

## Andy Ariens wins boys city championship with final-round 69 at Colonial

Andy Ariens followed in the footsteps of his former Mansfield High School teammate Kolton Crawford by winning the Fort Worth Junior Golf Association's Boys City Junior Golf Championship. Ariens, headed for Houston Baptist, was two shots behind entering the final round at Colonial Country Club, but picked the perfect day to fire his best score at the storied course when he finished with a 1-under-par 69 on another hot and humid day. Not only did he erase the deficit but he cruised to the title by six shots with his 72-hole 284 total. Tying for second at 250 included one of the third-round leaders Michael Walton of Fort Worth and Luke Neeley, another Mansfield golfer.



The boys tournament and Colonial Country Club are celebrating their 75th anniversary this year. The tournament and Colonial Country Club are marking their 75th anniversaries this year. Marvin Leonard, founder of Colonial, also started the boys tournament in 1936, and his daughter Marty Leonard, who'll be celebrating her 75th birthday this year, was at the ceremonies. Former Fort Worth mayor Mike Moncrief and the city's new mayor Betsy Price greeted the crowd to help kick off the awards presentations. Mayor Price also presented the winning trophy to Ariens. One special award was given to Wendell Conditt, who has been director and volunteer for more than 50 years. He was presented a plaque and he'll be included in one (the Perseverance) of the nine panels of Ben Hogan's swing sequence at the new First Tee Ben Hogan Learning Center at Rockwood Golf Course. Several past volunteers and champions, including Dr. Don Matheson (1950), Dee Finley (1962), Lindy Miller (1973) and Adam Rubinson (1996) were among those on hand.

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Marty Leonard and Wendell Conditt

Besides this being a special tournament for the FWJGA, it was special to Andy as well because the title adds to what's been a banner year. His Mansfield team won the 5A state title, he finished sixth and was selected first team in district, regional and state. He also wanted to show Kolton he could win the title, too.

Andy made the 9-hole turn in 1-over 36, but birdied the par-5 11th to get back to even. Someone told him after the hole that he was leading, and he promptly followed with a bogey on the par-4 12th. He wasn't sure it was that knowledge he was leading that led to the bogey, but he quickly regrouped and birdied the par-4 15th and finished with birdies on the par-4 17th and 18th holes after a bogey on the par-3 16th.

"My putting finally came through on the back nine," he said, noting that his putter had been the

only negative of his game through the first three rounds, which were played at Rockwood G.C., Ridglea C.C. and Mira Vista. Despite a balky putter, he was only three over at those courses after rounds of 70-71-74. "I was getting (the ball) really close." He knew eventually that some would start falling.

Andy said he had played Colonial about five times before Thursday and his lowest score had been 72-73. Those scores, though, came from the back tees. The Championship Flight played from the Blue Tees, which measure 6,837 yards compared to the Black Tees, which measure 7,204 yards.

"I really felt comfortable today and wasn't feeling nervous. I knew I had been hitting the ball good." He was just waiting for the putts to start falling, and two of those were 20-footers on 11 and 17. The only three-putt was on No. 16.

He, as Tyler, had tried other sports (baseball, soccer and hockey) before turning his focus to golf when he was about 13.

Tyler and Michael Walter were the co-leaders heading into the last round, tied at 215 and two ahead of Andy, Colby Webb and Luke Neeley. Webb fell back with an 84 and Neeley tied Tyler for second with a 75 and Tyler came in with a 77. Tyler took the runner-up trophy after a scorecard playoff, which left Neeley in third for the second consecutive year.

Michael said he was 5-over par after five holes and was trying to dig out of that hole, but too many scenic side trips negated a bigger comeback though he did play the remaining holes in two over.

Tyler said he couldn't get anything going en route to his 77. "My driver was bad, my irons were bad and my chipping was bad." He knew that after he made the turn in 39 and added a double-bogey on the par-4 12th that he probably had lost the lead. He didn't know how anyone else was playing, but "I knew I had to shoot in the low 70s to hold the lead."

Colonial provided hamburgers, hot dogs, fruit and other food for the contestants