Coleman Wins 2018 Mid-Amateur Championship

Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director

JimBob Coleman of Billings overcame a two shot deficit in the final round of the 32nd Montana State Mid-Amateur Championship to win by one shot over Robb Bergeson of Billings. The two Magic City golfers traveled nearly 500 miles to find themselves in a familiar place – the final group.

Coleman, a fixture atop amateur golf leaderboards, broke through for his first state title as an amateur. Coleman finished with a one-under-par round of 70, which tied for the low round of the day and tallied 210 (-3) for the three-day event at Whitefish Lake Golf Club's South Course.

Coleman pulled even with Bergeson, who led after the first and second rounds of play, on the 15th hole as he birdied the 195-yard par three, with Bergeson making par. Both players made par on the 16th and Bergeson bogeyed the 17th, while Coleman parred. They again parred the 18th as Coleman wrapped up the victory with a three-foot putt on the 18th hole.

Bergeson closed with 73, after a 69-69 start, to finish second with a 211 total (-2). Mark Mance, the 2016 Mid-Am Champion, finished third at 214 with a final round of even-par 71. Mance won the Joe Tomes Trophy as the low player age 50 and over.

Bennett MacIntyre of Helena was the only other player besides Coleman who broke par on the final round as he closed with 70 and 215 overall for fourth place. Logan Lindholm of Kalispell was fifth at 217 and Jason Winkler, also of Kalispell, was sixth at 218. Jerry Pearsall of Billings and Chris Golden of Bozeman tied for seventh at 219. Shawn Tucker of Whitefish finished ninth at his home course at 220. Ken Bush rounded out the top 10 at 221.

Coleman and Bergeson not only finished one, two, respectively, but also claimed the Gene Cook Cup for the low two finishers from the same club. Both players play at Yellowstone Country Club in Billings. ...Continued on the next page

September Tournaments

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The annual tournament is open to players age 25 and above with a handicap index maximum of 15. There were 113 players who competed this year including past champions: Joe Cielak (2017), Mark Mance (2016), Spencer Williams (2015, 2012), Parker Heller (2014), Logan Lindholm (2013), Dave Eames (2009), and Steve Williamson (2003). For complete hole-by-hole results, click here.

The 2019 Mid-Amateur will be hosted at Briarwood Golf Club in Billings.

Montana Sweeps Montana-Alberta Junior Ryder Cup
Lauren Nielson, USGA Boatwright Intern

The Montana-Alberta Junior Ryder Cup Matches were held August 7-8 at Whitefish Lake Golf Course. For the first time since 2011, both the boys and girls teams from Montana won their respective matches.

**BOYS:** First Round – Four Ball Matches: The Alberta team won 3 points, and the Montana team won 6 points. From Montana, Jace Rhodes (Bozeman) and JR Small (Bozeman) won a half point on the back nine of their round. Nick Pasquarello (Billings) and Bryce Reed (Hamilton) swept their match, winning 3 points total. Jordan and Justus Verge (both of Bozeman) won 2.5 points for their round.

Second Round – Chapman Matches: Alberta won a half point, and Montana won 8.5 points. The Montana 17 year-olds and 15 year-olds each swept their matches, winning 3 points apiece. The Montana 16 year-olds won 2.5 points for a dominating second round.

Third Round – Individual Match Play: Alberta won 11.5 points, while Montana won 6.5 points. Jace Rhodes was the only player from Montana to win all 3 points in his match. Overall, the Alberta boys won 15 points, and the Montana boys won 21 points.

**GIRLS:** First Round – Four Ball Matches: The Alberta team won 5 points, and the Montana team won 4 points. From Montana, Annika Danenhauer (Bozeman) and Laurel Ward (Bozeman) won all 3 points, and Carrie Carpenter (Billings) and Katie Fagg (Missoula) earned 1 point.

Second Round – Chapman Matches: Alberta won 3 points, and Montana won 6 points. The Montana 17 year-olds and 15 year-olds each swept their matches, both winning 3 points.

Third Round – Individual Match Play: Alberta won 8.5 points, while Montana won 9.5 points. Katie Fagg was the only player from Montana to win all 3 points in her match, which ended up being the deciding margin of victory. Overall, the Alberta girls won 16.5 points, and the Montana girls were victorious with 19.5 points.

Thank you to Whitefish Lake Golf Course for hosting this annual event. Next year’s matches will be played in Alberta, Canada.
Bozeman’s White Claims 2018 State Senior Crown
Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director

Tom White, a newcomer to the Montana State Senior Championship, looked comfortable as he jumped out to a five-shot advantage, following rounds of 67 and 68 in Helena at Bill Roberts Golf Course and Fox Ridge Golf Course.

White held the overnight lead and was nine-under par heading into the final round of the championship. On the last day, White admittedly protected his lead with conservative play in the final round resulting in a round of 75 at Green Meadow Country Club. White knew what he needed to do and executed his game plan. White’s winning score for the tournament was five-under-par 210 (67-68-75) and edged out runner up Craig Hurlbert of Hamilton.

White, who just this year turned 55 years of age, became eligible for the competition for the first time and made the most of his debut.

Hurlbert, a former Montana State Mid-Amateur Champion, finished runner-up at three-under-par after consistent rounds of 71-70-71 for a 212 total. Hurlbert is headed to Eugene, Oregon, on August 25th for the USGA Senior Open Championship at Eugene Country Club.


Chuck Burdette of Wilsall claimed the Senior Division Trophy with a total of 239 (81-80-78), five ahead of Everett Egbert of Belgrade. Ron Ramsbacher of Missoula tied for fifth overall (Freshman Flight) at 218 (71-75-72) with Gene Walsh of Anaconda (77-67-74). Walsh, in the Freshman Flight, tied for the low round of the championship in round two, which matched White’s first round performance. Rounding out the top ten were Stacey in seventh with 221, Mullins at 223 was eighth, and Tim Ranf (Freshman Flight) and Jay Anderson (Freshman), both of Helena, tied for ninth at 224. Complete Results can be found [here](#).

The State Seniors field included nearly 330 golfers from around the Treasure State. The field is split into four divisions based on age and includes 28 separate flights by handicap. The 2019 Montana State Senior Championship will be played in Billings.

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**St. Andrews Classic**

**PLAYER PRIZES:**
- Luke Racette, Laurel GC
- Mitch Rasmussen, Larchmont GC
- Boyd Jackson, Marias Valley GC
- Herb Thackeray, Valley View GC
- Rick Engum, Laurel GC
- Richard Nickerson, Village Greens GC
- Brian Lakes, Meadow Lark CC
- Nick Dietzen, Green Meadow CC
- Lewis Gundlach, Yegen GC
- Joe Kost, Meadow Lark CC
- Tina Veroulis, Green Meadow CC
- Esther Fischer, Jawbone Creek CC
- Laura Turner, Cottonwood Hills GC
- Barbara Baumgartner, Eagle Falls GC
- Melissa Anderson, Lake Hills GC
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- Linda Blakney, King Ranch GC

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Todd Hofer, 8/20/18, Meadow Lark CC, Hole #6, 195 yds, Hybrid
Curtis Loyins, 8/8/18, Whitefish Lake GC (North), Hole #15, 171 yds, 7 Iron
Lynn Snyder, 7/27/18, Missoula CC, Hole #12, 100 yds, 5 Wood
Linda Konesky, 5/13/18, Hickory Swing GC, Hole #14, 115 yds, 7 Iron

Polson’s Cameron Milton Earns National PGA Honor
Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director

Anyone who has spent any time at Polson Bay Golf Course knows that not only is it a fine golf course, but the staff’s courtesy, friendliness, and depth of knowledge is incredible. The youth participation levels and excitement in the community is easy to see.

This year, one of the PGA’s most prestigious honors was bestowed upon teaching professional, Cameron Milton. He was honored with the 2018 Youth Development Award, recognizing excellence in junior golf programming and a commitment to developing junior golfers.

A member of the Pacific Northwest PGA Section, Milton serves as the head golf professional at Polson Bay and was deemed to have displayed extraordinary and exemplary contributions and achievement in the area of youth player development, according to the PGA. He has been a PGA Member for 10 years and has earned a reputation for creating innovative teaching methods, implementing youth programs that serve youth from many diverse backgrounds.

Milton’s passion has been exhibited both on the course and off as he established the Mission Valley Junior Golf Association and helped launch the Golf in the Schools program that introduces the game to more than 400 middle school students in Polson each year. The PGA Junior League has grown significantly, thanks to Milton’s drive and exuberance. Polson Bay hosts an annual junior camp, which offers more than 120 juniors three free days of learning and play.

Milton is a past president of the Pacific Northwest PGA Section’s Western Montana Chapter and is a three-time Pacific Northwest PGA Section Youth Player Development Award recipient. Congratulations to Cameron and Polson Bay for setting a standard of junior development for the state to emulate!

Libby’s Johnston Competes at U.S. Amateur
Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director

Ryggs Johnston teed it up with many of the elite amateur golfers from around the world at the 118th U.S. Amateur this August. Johnston qualified as an alternate and joined the field at the iconic Pebble Beach Golf Course in California. The soon-to-be senior from Libby High School acquitted himself after day one with an even-par round of 71.

Day two was not up to the Arizona State commit’s standards as he struggled to a round of 80 (+8) at Spyglass Hill Golf Course. Johnston finished four shots off the cut line for the match play portion of the tournament. The top 64 golfers (of 312) after the first two rounds of stroke play advanced to match play.

Johnston, 18, who won the 101st Montana State Amateur Championship at Butte Country Club this July and is a three-time Montana High School State Champion, was participating in his second U.S. Amateur (he first qualified in 2015). 2017 Mid-Amateur Champion, Joe Cielak of Libby, was on the bag for Johnston’s tournament as his caddie.
Great matchups don’t always result in great matches, but the 2018 Montana Cup was a classic as the amateur team rallied to win back the Montana Cup from the professionals with a 38-34 victory.

The amateurs found themselves in a sizable hole after entering the final round trailing 19.5 to 16.5, and then losing points in three of the first four singles matches of the day. 2017 Mid-Amateur Champion, Joe Cielak of Libby, picked up a sweep over Connor Sproull to lead a rally that saw the final seven matches result in a 17.5 to 3.5 advantage in favor of the amateurs. The 38-34 triumphant comeback gave the amateurs a victory after losing last year to the professionals in Butte.

Bob Hasquet earned 3 points in his match with Brian Eekhoff, as did Spencer Williams vs. Tom Anderson, and Bill Dunn picked up 2.5 points in his match vs. Jason Lehtola.

Heading into the final match, David Owens of Hamilton needed to sweep amateur Marcus Drange of Billings to give square the match, which would have been good enough to retain the cup, but Drange prevailed with a 2-1 win to give the amateurs the win. Full results can be found here.

The Montana State Golf Association conducts the annual competition of matches between 12 club professionals and 12 top amateur golfers. They earn their inclusion on their respective teams based on a points system from the previous year’s competitions around the state. Click here for the full roster.

Day one had 36 holes of play with morning matches being four-ball (“best ball”) and afternoon matches were modified champion (version of alternate-shot). The final day was 12 single match play matches. Green Meadow General Manager and PGA Professional, Tod Fitterer, was the captain for the professionals and former MSGA Mid-Amateur Champion Parker Heller captained the amateurs for 2018.

The MSGA would like to thank Green Meadow CC for hosting this year’s Montana Cup.

2018-19 Raffle Tickets on Sale Now!
ALL proceeds go to support Junior golf programs in Montana!
Go to www.msgagolf.org/raffle-fundraiser for more information and to download a brochure with application.

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And, ultimately, it goes toward a great cause... our kids, the future golfers of Montana. Get your ticket today! Thanks for your support!

Changes to the RULES OF GOLF coming in 2019!
Take a few minutes to review the primary changes to the Rules of Golf taking effect January 1, 2019, that are expected to have the most impact on the game and to be of most interest to golfers. The items covered are organized into eight categories, and within each individual item, you will find the main reasons for the change. Click HERE for the USGA article.
Montana’s Longest Drive Complete
Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director

An incredible 86 days, 112 golf courses, 1,503 holes played, 512.29 miles walked, 193 hours driven, 8,507.3 miles driven, 6,206 strokes, 425 over par, 175 birdies made, 6 eagles, 90 lost golf balls, 281 beers drank, and 1 hole-in-one witnessed.

Great Falls native and Montana Tech graduate student, Sean Ryan, began with his first steps down the fairway of Hickory Swing Golf Course on May 9, with an ambitious journey ahead. Ryan capped his 112 golf course tour with his final round at his home track, Eagle Falls Golf Club in Great Falls.

Ryan, who competed at Montana Tech, is no stranger to walking in competition, but most recently decided that after 112 courses in which he walked exclusively, he would give his feet a rest. Ryan couldn’t resist playing three days in Whitefish at the Mid-Amateur, this time in a cart.

Ryan believes he is the first golfer to play every course in the state, and if not, he’s certainly the first to play them all in one summer. He also is researching a potential Guinness World Record of consecutive holes played in a row without duplicating a course in the process. To learn more about Sean’s journey, visit his website.

Orediggers Sign Weldon, Hasquet
Nick Dietzen, MSGA Communications Director

Montana Tech announced the addition of two golfers for the 2018-19 season. Isaiah Weldon and Blake Hasquet join the Digger men’s golf team this fall.

Weldon played at Butte High and was a four-year varsity golfer for the Bulldogs. He was twice named all-state by virtue of finishing in the top 15 at the Class AA state tournament.

Weldon finished 15th as a senior and 10th during his junior season and played on the Montana Junior Golf Tour for six years. He was the valedictorian at Butte High and plans on pursuing a degree in Bio Chemistry.

Hasquet comes to Montana Tech from Missoula Sentinel. The four-year varsity golfer finished in the top 20 twice at the Class AA state tournament. Hasquet took 18th as a senior and 17th his junior year.

ONE NETWORK IN 2019

Regardless of handicap vendor, all Associations will be converted to one network by January 1, 2019.

Here are the benefits:
- ONE network # - multiple states
- ONE handicap record - no linking
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- Centralized handicap calculation
- All handicap vendors, same network
- Invisible to golfers, no software or program change

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If so, we need to link your records, if this hasn't been done already! With the merge to one network by 2019, this needs to be completed soon to eliminate problems and confusion for both you and anyone searching your record.

Just email your information to support@msgagolf.org, and we’ll set you up!

On behalf of the kids from the juniors camp at Marian Hills (Malta), and all juniors state-wide, we would like to thank you for your generous support to junior golf programs in Montana.