

Chattanooga's Johnson shoots 66, takes first-round lead in 19<sup>th</sup> St. Augustine Amateur

ELKTON, Florida, USA (December 6, 2024) – Carson Johnson (Signal Mountain, Tenn.) used a hot putter to offset cold and windy conditions on Friday, shooting a bogey-free 66 for the first-round lead in the St. Augustine Amateur golf tournament.

A cold front with temperatures in the high 40s and winds gusting to 15-20 mph under cloudy skies early Friday made for a start full of wool caps, multiple layers of clothing and fast and firm greens. Only four players broke par and 22 shot 80 or above in the 76-player starting field on a trying day, especially with tee times scheduled through mid-morning.

Johnson's 66 included birdies on the par-5 fourth in shooting 34 on the front nine and birdies on the par-4 10<sup>th</sup>, par-4 15<sup>th</sup>, par-4 16<sup>th</sup> and par-3 17<sup>th</sup> in coming home in 32. Johnson holds a one-stroke lead over Danny Erickson (Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.), a redshirt freshman at North Florida who had five birdies and one bogey in his 67. Jason Duff (Elkton, Fla.), a UNF senior who grew up in a house right of the St. Johns Golf Club's first fairway, made birdies on two of the last four holes to shoot 69. Justin Sui (Lake Orion, Mich.), a 20-year-old who attends the University of Florida and plays amateur golf in Michigan and Florida, was the only other player under par with five birdies and four bogeys for a 70.

Johnson, a 21-year-old senior for the Mocs, hails from Signal Mountain, Tenn., just north of Chattanooga, and plays out of Signal Mountain Golf and Country Club, a 1922 course with similar old-school design characteristics as this week's course, the St. Johns Golf Club. Johnson's father, Chris, caddied for his son on the eve of the caddie's Saturday birthday. They played St. Johns for the first time on Thursday.

"The back nine, definitely, the putter got going a little bit," Johnson said. "The greens run so good here and my home club has some similarities to these greens. That definitely helped. It wasn't as hard to learn.

"As for the weather, it's just not thinking about it. Some guys are gonna hate those conditions. My coach is big on accepting on what it's giving you. I did a good job of that – really not trying to do too much."

Notes:

Low rounds: Friday, Carson Johnson (66)

Birdies, Field: Round 1, 175

2023: Round 1, 268; Round 2, 263; Round 3, 229.

Eagles, Field: Round 1, 3

2023: Round 1, 8; Round 2, 9; Round 3, 8

Field's average score: Round 1, 77.12

2023: Round 1, 73.65; Round 2, 73.75; Round 3, 73.33. Total: 73.61

Hardest Hole: No. 16, 4.80 stroke average

2023 (cumulative): No. 9, 4.44 stroke average

Easiest Hole: No. 18, 4.92 stroke average

2023 (cumulative): No. 11, 4.54 stroke average

Results: [www.staugustineamateur.com](http://www.staugustineamateur.com)

<https://www.golfgenius.com/pages/10863149056654331005>

Player bios:

<https://staugustineamateur.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2024-StAug-Am-bios-final.pdf>