

Sauer Leads Hillcrest Pro-Am After Two Days

BY ROYAL MCGREGOR
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Jon Sauer gladly took his tee time in the morning, which helped him finish the second day of the 37th annual Hillcrest Invitational Pro-Am in first place.

Sauer took command of Friday's action, shooting another 66. The pro shot a 66 in Thursday's opening round and he sits atop the leaderboard with a two-day score of 132.

Neil Johnson was in the same boat as Sauer after the first round, but dropped a shot back Friday with a 67.

"I just wanted to come in today and be patient," Johnson said. "Being in the afternoon session there are going to be some bumpy greens and a little bit of different things to deal with around two or three in the afternoon rather than eight in the morning."

"I needed to hit good shots and whatever came out of it came out of it," he added. "The first 15 holes I played today were perfect; about all I can ask for playing late in the day."

Sauer was just finishing up his second round when Johnson was teeing off on his first hole and Johnson didn't feel any pressure coming into the day.

"I figured a couple of the guys that shot a 66 on Thursday were going to be able to shooting the same coming into the morning session," Johnson said. "I wasn't really interested in what the other people shot. It is only day two of four."

"If somebody would have went out and shot a 60 today, it would

have been great to see," he added. "I wouldn't feel like I needed to go out and shot a 60 just because there are plenty of holes to catch up on."

Johnson is hoping to continue his good play throughout the next two days of competition and hopefully come into Sunday's final round contending for the lead.

"I'm going to keep doing what I have been doing these past two days," Johnson said. "Trying to keep the ball in the fairway and also trying to keep the ball below the pin."

"I wouldn't say that I have been the course simple, but I have been playing it smart," he added. "Those are really the only two ways to play this course being in the fairway and playing the ball below the pin."

Tim Ailes was looking to repeat his 66 from the first day, but he didn't find the same success shooting three under on Friday. Ailes is now tied for fourth place with a two day total of 135.

"I knew the greens coming into this afternoon were going to be firm," Ailes said. "I just needed to stay patient and attack when I could and make par when I couldn't attack."

Ailes is looking to continue this tournament by attacking the course and be at the top when it is all said and done.

"Even though there are only a couple par five's those are holes that I need to attack," Ailes said. "The key holes to attack on this course are one through five and if you can play those holes three or four under, you will be ahead in the game."

Wade Pettitt was another

member of the golfers tied for first after the first day and he started out his afternoon with a birdie but didn't finish exactly like he had hoped for shooting a 73. He is now tied for 15th with a 139.

"On Thursday I was one over through two and (Friday) I was even par," Pettitt said. "Then after nine holes I was three over par and I managed to get that back down to even par after the 16th hole."

"Getting back to even par just shows I am able to battle back," he added. "I get to tee off in the morning today (Saturday) and the morning tee times seem to have some of the lower scores throughout this weekend so far."

The short game of Pettitt is what kept in the hunt of first place and he attributes that to his two older brothers, one of whom — Ben Pettitt — had won the Hillcrest Invitational back in 2006.

"When I was growing up, I was never the longest hitter, I grew up working on my short game," Pettitt said. "It is the most crucial part of the game, it saves on a bunch of strokes."

"I wasn't hitting the ball of the tee like I had hoped, but I saved myself with my short game," he added.

Pettitt is hoping to take some course pointers from his caddie Yankton golf standout Jace Guthmiller.

"I met Jace last year as he was caddying for someone else," Pettitt said. "I came to Hillcrest a couple days before the tournament started and wanted to see if Jace would caddie for me."

"It is good to have the knowl-



Yankton's Chuck Olsen chips on to the No. 2 green during his round Friday afternoon at the Hillcrest Pro-Am, held at Hillcrest Golf & Country Club.

edge of Jace there and have him give me a second opinion," he added.

Zenon Brown played well on his second day shooting a 68, which helped him settle into third place with a two day total of 134, while Ian Hessels had another strong day dropping down for a

tied for four place with a 135. Hessels is the defending champ and he doesn't look like he is going to back down anytime soon shooting a 69 on the second day.

In the amateur division the two day net total leading the pack is Yankton's Dennis Schieffer with two day total of 136 and under.

Taking a close second is three golfers, who ended their second day with a two day total of 137; Val Madia of Omaha, Neb., Sean Zimmerman of Crofton, Neb. and John Ehret of Yankton.

The third day of the Pro-Am tees off at 7 a.m. today (Saturday) at Hillcrest Golf & Country Club.

Games At UNL, Marquette, Wisc. Highlight USD Men's Schedule

VERMILLION — The University of South Dakota men's basketball team begins its Great West Conference title defense with a solid non-conference slate and 14 home games during the 2010-11 schedule, which was released Friday.

The Coyotes finished 22-10 last season to win the GWC regular season and tournament and earn a berth in the Collegiansider.com Postseason Tournament.

"This is the most difficult schedule we have had since our move to NCAA Division I," head coach Dave Boots said in the release. "It will provide our fans with some good home games and some very difficult road games. It should be a schedule that will test a very young team."

USD's non-conference schedule includes road games at Nebraska (Nov. 12), Marquette (Nov. 20), Wisconsin (Dec. 4) and Loyola Marymount (Dec. 11).

USD will compete in the Illinois State Thanksgiving Classic on Nov. 26-28, and opens the tournament against the host Redbirds on the first day. USD also faces Jacksonville State on Nov. 27 and Louisiana-Monroe on Nov. 28 at the event.

South Dakota's home schedule kicks into high gear on Dec. 1 when the Mountain West's Wyoming comes to Vermillion.

The Coyotes open the GWC season at long-time rival North Dakota on Jan. 15, before beginning a five-game homestand against Houston Baptist on Jan. 27.

STAGS

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couple runs, and were going to score a couple more."

The Stags wasted a bases-loaded opportunity in the fourth, but bounced back with a run in the fifth. Quall reached on an error. Benson followed with a walk, and Tyler Luoma notched an infield single to stretch the Elk Point lead to 5-0.

Elk Point scored its final two runs in the sixth inning, scoring on a Strassburg single and a Quall double.

Luoma finished with three hits for Elk Point. Quall doubled and singled. Strassburg, Dustin Little and Nate Hinseth also had two hits each.

"Coming into the game, I expected we'd start slow because we're such a young team," said Hinseth, the Stags' manager. "These guys impressed the hell out of me."

Kappes and Ryan Wagner had the lone hits for Britton, which only once had a runner get past first base.

"You have to score runs to win at state," said a frustrated Britton manager Troy Knecht. "This is my third year with the team, and it's been the same result. We score runs all year, then get down here and we don't."

Bruinsma walked just two and never allowed more than one baserunner in an inning.

"I expected Bo to pitch well," Hinseth said of the young right-hander. "I didn't expect a complete game shutout."

With the victory, Elk Point now advances to face Crofton on Tuesday at 6 p.m.

"If we keep playing (like we did today) the rest of the tournament, we're going to be competitive," Hinseth said. "But we can't look by those teams. We have to be ready to play."



Elk Point center fielder Dustin Little runs down a fly ball near the deepest part of Sioux Falls Stadium for the final out of the first inning during the Stags' opening round game with Britton Friday in Sioux Falls.

Irene Looks To Ride Surge In Tourney Opener Sunday

BY JEREMY HOECK
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After a slow start to their season, the Irene Cardinals closed strong and earned yet another trip to state.

Now, the key is to continue that momentum.

Irene will face the Platte Killer Tomatoes on Sunday at 11 a.m. in the opening round of the South Dakota State Class B Amateur Baseball Tournament in Sioux Falls.

The Cardinals (10-6) earned one of four state berths out of the South Central League, and despite a 4-4 start to the regular season, the end goal remained intact.

"We didn't get off to the greatest start, but once we got some more games in, we kind of took off," manager Kendall Johnke said. "We could've done better than 10-6, but even in our losses, we were in most of those games."

One of the main reasons Irene has dropped its share of close games this season has been its defense, according to Johnke.

"Our biggest downfall has been the defense; it's let us down a few too many times," he said. "Even in districts, we were up big on Crofton, but gave up a bunch of unearned runs."

"You can't do that at state."

A balanced offense has helped neutralize that downfall, as the Cardinals boast 12 players with a batting average over .300, including six over the .400 mark.

Newcomer Ben Krush leads the team in hitting at .514, while Mike King (.514), Henry Hauger (.500), Simon Healy (.487), Garrett Gross

(.447) and Wes Robertson (.444), Joe Sees (.375), Matt Rempp (.361), George Sees (.359) and Adam Rempp (.333) have all contributed to the offense.

"Our lineup has been pretty solid again this year," Johnke said. "Our one through eight batters can hit us a bomb at any time. One mistake to those guys and they can hurt you. I think that shows our depth."

Healy leads the team in homers and another power hitter, Jeremy Rempp, is batting .303.

On the mound, Irene has six guys that have recorded a win this season. Joe Sees (3-0), Matt Sees (3-1), Matt Rempp (2-1), Healy (2-3), King (1-1) and Adam Rempp (1-1) have all come up strong at times, Johnke said.

"We've had a variation of different guys; there's no real clear-cut ace," he said. "We have had some guys have other things going on at times, so it's been nice having a bunch of guys we can rely on."

Needing another infielder, Irene added Menno's Josh Berndt as a pickup player for the tournament. Earlier this season, Berndt drove in 10 runs in a game against the Cardinals, and in three games against Irene, Berndt has hit five homers.

Sunday's first round opponent, Platte, comes in with a 9-8 record. Johnke said the thing he's heard most frequently about the Killer Tomatoes is that they're "young and fast."

"Hopefully, we can come out and play well," he said. "We know some good teams don't play well right away and go home. That's not what we want to happen."

Renner-Newcastle Makes State Tourney Debut Sunday

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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When most teams talk about picking up young players, they are talking about kids fresh out of the American Legion programs. When Renner-Newcastle does, those "kids" are in their early 40s.

But Renner-Newcastle, which plays in the State Line League, took care of some younger teams to earn their way to state.

Renner-Newcastle makes its debut in the 2010 South Dakota State Amateur Baseball Tournament Sunday, facing Miller-Wessington.

The Renner-Newcastle team, which plays its home games in Renner, is a squad put together by S.D. Amateur Baseball Hall of Famer Dave Mydland. The team plays doubleheaders on Sundays during the season, allowing the players to come together from across the region.

"Everyone's got kids and many of us coach," Mydland noted. "It fits in with the State Line League schedule."

Much of that team will comprise the squad that goes to Florida this winter and represents South Dakota in the 48-Over World Series.

"Most are in their 40s, eight to 10 are in their mid 50s," Mydland said. "It keeps them in shape, keeps them rolling."

"There's just something about that horsehide. We just don't want to give it up."

Besides Mydland, who is batting .342, Renner-Newcastle boasts another current Hall of Famer in Sherm Cutler. The team has picked up a couple of "younger" players this season, including Pedro Johnson (.347) and Pat Schmidt (.462), and a couple with ties to northeast Nebraska, Don Hagge (.301) and Scott Miller (.361).

"There are a lot of old (South

Dakota State) Jackrabbits on this team," Mydland noted. "I played ball against these kids for years."

Others who have contributed offensively include John Davis (.392), Chad Huwe (.370), Jon Maras (.362), Mick Hognlund (.340), Steve Bertrand (.340), Curt Cutler (.330), Neil Mathieson (.324), Chuck Sendelbach (.310), Steve McGee (.305), Dale Swier (.260) and Reg Ronken (.250).

Johnson (2-0), Rex Johnston (5-1), Curt Cutler (2-1), Maras (2-0) and Bertrand (1-0) have done a majority of the pitching for the team.

While Renner-Newcastle features a ton of state tournament

experience, a couple years of not making the tournament have made the team hungry for the experience.

"In the old days we used to expect to make state every year," Mydland said. "Now it's special."

And Mydland said the team wouldn't mind showing some younger players how it's done, either.

"It's fun to beat up on them when you can," he said. "It's fun to take the kids on. We can out-smart them, which is what we have to do."

Renner-Newcastle plays Miller-Wessington Sunday at 1 p.m., the final game of the first round.

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