

## Greenleaf lone N.H. golfer remaining at Junior Am



Nicholas Jan, of Northbrook, Ill., tees off from the 3rd hole during the second round of stroke play at the



U.S. Junior Amateur golf championship Tuesday at The Golf Club of New England.

Jorge Garcia, of Venezuela, holds his ball after a great putt on the second hole during stroke-play qualifying at the 65th U.S. Junior Amateur Championship at The Golf Club of New England Tuesday in Stratham.

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STRATHAM — Standing on the 18th green, Connor Greenleaf looked over the 20-foot putt with his caddy, his older brother Ryan, and started to think out loud.

"I said something like, 'Gee, if I make this that would be insane,'" he said.

Greenleaf figured par would give him a good shot at match play at the U.S. Junior Amateur Championship, but with a perfect putt and a sweeping fist pump, the 16-year-old from Windham became New Hampshire's last hope at the Golf Club of New England.

Greenleaf's clutch birdie on 18 closed his final round of stroke play at 3-over-par 75. His two-day score of 149 qualified him for match play, which was his main goal at the start of this tournament. He'll be the No. 39 seed and face No. 26 Victor Wiggins, of North Carolina, today at 9:42 a.m.

That's when he can start unlocking the bigger dreams.

"I had a couple unlucky breaks coming down the stretch, some big lip-outs, but the birdie at the end kind of settled the deal," Greenleaf said. "I really don't care who I play. A player can have a bad round anytime, so as long as you get in the bracket, you're playing."

Greenleaf was steadier than his round on Monday, which included five birdies, five bogeys and a double bogey. On Tuesday, he scored 12 pars, two birdies and three bogeys. His worst blemish was a double bogey on the par-3 17th, a hole he birdied on Monday. This time his tee shot caught a wind gust, bounced in the rough and caromed out into a pond that looms ahead of the undulating green.

"I was really satisfied today," Greenleaf said. "I thought I had a lot of opportunities out there that I got robbed on. I hit the ball well. I missed one short putt (on the 7th hole) ... but I just kept it going throughout."

Greenleaf's stellar play stole the local headlines from Keene's Chelso Barrett, who was the runner-up in this tournament last year in Bremerton, Wash. Barrett shot a 76 Tuesday morning to finish with a two-day score of 10-over-par 154, which was one stroke shy of a seven-player play-off for the 64th and final seed.

Barrett was so sure of his fate, he departed the golf club shortly after his round to hit the beach.

"I tried to block out (the attention) the best I could," he said. "But nothing really happened. I never really had any momentum from the beginning (Monday) and didn't have any today, either. It was a flat three days. Just not my best golf."

Jim Liu, the 2010 champion and one of the top favorites, shared medalist honors with Nicolas Echavarria and Shintaro Ban at 3-under for the tournament. They were three of just seven players to finish the two days of stroke play under par. Max McGreevy, the leader entering Tuesday after shooting 68, shot 7-over in his second round and moved to 3-over for the tournament.

Parking and attendance for the U.S. Junior Am is available free of charge for the general public at the Golf Club of New England. The tournament continues daily from today to Saturday's 36-hole championship match

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