

## Medalist Bradford Tilley and Thomas Todd III Win First-Round Matches at U.S. Mid-Amateur

*Oct. 7-13, 2017, Capital City Club-Crabapple, Atlanta, Ga.  
and Atlanta National Golf Club, Milton, Ga.*  
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By Brian DePasquale, USGA

ATLANTA, Ga. – Bradford Tilley, 34, of Easton, Conn., and Thomas Todd III, 30, of Laurens, S.C., each won Round-of-64 matches on Tuesday in the 2017 U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship. Tilley registered a 3-and-2 victory while Todd rolled to a 7-and-5 decision on the par-70, 7,207-yard Capital City Club's Crabapple Course.

Tilley, who posted rounds of 69 and 67 in stroke play – the former at stroke play co-host Atlanta National Golf Club – to earn medalist honors and the top seed in the match-play bracket, had to overcome more than Draegen Majors, 29, of Tulsa, Okla., his opponent. Tilley came to the course suffering from flu-like symptoms and twice came close to conceding the match.

"[I] just told myself to keep going, hit one shot, drink as much water as possible," said Tilley, who estimates he drank as many as 20 bottles of fluid during the match. "I had to lie down between shots. Should have started that earlier, because when I did, I got a little bit of pause from the pain and discomfort."

Despite feeling ill Tilley was able to get off to a good start with birdies on the second and fifth holes for a 2-up lead. He struck a 140-yard 9-iron to close range for his first birdie and got up and down from a greenside bunker at the drivable par-4 fifth, which measured 311 yards. He added a tap-in birdie at No. 11 and wrapped up the victory by cutting a 6-iron approach to within 7 feet at No. 16.

"I leaned on my caddie to read the putts," said Tilley about his mental and physical fight through the round. "I asked him to give me all the numbers and I hit the shots and tried to rest as much as I could. [I] dumped water on myself a couple of times."

The U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship continues with the Round of 32 and Round of 16 on Wednesday. The quarterfinal and semifinal rounds will be played on Thursday. The championship concludes with a 36-hole final on Friday starting at 8 a.m. EDT. Play was postponed for a full day earlier in the week due to the impact of Tropical Depression Nate.

Todd, the No. 2 seed after carding stroke-play rounds of 71 and 66, was in full control against David Bolen, 38, of Lubbock, Texas, one of 16 survivors from Tuesday's 25-man playoff for the final match-play spots. He made birdies on holes 3, 5 and 7 to build a 4-up advantage at the turn.

"I'm swinging well; I'm putting well," said Todd, who advanced to match play for the first time in his third consecutive Mid-Amateur appearance. "That's a very good combination."

Todd found the green with his tee shot at the drivable par-4 fifth for a conceded birdie and never trailed from that point. He made consecutive birdies on the inward nine to seal the outcome. Todd punched a 9-iron to within 15 feet on the par-4 11th and then reached the green in two with a 236-yard 3-wood on the par-5 12th for a commanding 6-up margin.

In the most unexpected result of the day, Dusty Drenth, 29, of Davenport, Iowa, upended defending champion Stewart Hagestad, 3 and 1. Drenth, who qualified for his first USGA championship and works in sales for a supply company, was 2 down through six holes, but squared the match with birdies on the seventh and ninth holes. He would then win No. 10 with a par and No. 11 with a birdie to pull ahead.

"I was grooving early and I just kept pulling it [the driver from his bag] and kept ripping it right down the middle of the fairway," said Drenth, another of the 16 playoff survivors. "I'm a good wedge player, so any time I get wedges in my hand, [I] just try to keep scoring."

Hagestad, who fired 6-under 64 in the second round of stroke play at Capital City Club to earn the No. 4 seed, looked to be in form after playing on the winning USA Walker Cup Team last month, qualifying for this year's U.S. Open and tying for 36th at the Masters to earn low-amateur honors.

"He kept hitting it 10 yards further than me and kept hitting fairways, it's awfully tough to get the [tee] box back," said Hagestad, 26, of Newport Beach, Calif., who won last year's title in a dramatic 37-hole battle. "He also did a really, really nice job of lag putting, which I'm sure made it very stress free."

Scott Anderson, the No. 3 seed, also reached the Round of 32 after defeating Sherrill Britt, 52, of West End, N.C., 4 and 2. He birdied the par-4 second by hitting a pitching wedge to within 12 feet and won the following hole with a par after Britt found a greenside bunker with his approach.

"I am usually pretty quick out of the gates," said Anderson, who is playing in his first U.S. Mid-Amateur and works as a club fitter. "I think that's important in these things, especially if you're going to make a deep run."

Anderson, 35, of Columbus, Ohio, birdied the par-4 seventh by delivering a sand wedge to within 8 feet for a 3-up lead and then upped that margin on No. 11 with another birdie.

In a battle of North Carolinians, Chad Wilfong, 37, of Charlotte, defeated Scott Harvey, 39, of Greensboro, 3 and 2. Harvey won the 2014 Mid-Amateur and was the runner-up to Hagestad last year.

Wilfong, who shared the lead after the first round of stroke play and is playing in his first USGA championship, won holes 6 and 7 with par and a birdie, respectively, to go ahead for good. This came after Harvey squared the match on No. 5 by holing a bunker shot for an eagle.

"I think any time you play at a high level, if you show up and you hit good shots, you can win," said Wilfong, who regained his amateur status after competing on the Nationwide Tour (now Web.com) from 2003-06. "If you don't, you're not going to win. You have got to play well to best these guys."

Corby Segal, 46, of Santa Clarita, Calif., and Brad Nurski, 38, of St. Joseph, Mo., each advanced in the bracket but in different ways. Nurski, the runner-up in the 2014 Mid-Amateur and No. 6 seed, won the last two holes in regulation before winning with a par on the 21st hole against Sam Wempe, 32, of Topeka, Kan. Segal, the No. 5 seed, was a 2-and-1 winner over Justin Tereshko, 27, of Greensboro, N.C.

The older generation of this championship also moved forward in the bracket. Randal Lewis, 60, of Alma, Mich., edged Trent Peterson, 30, of St. Paul, Minn., 1 up. Lewis won the 2011 U.S. Mid-Amateur and was the runner-up in 1996. Gene Elliott, 55, of West Des Moines, Iowa, cruised to a 7-and-6 win over Daniel MacDonald, 36, of Ridgewood, N.J. Elliott is playing in his 13th Mid-Amateur. Michael Muehr, 45, of Potomac Falls, Va., beat Mark Scheibach, 44, of La Quinta, Calif., 7 and 5.

Jason Anthony, 34, of Fairfield, Conn., made six birdies in a 6-and-4 victory over four-time Mid-Amateur champion Nathan Smith, 39, of Pittsburgh, Pa.

In an impressive comeback, Devaughn Robinson, 29, of The Bahamas, came from 3 down with five holes to play to defeat Jon Lindstrom, 50, of Broomfield, Colo., in 19 holes. Robinson birdied 18 to force extra holes and added another on the 19th hole, the 441-yard, par-4 first. It was one of five extra-hole matches in the Round of 64.

The U.S. Mid-Amateur is one of 13 national championships conducted annually by the United States Golf Association, 10 of which are strictly for amateurs.

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