

Leopard Creek Times

Alfred Dunhill Championship Daily News & Order of Play

ROUND 2, FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER, 2019



GOOD WIL HUNTING GLORY AT LEOPARD CREEK

On a scorching hot first day of the Alfred Dunhill Championship, it was the over six-foot tall Wil Besseling of The Netherlands who left the rest of the field standing in his shade as he took a one-stroke lead at Leopard Creek.

Besseling opened with a round of seven-under-par 65 to lead by one over South Africa's Keith Horne, Englishman Garrick Porteous and Spaniard Pablo Larrazabal.

It was exactly the start he was hoping for in what was the first round of the European Tour's new season.

"It's a great start to the season, and a great round. I played well from the start and gave myself opportunities. I'm really happy with a 65,

and with a birdie on the last," he said.

And he was equally happy with being able to wear shorts following the groundbreaking decision by the European Tour and Sunshine Tour to allow for this based on the excessive heat this week.

"It was definitely a nice change. I mean, the first time ever on tour wearing shorts in a tournament round, and probably this is the place to do it," he said.

But the field remains well within

reach of Besseling after the first day.

Larrazabal in particular reveled in his love for Leopard Creek and signed for a 66 in which he dropped only one shot.

Behind them, former champion Branden Grace is only three shots back following a 68 which he said brought back memories of his 2014 triumph in this tournament.

Further down the leaderboard, Charl Schwartzel's first tournament round after an eight-month injury

layoff yielded a two-under-par 70. Frenchman Adrien Saddier claimed the first hole-in-one of this year's tournament on the par-three 16th to also finish the day on two under.

Ernie Els, the winner of the 2005 Alfred Dunhill Championship, signed for an opening round of two-over-par 74.



Pablo Larrazabal.

PABLO IN LOVE WITH LEOPARD CREEK

Spaniard Pablo Larrazabal loves coming over to Leopard Creek so much every year for the Alfred Dunhill Championship, saying it's one of the first commitments he makes every season, and that if it were closer to Barcelona he would even buy a house on the property. Now in his 13th season as a European Tour professional, Larrazabal put all that experience to great use in the first round as he played his way into contention with a six-under-par 66. The Alfred Dunhill Championship is the first tournament of the European Tour's new season, and Larrazabal was more than happy with his start. "A six-under-par start the season is exactly what you're looking for. I hit a lot of good shots and had many opportunities for birdies," he said. "I love this place. We are always treated so well here and it is number one on my calendar. Leopard Creek is one of the best courses on tour. Growing up in the city (Barcelona), coming to the bush is very special for me. I love it – all the nature and the

wildlife. I would buy a place here if it was five/six hours from Barcelona." Unsurprisingly, given that Leopard Creek is a favourite destination of his, the 36-year-old Larrazabal said it is a course that also just seems to suit his eye and he made it count in a top-class round that included five birdies and an eagle on the 15th. A three-putt for bogey on the par-four 11th was the only blemish. "I played very solid and I just feel like I can play well here every time. The course suits my eye. It is tough from the tees and you have to hit the ball straight. The new grass means the course is playing shorter because the ball runs more, but that also makes it trickier and the greens can be firmer and quicker with this bent grass. "You have to play smart golf. You don't have to hit the ball far from the tee, but you have to be straight. That's what I like, you don't want to just be taking driver out. You have to think around here."

GOLFRSA'S YOUNG STARS MAKE THEIR CHAMPIONSHIP DEBUT



Wilco Nienaber.

Rookie professionals Wilco Nienaber, Garrick Higgs and Deon Germishuys, and top-ranked South African amateur Jayden Schaper are all making their debut in the Alfred Dunhill Championship this week as the new generation of young stars to emerge from GolfRSA. The four golfers represent the excellent work of the GolfRSA National Squad, with the generous support of Johann Rupert, to identify the country's top amateur talent and expose them to the highest international amateur competition to ensure their best possible preparation for a professional career.

The National Junior Development Centre was also established at Leopard Creek in 2015 to create a world-class practice facility for GolfRSA and South African Golf Development Board (SAGDB) golfers. The fruits of these efforts were seen in last year's South African Open hosted by the City of Johannesburg when a record four amateurs made it through to the weekend of the championship. Nienaber in particular recognizes the role his time with GolfRSA has played in helping him make the transition to the professional ranks this year.

"It's helped a tremendous amount with moving from amateur to professional. It really prepared me well for my professional career," he said. The new young star of South African professional golf has high expectations for his generation. "I'm very excited about this new generation of South Africans coming through. There are a lot of us pushing each other to new heights. In our top amateur events it's not often that the same golfer wins, so it's great to see the depth we have at the moment."



RMB. Solutionist Thinking.

Because, in short, the long game matters. Our Solutionist Thinking goes the distance. Through persistence and a can-do attitude, it drives possibility, unlocking opportunity for our clients. It's a mindset that inspires everything that we do.

Corporate and Investment Banking

Search Solutionist Thinking
Rand Merchant Bank is an Authorised Financial Services and Credit Provider.

RMB
A Division of FirstRand Bank Limited
Traditional values. Innovative ideas.

AVIS

SAVE TIME AND ENJOY THE REWARDS

Say goodbye to lengthy paperwork and enjoy priority service. Sign up for **AVIS** Preferred now, it's Free!

AVIS.CO.ZA

THE OFFICIAL COFFEE
PARTNER OF THE
**2019 ALFRED DUNHILL
CHAMPIONSHIP**





Branden Grace.

GRACE MAKES SHORT WORK OF HIS 68

Branden Grace won the Alfred Dunhill Championship at Leopard Creek in 2014, a few years before the extensive improvements to the course. But he said there is little change to how he approaches the esteemed layout following an impressive 68 on the opening day.

“When I was out there, I remembered just about all the shots I played when I won and the course hasn’t changed so much from the tee. It just makes it easier for me to pick and commit to my shots, compared to someone who hasn’t played here before. It’s a course I’m very fond of and it’s in awesome condition. The changes to the

course have settled in nicely now and the rough is up more than normal too,” Grace said. “When I won here, I played pretty aggressively from the tee and I did the same thing in the first round. I just have to stay with the game-plan and stay patient. It was probably my best ball-striking ever around here – a very solid start.”

Even though he teed off early in the morning the heat was still very much a factor, and Grace was happy to take advantage of the groundbreaking ruling to allow the players to wear shorts due to the extreme conditions. Although he did admit that one thing

professional golfers aren’t used to is applying sunscreen to their legs before a tournament round.

“I’m going to see how red my legs are in the morning, but wearing shorts was awesome. Johann Rupert and the Sunshine Tour are always thinking of the players, but I was still really pleasantly surprised with the ruling. It’s spot on because it’s boiling out there. I had to buy some shorts in the pro shop. But the younger professionals seemed a bit nervous to wear shorts.”



TAKING A SWING AT PLASTIC

The Alfred Dunhill Championship has followed the example set by The Open Championship and reduced single-use plastic bottled water from the tournament.

The partnership between Refill Co, the global water technology company Bluewater and the Alfred Dunhill Championship is the first of its kind on the Sunshine Tour. Fans and golfers are encouraged to purchase Alfred Dunhill Championship-branded glass bottles at the course, or bring their own reusable bottles, which they can then refill free of charge at several points on the golf course. The various Aquifer Trailers provide purified, chilled drinking water to the golfers and spectators, while the Cube – a standalone

purification system – services the indoor hospitality areas. All the refill solutions purify water sourced from the Crocodile River, reducing the demand on the municipal water supply. “We’re in such a beautiful environment here at Leopard Creek where sustainability is key, and by working with us we can provide solutions to reduce single-use plastic at sports events like this,” said Janneke Brasecke, Head of Mobile Solutions Africa. “It’s easy and convenient for people to refill, and the players have loved it.”

Plastic Bottles and Plastic Waste

- By 2050 estimates say that there will be more plastic in the sea by mass, than fish.
- There are over 1 million plastic bottles sold around the world every minute.
- Plastic bottles can take over 400 years to degrade in nature.
- Plastic waste has been found in the Mariana Trench, the deepest part of the ocean, and microplastics have been found on the Pyrenees Mountains in Europe and the Rocky Mountains in America.



Tap into a world of possibilities

At PwC we believe that business, like golf, is competitive, thrilling and sometimes unpredictable. That’s why we aim to understand every aspect of your business, enabling you to raise your game and achieve success.

At PwC our purpose is to build trust in society and solve important problems.

To find out how we can assist you, visit www.pwc.co.za.

VAN TONDER STALKING BIG DREAMS AT LEOPARD CREEK

As the Sunshine Tour’s season enters its final stretch of lucrative summer tournaments, Danie van Tonder is well aware of how important this week’s Alfred Dunhill Championship is in terms of him maintaining his number one position on the Order of Merit.

The 28-year-old came through the first round well in contention after an opening four-under-par 68. Van Tonder is about R24 000 ahead of Thriston Lawrence on the Sunshine Tour Order of Merit at the moment, and these tournaments co-sanctioned with the European Tour have a tremendous impact on the final standings on the money list, especially with first prize at Leopard Creek worth nearly R3.9 million. “I’ve been playing well for a while and I only really made one mistake in the first round with

my double bogey on the par-three 16th. But there were a few birdies and not too many big putts to make, so it was not too bad,” Van Tonder said. The Boksburg-born Van Tonder’s best performance in the big summer tournaments came in 2014 when he was the runner-up to Englishman Ross Fisher in the Tshwane Open and found himself playing in the World Golf Championship events the next year in China and Florida, as well as the 2015 Nedbank Golf Challenge hosted by Gary

Player. In his only full year on the European Tour he played in 12 events and made nine cuts, but was unable to retain his playing privileges. But winning the Sunshine Tour Order of Merit this season will automatically get him an invite to next year’s Nedbank Golf Challenge, and might just be the springboard for another campaign in Europe. In that sense, Van Tonder is the epitome of the Sunshine Tour’s new slogan of #Gr8nessBeginsHere.

TAKE A STAND AGAINST SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

It takes 450 years to break down into micropastics

Only 1 in 5 bottles are recycled worldwide

Microplastics end up in the food chain

1 million plastic bottles are bought worldwide every minute

93% of tested bottled water contained some sort of microplastic

Plastic pollution kills 100 million marine mammals each year

Transporting plastic bottles adds CO₂ emissions into the atmosphere

By 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans

80% of plastic in our oceans come from land



OCEAN ENEMY NO.1

Bluewater is a world-leading water purification company with its global headquarters in Stockholm, Sweden. Bluewater innovates, manufactures, and commercialises compact water purifiers for residential, business, and public use that harness the company's patented reverse osmosis technology to remove virtually all pollutants from tap water, including lead, bacteria, pesticides, medical residues, chlorine, and limescale.

Please visit us at www.bluewater.africa/



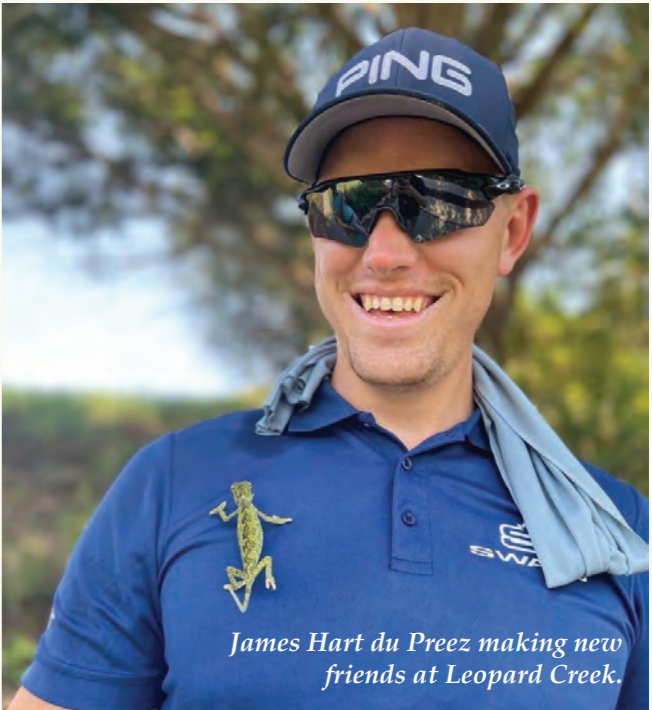


TAKING THE GAME TO THE PEOPLE

The South African Golf Development Board celebrates 20 years of developing golfers and changing lives.



TOP: Nobody likes to be stuck behind a slow player.



IMPROVE YOUR GRIP



CONSOL GRIP & GO



Available at your nearest Consol Shop
Woodmead (011) 603 2080
Cornubia Mall (031) 393 0035
Stellenbosch (021) 888 4026
www.consol.co.za

The best things come in glass



© ALFRED DUNHILL LTD

dunhill

@alfreddunhill