

Dufner Adds Name To List Of First-Time Major Winners At PGA Championship

BY K.C. JOHNSON
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PITTSFORD, N.Y. (MCT) — The text message pinged Jason Dufner's cellphone Saturday night.

"I wished him good luck," Keegan Bradley said. "Duf's a great champion."

Place the emphasis on present tense.

Dufner seized the PGA Championship on Sunday at Oak Hill Country Club, turning back Jim Furyk by dialing in near-perfect accuracy throughout a 2-under 68. His 10-under score gave him a two-shot victory over Furyk, who carded a 71. Henrik Stenson finished three back.

It's telling that Bradley made the above comment before Sunday's round ended, before Dufner became

the fourth golfer in the last five years to claim his first major championship at the PGA.

In fact, all you need to know about the popularity of a player who once made "Dufnering" a trending topic on social media is that Bradley is the one who defeated Dufner in a playoff at the PGA Championship two years ago. That's when Dufner lost a four-shot lead with four holes to play.

On Sunday, Bradley even turned around en route to the airport — almost running a red light — and waited to offer his congratulations in person.

Redemption has rarely looked so popular.

"He's a good guy and he's good-hearted about a little ribbing I give him about that day," Bradley said.

Dufner rarely lets emotion show.

But he did greet his major moment with a double fist-pump and, uh, a hug for the ages with his wife on the 18th green. As he walked off, Bradley found him.

"We just kind of bro-hugged, which I don't know how that goes over," Dufner cracked. "He just said, 'I'm proud of you.' And I said, 'Thanks a lot. It means a lot for you to be here.'"

Don't mistake Dufner's lack of emotion for a lack of competitiveness. Aggressive all day with his tee shots and approaches, Dufner ran his bogey-free streak to 26 holes before matching Furyk with bogeys on the difficult closing holes at 17 and 18.

Dufner hit it to kick-in distance on No. 5, almost holed out from 120 yards on No. 8 for another birdie and knocked it close for yet another

on the par-4 16th.

"I mean, he had tap-in birdies," Furyk said.

After missing four straight makeable birdie putts on Nos. 10-13, Dufner pointed to his up-and-down at the tricky par-3 15th as his biggest moment. That's one of three times he used a fairway wood to chip from the fringe, a delicate play for someone who began his scoreboard watching at the turn.

"I come across as a pretty cool customer, I guess," Dufner said. "But there are definitely some nerves out there, especially when you're trying to win a major championship."

The last time Dufner faced that prospect, he crashed and burned, aided by Bradley's spectacular finish at the Atlanta Athletic Club.

"I was probably over what hap-

pened in Atlanta, 95 percent of it, by the time we got back home at Auburn," Dufner said. "But you always carry those scars with you."

"And (Bradley) always jabbed at me a little bit about having one of these (trophies) in his house and thanks for giving it to him and all that stuff. Now I've got one too."

Furyk, the third-round leader by one, played a solid if unspectacular round to keep the 2003 U.S. Open as his lone major victory.

"I have no regrets," Furyk said. "I played my heart out. I played a very, very solid tournament."

Winning majors is no joke. It takes skill, steely-eyed determination and the occasional smile from the golf gods. And, truly, only those who have prevailed in one understand fully what it takes.



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Tabor Bluebirds outfielder Brett Scherschligt, a pickup player from Freeman, dives for a flyball in Sunday morning's first-round game with Lennox Only One at the State Class B Amateur Baseball Tournament at Sioux Falls Stadium. Tabor needed extra innings to oust Lennox 6-5. The Bluebirds advance to a second-round matchup against the defending state champions, the Parkston Mudcats, on Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Tabor

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they didn't ruin the surprise. I already talked to their parents, so they knew it was coming."

Once up 5-1, Lennox Only One (12-18) suddenly saw a potential loss coming in the bottom of the 10th.

Tabor's Doug Vanecek led off with a single (and was nearly picked off on the next pitch) and Rob Keppen followed with a base hit. Pickup player Brett Scherschligt loaded the bases with a bunt single.

On the second pitch to Kloucek, he was hit in the back elbow, bringing home the winning run.

Vanecek, the third of three Tabor pitchers, got the win for the Bluebirds, who advance to play defending state champion Parkston Mudcats on Wednesday at 8 p.m.

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck



Broncs Battle To Stay Alive

LEFT: Lesterville runner Cameron Schiltz is tagged out by Winner-Colome catcher Blake Nielsen during their second round game Sunday night at the State Class B Amateur Baseball Tournament at Sioux Falls Stadium. The game was in progress at presstime.

BELOW: Lesterville second baseman Darrin Svacina, right, drops down a tag on Winner-Colome runner Dane Driscoll during their Sunday night second round game.

JEREMY HOECK/P&D



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Miller shortstop Dustin Harvey, left, forces out Irene runner Matt Sees on Saturday morning during their first-round game at the State Class B Amateur Baseball Tournament at Sioux Falls Stadium.

SDGA

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been a little bit longer, which will help me prepare for college."

Fitts is also happy to see Getz fill her spot on the Jackrabbits' roster.

"It makes me feel better," she said. "I feel that she will make the transition to college well, and will be a good player."

Cotton, who led Fitts by two strokes entering the final round, was not able to add to her titles in 2008 and 2010, saying that she made too many mistakes on Sunday.

"I had more mistakes. I made five bogeys," she said. "But Morgan was on fire. She is a great putter, and she made them all today."

"Morgan played great. Hallie did as well," Cotton said. "The level of golf keeps going up."

While this weekend's tournament was more of a younger woman's game — most of the field is in high school or college — Cotton feels that the post-collegiate golfers need to keep involved in the event.

"I think it's good if Morgan and I keep playing," she said. "We need a few of us playing post-college. We need to continue playing so this tournament doesn't drop off."

Morgan's younger sister Lauren won the first flight, beating Mitchell's Kristin Sabers on a scorecard playoff. The two will be teammates at Dakota Wesleyan this coming school year.

Claire Jansa of Sioux Falls won the third flight.

Family Gathering

Three sets of sisters are competing in the tournament, and two of those sets were paired up on Saturday. The highest-ranking of those were Morgan and Lauren Fitts of Brookings.



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Morgan Fitts of Brookings, right, won the SDGA Women's Amateur championship on Sunday at Fox Run Golf Course. Karla Cotton of Sioux Falls, left, and Hallie Getz of Pierre, center, tied for second.

Morgan, who recently finished her eligibility at South Dakota State, and Lauren, who competes for Dakota Wesleyan, shared a group for what they believe was their first competitive rounds together.

"I knew it was going to be a wierd day," Morgan said. "I know Lauren's game, and it was hard for me to be competitive against my sister."

Each sister had a parent on her bag, Morgan with their mother and Lauren with their father. The two said that it was the norm.

"Ever since I've been playing, dad's been with me," Lauren said. "I think it was harder for dad (today)."

Morgan said that attitudes were why dad wasn't on her bag.

"Dad and I always think we know everything," she said. "Mom talked me through the last hole as best she could."

The two spend the round talking with each other and with the third golfer in their group, Mingo.

"I like to talk, but I don't like to talk about golf when I'm playing, especially if I'm

playing well," Morgan said.

While it was a different experience, both sisters said they wouldn't mind getting paired together again.

"It was fun, but it was hard to not cheer for Lauren," Morgan said. "It was fun to play with her."

Natalie and Meredith Turner of Sioux Falls were also paired on Saturday. Abbie and Katie Grevlos were

the other set of sisters in the field.

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/JCimburek

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Tuesday, August 13
7:40 am The Center (Christy Hauer)
8:20 am YHS Principal (Jennifer Johnke)
8:45 am Dakota Museum (Crystal Nelson)

Wednesday, August 14
7:40 am YC Observer (Kathy Church, Kristy Wyland)
8:20 am Hy-Vee Foods (Chef Staci)

Irene Edges Miller 3-2

BY JEREMY HOECK
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SIOUX FALLS — The drought is over for the Irene Cardinals.

And all it took was a little squibber to the mound. Not to mention a dominant pitching performance from Ben Sees.

Thanks to a go-ahead run that scored on a throwing error, Irene rallied past Miller 3-2 in Saturday morning's first-round game at the State Class B Amateur Baseball Tournament in Sioux Falls.

The win was Irene's first at state since 2009, ending a 3-year skid in the first round. So yeah, there was plenty of reason to celebrate.

"The last three years have been tough; it was one and done," Sees said. "It's bitter-sweet now."

"I feel like it's extra special for me," he added, referencing him joining the team after it last won a game at state.

Sees took advantage of

the chance to end that drought, allowing four hits (two over the final seven innings) in a complete game effort.

The soft-throwing right-hander walked two, struck out five and even picked two runners off first base — providing the Cardinals (16-14) with a much-needed performance.

"The bats eventually came around, and we strung a few (hits) together," manager Kendall Johnke said. "Thankfully with the way Ben pitched, we didn't need a lot."

Miller got a lead-off single in the top of the second inning, and later benefited from a Sees throwing error to first base. Sam Simons later hit an RBI single to push the Outlaws lead to 2-1.

After scoring a run in the bottom of the first on a Wes Robertson RBI single, Irene

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