

Third Time's the Charm – Dailey Wins 9th-Annual ECI



DEVENS, Mass. – On a day where our country celebrated the death of September 11 mastermind Osama bin Laden, the ECI celebrated its 9th-annual tournament champion.

John Dailey carded a 4-over par 76 en route to his third title in four years and tied Nick Turczak for the most championships won in the history of the tournament. Dailey outlasted Ken Tessier (78) down the stretch as he finished in second place alone.

“I’m thrilled to win here again at Red Tail. I put a lot of time into my game last week to make sure I was ready to go for today,” said Dailey in his championship press conference after the round. “I played fairly relaxed golf out there, and made some clutch putts down the stretch to keep me at the top of the leaderboard.”

Dailey birdied the 2nd hole and was 1-under par standing on the ninth tee when he hit an errant tee shot into the right side hazard costing him a double bogey. He made the turn at 1-over par and was tied with Brian Gill. He was also one shot ahead of Tessier, and two shots ahead of Turczak and ECI rookie Jerry Miceli. Tim Byram birdied the first hole to jump out to an early lead, but faded after a front nine 46 dropped him to the second page of the leaderboard. Carl Bean was also even par through six holes, but a quadruple bogey eight on the long par-4 seventh doomed any chances of Bean pulling off the Cinderella run. While Dailey and Tessier got off to good starts on the closing nine holes, defending champion Brian Gill struggled on the shaky Red Tail greens with two three putts. He also made a double bogey on the par-4, 13th-hole en route to an 81.

“I struggled with the putter all day long,” said Gill, the 2004 and 2010 champion. “You just can’t win that way.”

Miceli and Turczak also found some issues on the greens coming in, and both closed with 40 and rounds of 79. Meanwhile, Tessier looked unflappable and stayed only one behind Dailey until he got to the 16th hole. With Dailey one shot ahead, Tessier got aggressive and took his approach shot at the flagstick, only to come up short in the waste area. After a chilly dip followed by a skull over the green, Tessier penciled in a triple bogey and fell four shots behind Dailey which ultimately halted his championship run in a heartbeat

“That hole has plagued me over the years,” said a distraught Tessier after his round. “I’ve been close so many times now. I just need to stay positive and hope something breaks my way in the future.”

After Dailey pared the 17th-hole, and three-putt bogeyed the 18th hole, he finished with 76, good enough to win the title. “Ken really struck the ball well today. I tried to stay in the moment, and he had just one bad hole that cost him. He will be back again next year in contention, I’m sure!”

With that being said, another ECI has now come and gone, and for some, the elusive title still lingers over their heads. Matt Barnes struggled with a round of 87 and returned to New London, Conn. without a title in his archives. Justin McLearn shot 83 while Marc Zirolli, who desperately wants to get into contention in this championship, struggled with a 92, though Zirolli did start 4-over through six holes.

Derek Sharron played one of his best rounds in the Endicott Invitational with a round of 88, along with Tim Byram who shot the same score. With another ECI in the books, tournament officials are talking about a change of location for the 10th anniversary next year. According to reports, Hilton Head, South Carolina could be the destination for a two-day championship marked by both a team and individual event during the same weekend in 2012. Tickets go on sale at www.ecigolf.com starting next February.

~Final Leaderboard~

1. - John Dailey - 76
2. - Ken Tessier - 78
3. - Jerry Miceli - 79
Nick Turczak - 79
5. - Brian Gill, PGA - 81
6. - Justin McLearn - 83
7. - Matt Barnes - 87
8. - Derek Sharron - 88
Tim Byram - 88
10. - Carl Bean - 89
11. - Alex Lawner - 91
Matt Gajda - 91
13. - Marc Zirolli - 92
14. - Jeff Barnhart - 95
Kenny Dargon - 95
16. - Craig Roderick - 98
17. - Pete Woodward - WD

