

He did it!

King Arnie captivates crowd in U.S. Senior Open triumph



Arnold Palmer had good reason to frown after the first six holes of Monday's playoff as he trailed by six strokes.

By Dennis O'Connor
staff writer

Life was so different for Arnold Palmer during his visit to Oakland Hills Country Club last week.

Yes, he won Monday's three-way playoff to take the second annual United States Senior Open. That was different, in itself, because he hasn't won a tournament on the regular tour in eight years, since the 1973 Bob Hope Desert Classic.

But there were other differences, as well.

"For the first time in a long time, I've done nothing this week but play golf," Palmer said. "No business calls, no building golf courses, just concentrating on golf."

It paid off.

And Palmer couldn't be happier. He thought about skipping this week's British Open, but his play on "The Monster" changed all that thinking.

Palmer, called by many "The King" of golf, was in a horrendous slump, embarrassing himself at many recent tournaments with what he called "atrocious" iron play and putting.

But he was recharged at Oakland Hills.

Palmer finished in a three-way, first-place tie with Billy Casper and Bob Stone after Sunday's final round.

Then, after flying home to Latrobe, Pa. Sunday night — to rearrange his schedule because of the extra round — Palmer arrived back at Oakland Hills that morning and fired an even-par 70 to take home the \$26,000 first prize.

Stone, who never won more than \$8,000 at one tournament during his years on the regular tour, finished with a 74. Casper, who quadruple bogied the famed 16th hole when he splashed two shots into the "water," took 77. Both men shared second and third-place prize money taking \$9,586 each.

BUT THE REAL story, as far as the 2,782 people who watch the playoff round were concerned, was the way Palmer fought back from a six-stroke deficit to Stone after only six holes.



photos by JOHN STANO/staff photographer

King Arnie looks with anticipation as he rolls this 40-foot putt into the cup for a birdie of the 15th hole. Palmer fought back from a six-stroke deficit for an easy victory.

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It's tournament time for NF-WB sluggers

North Farmington-West Bloomfield's Babe Ruth baseball team was the big winner in the recent district tournament. First prize is a weekend in Crosswell, Mich., for manager Don St. Pierre and his squad.

St. Pierre's crew, a 15-man all-star team of 13-year-olds from the North Farmington-West Bloomfield leagues, won the Babe Ruth district championship last Saturday, beating Birmingham, 11-7, in the finals.

And now it's on to the Babe Ruth state tournament in Crosswell, located about 25 miles northwest of Port Huron in Michigan's thumb, for NF-WB. The local team opens tournament play at 2:30 p.m. Saturday.

In the district finals, played in Westland, NF-WB relied on a five-run fifth inning and the strong relief pitching of Ed Collins to eliminate Birmingham, which had fought back in the losers' bracket after falling to NF-WB in the opening game.

Collins replaced starter Rick Becker with one out in the third inning and threw a six-hit with seven strikeouts and three walks. Don St. Pierre, the coach's son, paced NF-WB's 12-hit attack with three doubles and one run batted in. Teammate Brian Smolinski went three for four and knocked in three runs.

Losing pitcher Craig Dunn started and lasted four innings, striking out one and walking two. Birmingham's Chris Brown was on base three times with two hits and a walk, and teammate Joey Fujiga had three hits and drove in a run.

NF-WB OPENED the tournament with an 8-2

win over the same Birmingham team. Bob Chwalk, a left hander and NF-WB's strongest pitcher, went the distance with a three-hitter. He struck out six and walked four.

"The one word about Chwalk is overpowering," the manager said. "He's about 6 feet and 160 pounds and he can really throw the ball. They didn't hit a ball hard against him in the two games he pitched."

St. Pierre went two for two and knocked in two runs in the opening game. Becker had a hit and drove in a run.

NF-WB's next victim was Walled Lake, 13-9. Collins, the starter, pitched five full innings for the win. He allowed six hits, struck out seven and walked four.

Ricky James was a hero both at the plate and on the mound. He had three hits in four trips and was credited with a pitching save after he retired three of the four men he faced in the bottom of the seventh.

Chwalk pitched a two-hitter and struck out nine to pace NF-WB's 8-2 thumping of Berkley in the next game. Dave Einstand had a double and a triple and three runs batted in for the winners.

St. Pierre, a first baseman, was the team's leading hitter in the tournament with 10 hits in 14 at bats. Speed on the basepaths is another NF-WB asset.

"I don't have a slow runner on the team," the manager said. "Unfortunately, they didn't keep track of stolen bases in the district, but we had a ton of them."



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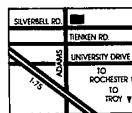
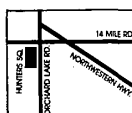
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Bob Saka Olds	2	7	0
Roadrunners	2	7	0
Superslats	1	8	0

Recent results

Roadrunners 11, Michigan Trade Exchange 5; Purple Gang 7, Mr. Joe's 6; State Sausage 14, Superslats 0; LaPlata's Raiders 7, Bob Saka Olds 6.

Recent results
Soaker & Citea 7, DuQuet Jewellers 0; McPuck's Saloon 15,