

Moyer's 76 shines on Monday in Menifee at Inland Empire Championship:

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With Monday marking two weeks until league tournament play and three from CIF-SS Individual Qualifying tournaments the Inland Empire Championship fits into a perfect spot on the schedule. Due to renovations at Soboba Springs Country Club host Hemet High School moved their 6th annual tournament to Menifee Lakes Country Club's Lakes Course. At 6,528 yards the course isn't overly long for today's average high school golfer but still has two defenses in wind and pin placements. It blew between 15-30 miles an hour all day and with pins tucked in some of the tougher spots on greens there wasn't a lot of shock at an over par score taking home medalist honors. Wilson Moyer of Temecula Valley would shoot +4 (76) to win the title defeating 4 others including Josh Mathey (San Jacinto), Benjamin Curtin (Lake Arrowhead Christian School), Tommy Cavmo (REV), and Mitchell Briley (Whittier Christian) who posted 78 (+6). All-tournament honors were handed out to anyone who posted 82 (+10) or lower with Ben Delahanty (Elsinore) earning that final patch over 3 others in a tiebreaker.

I chatted with Moyer after the awards ceremony. When asked about the biggest keys to his success he remarked "I felt like I just was able to putt well, better than I have in the past, and hit a lot of greens." The performance would be his career low in High School. I also asked our medalist about what his biggest takeaway from Monday would be and he said "I think just the confidence of it to just get on a roll and keep playing better." Golden Bears coach Steve Admiak would remark about his team's day "I was really happy overall considering how much the winds kicked up. Some of the guys who might not typically be at the top had really great days. Being able to see my 4,5 and 6 guys come thru big gives us encouragement heading into a tough week of league matches." Including the medalist Temecula Valley would place three players on the all-tournament team just edging Elsinore for that honor. Michael Swyden and Devin Ferguson would also earn honors for the Golden Bears. Ferguson might have been in the running for medalist honors but struggled on the back nine playing 11 & 12 in a combined 5 over par (double bogey & triple bogey) missing both greens long and not being able to get up and down. He made a difficult 20 footer on 2 for birdie and would also drain another lengthy birdie putt on 9 to turn at +4 (39). Another birdie on 10 would bring him to +3 before that rough patch.

Rounds of golf are not always smooth especially in Monday's conditions as Micah Stewart of Hemet can attest to after shooting +11 (83). He got off to a good start making a birdie putt from about 7 feet under the front pin placement, hitting the green and then grinding out a two putt par on two, then bogeying 3 from right of the green. Four pars over the final six holes including a brilliant up and down from left of the 8th green and a chip in from long on number 9 would result in Stewart turning at +2 (37). His group which included Temecula Valley's Devin Ferguson would play their entire back 9 in the teeth of those earlier mentioned winds and he struggled. After a bogey, double bogey, par, par start Stewart would hit his tee shot into the water on 14. Then hit an approach to two feet and miss the short putt for bogey. He would hit a layup on 15

into the water and make another double bogey lipping out a putt of less than 2 feet for a second straight hole. He then finished bogey, bogey, double bogey to post a back nine 46 (+9). I caught up with Micah after the round. His initial thoughts about the back nine: "It was pretty tough. There was a lot of water and I had some issues missing shots right." Stewart would display some deft touch around the greens getting up and downs in key spots on 8, 13, and 16 (bogey from left of the green) in addition to that chip in on 9. Short misses on 14 & 15 would cost him all-tournament honors. When I asked about those putts he would remark "That was just mental...I got too excited and made some dumb mistakes." Bulldog coach Ryan Ortiz was quite pleased with his team's day saying "I think that we performed pretty well. We've never played this course (the Lakes) at Menifee Lakes so I think these scores are encouraging going into the stretch run."

Representing the small schools were Lake Arrowhead Christian School's Benjamin Curtin & Whittier Christian's Mitchell Briley who each shot +6 (78). I had the opportunity to chat with Curtin as scores were being processed whose Monday round was a competitive career low. He remarked when asked about keys to his success "I was a lot more conservative today than usual...I didn't look too much at flagsticks on the approaches and just made sure I was on in regulation."

Inland Sports Area Notables:

1. Wilson Moyer Temecula Valley +4 (76)

T2. Josh Mathey San Jacinto HS +6 (78)

Benjamin Curtin Lake Arrowhead Christian School +6 (78)

Timmy Cavarno Redlands East Valley +6 (78)

5. Devin Ferguson Temecula Valley +8 (80)

Kobe Mara Elsinore +8 (80)

Michael Swyden Temecula Valley +8 (80)

T7. Francisco Juarez Beaumont +9 (81)

Ethan Zander Citrus Valley +9 (81)

T10. *Ben Delahanty Elsinore +10 (82)

*Won a tiebreaker for the final all tournament patch based on back nine score over three others.

Cameron Usher Citrus Valley +10 (82)

T15. Micah Stewart Hemet +11 (83)

Leif Tillman Citrus Valley +11 (83)

16. Griffin Ferguson Temecula Valley +12 (84)

17. Tristen Boose Elsinore +13 (85)