**Three Medalists Advance in Round of 64 at Junior Am**

By Joey Geske, USGA

**What Happened**

Ricky Castillo, William Moll and William Mouw, who shared medalist honors on Tuesday in the 72nd U.S. Junior Amateur Championship at Inverness Club in Toledo, Ohio, led the advance in Wednesday’s Round-of-64 matches.

All three players completed 36 holes of stroke play at 4-under-par 138, and Moll, of Houston, Texas, drew the No. 1 seed in match play. The 18-year-old won the first two holes against Josh Bartels of Lincoln, Neb., on Wednesday and went on to a 5-and-3 victory. Moll, who is competing in his first USGA championship, hit his approach shot on the par-410th hole to 8 feet and drained the putt to kick-start a streak of three straight winning holes that sealed his win.

“It was really awesome; it was like a whole new experience playing singles match play,” said Moll, who will attend Vanderbilt University in the fall. “You only have to beat one guy. You can adjust your play off how they play.”

Castillo, 18, of Yorba Linda, Calif., earned a spot in the Round of 32 for the third consecutive year by escaping with a 1-up victory over Drew Salyers. The No. 2 seed, Castillo relinquished a 4-up lead to Salyers before rebounding to take the lead back with a conceded par on No. 17. Castillo clinched his win with a 7-foot par putt on the 18th hole.

“Played a little sloppy, had a little pressure on me, but in the end it worked out,” said Castillo. “Hopefully I can keep it going tomorrow.”

One of the top performances of the day came from Mouw, the No. 3 seed, who defeated Jake Beber-Frankel, 6 and 4. Mouw, 18, of Chino, Calif., had the shot of the day on the par-4 11th, which was playing at 261 yards, when he hit a 3-iron to within a foot of the hole for a conceded eagle and a 4-up lead. At No. 20, Mouw is the second-highest ranked player in this week’s field in the World Amateur Golf Ranking (WAGR).

The biggest upset of the day came from Sean Curran, the No. 58 seed. Curran, of New Lenox, Ill., survived an 8-for-7 playoff on Wednesday morning by sinking a 20-foot birdie putt, then defeated No. 7 seed Brett Roberts, 2 and 1. No. 55 seed Yuki Moriyama, of Japan, defeated No. 10 Karl Vilips, of Australia, 4 and 2. Vilips is No. 53 in the WAGR, sixth-best position in the field.

**What’s Next**

Two rounds of match play will take place Thursday. The Round of 32 will begin at 7 a.m., with the winners advancing to the Round of 16 on Thursday afternoon beginning at 1 p.m. The quarterfinal and semifinal rounds of match play will take place Friday, and the championship will conclude with the 36-hole final on Saturday.

**Notable**

* A pair of high-school teammates squared off in the Round of 64. Maxwell Moldovan, of Uniontown, Ohio, defeated Cade Breitenstine, of Akron, Ohio, 3 and 2. The players recently finished their season at Green (Ohio) High School, with Breitenstine, 18, headed to Kent State in the fall and Moldovan, 17, bound for Ohio State in the fall of 2020.
* Defending champion Michael Thorbjornsen, of Wellesley, Mass., and 2018 runner-up Akshay Bhatia, of Wake Forest, N.C., both advanced as the No. 5 and No. 6 seeds, respectively. Thorbjornsen defeated Phichaksn Maichon, 5 and 4, while Bhatia defeated Luke Morgan, 4 and 2. Bhatia holds the No. 4 position in the WAGR, highest in the field.
* Another set of high-school teammates lost tight matches on Wednesday. O’Neal School teammates in Southern Pines, N.C., Jackson Van Paris and Tommy Morrison lost in 19 holes and 20 holes, respectively. Van Paris, 15, of Pinehurst, N.C., became the youngest player since Bob Jones in 1916 to win a U.S. Amateur match, last August at age 14. Both players are members at the Country Club of North Carolina, host site of the 2021 U.S. Junior Amateur.

**Quotable**

* “Every match-play event I play in, I feel like I get something experience-wise, get better at it. Last year, I was 3 up early but gave up the lead toward the end of the round. Mentally I was thinking, just stay focused. Get a couple early ones and then just keep it.” – **Kelly Chinn**, the medalist in the 2018 U.S. Junior Amateur, on returning to the Round of 32
* “I talked to my brother, if I play a little more break it's just going to turn a little more. I would rather miss it on the high side than miss it on the low side. Usually when it's on the high side it lips in, and that's what it did.” – **Castillo**, on his 7-foot par putt on No. 18 to win the match
* “I'm just glad it's just one match today. Got to really restore your batteries from the past few days, and then tomorrow, whatever happens it's going to be a long day either way. Even if you win the first match and lose the second or win both, it's still long. You're still playing 36 holes.” – **Michael Thorbjornsen**, defending champion