



## Barrett aims for U.S. Junior crown in his home state

By MIKE CULLITY  
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STRATHAM — When Chelso Barrett qualified for match play at the 2011 U.S. Junior Amateur Championship last July, he knew that advancing to the semifinals would earn him an exemption into this year's tournament in his home state.

"I said if I can do that, I can end my junior career in New Hampshire, and there's no better place than here (to do so)," the Keene golfer said.

With that goal in mind, Barrett blazed to the final before falling to Texas golfer Jordan Spieth at Gold Mountain Golf Club in Bremerton, Wash. But despite a disappointing finish, Barrett could take solace in knowing he wouldn't have to travel far for one last crack at the U.S. Golf Association's national junior crown.



BARRETT

A 17-year-old Keene High School junior, Barrett was at the Golf Club of New England Wednesday to promote the 2012 U.S. Junior Amateur, scheduled for July 16-21 at the Arnold Palmer-designed course. The tournament will be the first USGA national championship staged in New Hampshire. One of 10 players currently exempt into the 156-player field, Barrett figures to be among the tournament favorites after his performance last year. After failing to successfully defend his 2010 New Hampshire State Junior title last June, he won the New England PGA Junior Championship in early July before thrusting himself into the national spotlight 3,000 miles from home.

By reaching the U.S. Junior final, Barrett drew notice from the many college golf coaches who scout for talent at the tournament annually. Last November, he verbally committed to play golf at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth after he graduates high school next year, he said.

Competing for a Division I school in a golf hotbed will be a lofty achievement for a kid who grew up playing Keene's Bretwood Golf Course, which his family operates. In the meantime, however, the son of 1980 New Hampshire State Amateur champion Hugh Barrett is focused on winning the U.S. Junior title that eluded him last year.

Open to male amateur golfers who will not have reached their 18th birthday on or before July 17, the U.S. Junior will feature competitors from across the country and around the globe. Past winners who have achieved PGA Tour success include Johnny Miller (1964), David Duval (1989), Hunter Mahan (1999) and three-time champion Tiger Woods (1991-93).

To determine the field, the USGA will stage 63 sectional qualifiers in June, including one at Atkinson Country Club next Tuesday in which 14 Granite State players are entered.

Once they arrive in New Hampshire next month, the competitors will attend a welcome dinner at Pease International Tradeport featuring Deane Beman, the former PGA Tour commissioner and a two-time U.S. Amateur champion. After two rounds of stroke-play qualifying on July 16-17, the low 64 scorers will advance to match play, with the 36-hole final scheduled for July 21.

The USGA will set up the par-72 Golf Club of New England layout to play just less than 7,200 yards for the championship, said tournament director Greg Sanfilippo. The greens are expected to be running at 11 or 12 on the Stimpmeter, and USGA officials plan to eliminate the course's intermediate cut of rough while growing the primary rough to 3 or 4 inches in height, he added.

"It will really penalize the player for missing the fairway and place a premium on their drives," Sanfilippo said.

The Golf Club of New England has raised \$600,000 in sponsorship dollars from local businesses to operate the tournament, which will not charge spectators admission.

"It allows families to enjoy, especially in these tough economic times, the ability to have a family fun day together and not have it cost any money," said Craig Benson, the Golf Club of New England's owner and former New Hampshire governor.

The club has also recruited 477 volunteers to assist with the tournament, more than twice the number that participated in the 2011 championship, Benson added.

[mcullity@unionleader.com](mailto:mcullity@unionleader.com).

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