



Seeking a Three-Peat

Northern California's Schmuhl makes bid for a third consecutive trip to The McGladrey Team Championship

By Bob Denney

If PGA Professionals were the only competitors in the national McGladrey Team Championship, then Jason Schmuhl would be a heavy favorite any time he pushed a tee into the ground in Pinehurst, N.C.

But the Championship is all about team, and Schmuhl, the 2008 Northern California PGA Player of the Year, has guided two previous foursomes to the final field of 164 players.

The 36-year-old PGA head professional at Windsor (Calif.) Golf Club, Schmuhl (*pictured below*) has posted a combined 19-under-par through the 108 holes he has played at Pinehurst. He was 13-under-par last year after rounds of 65, 70 and 68.

As a result, Windsor Golf Club – a public golf course that averages 60,000 rounds per year and has a wide spectrum of regular players – finished runner-up in 2007 and was third last year.

This year, with the Championship handicap index raised from 50 to 75 percent, Schmuhl anticipates even greater competition. “There will be more teams that have a chance to make it this year,” explains Schmuhl. “It will be a real battle.”

“The McGladrey Team Championship is one of the best tournaments I play in all year. I don’t know what it is about Pinehurst, but I guess it has some things in common with my home course. The greens we have here (at Windsor Golf Club) are fairly small and on two of the courses at Pinehurst – Nos. 2 and 4 – you have to hit to areas on the greens that are fairly small. We don’t have pine straw like Pinehurst, but we do have oaks, and we don’t have the same undulation that you see at Pinehurst.”

“It’s been a great experience each year for me and for our amateur players. Both teams had good chemistry. The first year, we had two brothers on

the team and it seemed each round one player of our threesome would have a great day.

“Last year, we had our club champion and runner-up on the same team. They were all good buddies.”

This summer, Windsor Golf Club hosts its Local Qualifying Event on June 28, which also is the date of the opening round of the PGA Professional National Championship in Santa Ana Pueblo, N.M.

Schmuhl will be competing in the National Championship that week, while he will have assistance back home at Windsor to run the Local Qualifying Event.

Schmuhl missed the cut at Greensboro, Ga., in his first trip to the National Championship. “I’m hoping that I can play a lot better this year, like what I have been able to do in Pinehurst,” says Schmuhl.

The winner of the Local Qualifying Event at Windsor Golf Club advances to the Northern California McGladrey Team Championship, Aug. 14, at another course where Schmuhl has some experience – D’Andrea Golf Club in Sparks, Nev.

“My game is pretty unpredictable at times, but I do feel that I am well-suited for this type of format. I can make a lot of birdies,” says Schmuhl, a graduate of Sonoma State University in 1996, who also played while he was a student at the University of San Francisco and Santa Rosa Community College. “That is what is so much fun about this format.”

“Last year, I was lucky to have a team that knew each other well and had played so much together at our club. One of the guys, Mike McCreary, won our club championship by defeating his future teammate (Rene Purugganan). That is what helps make any team that much better.”

To register for a Local Qualifying Event, visit PGA.com/teamchampionship.

The PGA McGladrey Team Championship is the result of a partnership between The PGA of America and RSM McGladrey, the Official Accounting, Tax and Business Consulting firm of The PGA of America. RSM McGladrey is the fifth largest accounting, tax and business consulting firm in the country when considered with McGladrey & Pullen LLP (a partner-owned CPA firm). ■



What: The McGladrey Team Championship

Where: Pinehurst (N.C.) Resort

When: Oct. 26–28

Who: 41 four-member PGA Section Champion teams composed of three amateurs and a PGA Professional

Web site: PGA.com/teamchampionship

Above: The 2008 Windsor (Calif.) Golf Club team, led by PGA Professional Jason Schmuhl (fourth from left) at the 2008 McGladrey Team Championship



MONTANA PRITCHARD/THE PGA OF AMERICA