



Poole never wavers, wins 52nd Dogwood Invitational by four shots

Druid Hills Golf Club, Atlanta Ga. June 9, 2018 - Ashton Poole might not have been in the position to win the 52nd Dogwood Invitational if it hadn't been for an old friend back in Charlottesville, Va.

Poole got a little nudge to get in the field a year ago from former U.S. Amateur and British Amateur champion Vinny Giles, who had been a two-time winner of the Dogwood.

"When a former champion calls, you listen to what they have to say," said Dogwood Tournament Chairman Edward Toledano.

With a boost from Giles, Poole received an invitation a year ago and missed the cut by two shots. This year he returned and scorched the field for a four-shot win. Poole, a native of Charlotte who will be a junior at Virginia in the fall, had rounds of 69-66-64-67 for a 22-under 266.

Giles, who played at the University of Georgia and attended law school at Virginia, was a two-time winner of the Dogwood (1963 and 1965) and requested a spot for young friend a year ago.

"Vinny is a buddy of mind and he helped me get in the tournament," Poole said. "To win the same tournament that Vinny won, with his career, means so much."

Chandler Eaton, a junior at Duke, shot a 65 on Saturday and made a valiant push. He finished alone in second at 18-under 280, one shot better than Palmer Cup player S.M. Lee of Dalton State, who closed with a 68 and finished 17-under.

"I'm super proud," Eaton said. "I didn't really know where I was at the end. I knew I was doing really good. I knew I was making putts and hitting fairways and that adds up in the end."

Jacob Solomon of Auburn and William Nottingham of Clemson tied for fourth. Solomon finished with a 69 and Nottingham shot 72, as the pair finished at 15-under 273.

Poole had a three-shot lead at the turn, but saw it dwindle to one after Eaton made a birdie at the par-4 16th hole. But the tide turned quickly; Poole birdied the 16th and minutes later Eaton doubled the 17th, restoring Poole's three-shot lead.

Poole said he was nervous, despite the big lead coming down the stretch.

"It's by far the biggest win of my career," Poole said. "I was nervous. At some point on the first tee, I'm thinking, 'I'm good, I'm good.' And when I teed the ball up and stood up, I couldn't feel my legs. So

anyone who says they're not nervous coming down the stretch with the lead is lying. You just have to stick to your game plan and play to your strengths."

The players enjoyed championship conditions all week thanks to superintendent Joe Hollis and director of golf Bobby Guiendon.

"I want to thank the Druid Hill members for allowing us to come and use their course," Poole said. "It is a special place and it's a privilege for us to be able to be here."

About The Dogwood Invitational

The Dogwood Invitational is an elite amateur golf championship established to promote the game of amateur golf and support junior golf organizations. Held at Druid Hills Golf Club in Atlanta, Georgia, the tournament is an internationally ranked top amateur golf event that began in 1941. The tournament is run by The Dogwood Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit, and proceeds from sponsorships are directed to the Georgia Junior Golf Association and Druid Hills Golf Club Foundation. Find out more at www.thedogwood.com.

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