Nishimura and partner Steve Johnson as they both finished with 28.5 points but the Roberts team prevailed in the head to head battle. Seminole Flight winners, Frank Moser and Barry Pressman finished with 29.5 points to win their flight and made a strong showing in the derby. Congratulations to all the participants, the flight winners and to the 2017 Wilshire Invitational Champions, Smitty Smith and Mike Greenfeld!