**Rookie Gallegos opens three-shot bulge with 18 holes left in Puerto Plata DR Open**

PUERTO PLATA, Dominican Republic—It’s not quite a two-man tournament entering the final round of the Puerto Plata DR Open, but PGA TOUR Latinoamerica rookie Andres Gallegos and MJ Maguire have separated themselves from the rest of the field with 18 holes to play. And Gallegos has distanced himself significantly from Maguire, taking a three-shot lead into Sunday as he looks for his first professional victory. Gallegos fired his third consecutive sub-70 round—this time a 4-under 67—and the Argentine reached 16-under. Holding a four-shot lead standing on the par-5 18th tee, Gallegos could only par the hole while Maguire made a birdie there to cut his deficit to three. Gallegos and Maguire will again be paired together Sunday, playing in the final threesome for the second consecutive day.

After playing his first 36 holes bogey-free, Gallegos opened his round with an eagle at the par-5 first hole for the second consecutive day (chipping in). After pars and Nos. 2 and 3, he made his first birdie of the day at No. 4. Following a par-5 at No. 5, Gallegos recorded his first bogey of the tournament at No. 6. He had an additional bogey, at No. 12, but he offset those with birdies at Nos. 8, 15 and 16 at Playa Dorada Golf Course. Gallegos was able to open his three-shot lead, thanks to Maguire’s troubles early on his back nine Saturday. Maguire bogeyed the 10th, 12th and 13th holes.

**Did you know**

that six of the seven winners in 2018 have been in their 20s—with only 30-year-old Michael Buttacavoli not a part of that trend, at the BMW Jamaica Classic? Both Andres Gallegos and MJ Maguire, 1-2 in the standings with 18 holes to play, are in their 20s.

**Key Information**

Of the four tournaments that went a full 72 holes this season, three 54-hole leaders have gone on to win: Ben Polland (Guatemala Stella Artois Open), Austin Smotherman (59th Abierto Mexicano de Golf) and Cristobal Del Solar (87th Abierto OSDE del Centro). Only Chris Killmer and Eric Steger, the third-round co-leaders last week at the Costa Rica Classic were unable to turn their 54-hole leads into wins. Tyson Alexander came from two strokes off the lead on the final day to win.

This week, Andres Gallegos is a combined 7-under on Playa Dorada Golf Course’s three par-5s (Nos. 1, 5 and 18). He has two eagles, three birdies and four pars.

MJ Maguire’s three bogeys in four holes Saturday matched the total number of bogeys he had in his first 45 holes of the tournament. Maguire has yet to bogey the same hole twice, his scorecard blemishes coming at Nos. 2, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

This is the second time this season that a player has taken a three-shot lead into the final round. Ben Polland (Guatemala Stella Artois Open) had that advantage and went on to win by four shots. The largest 54-hole lead this season was the six-shot lead Cristobal Del Solar held at the 87th Abierto OSDE del Centro. Del Solar won by five shots.

Uruguayan Juan Alvarez continued his fine play, with his third consecutive under-par score—a third-round, 3-under 68 that leaves him alone in third at 11-under, five shots behind leader Andres Gallegos.

Argentina’s Tommy Cocha and Chile’s Benjamin Alvarado join leader Andres Gallegos of Argentina as the only players with three rounds in the 60s this week. Gallegos has scores of 66-64-67, with Cocha shooting back-to-back 68s after opening with a 67. Alvarado has two 69s to go with his second-round 65.

The Dominican Republic’s Julio Santos is still the to player from the DR. He dropped four spots after his 1-over 72 Saturday. He’s tied with five others at 6-under, 10 shots behind Andres Gallegos’ leading pace.

**Quotable**

“Definitely today was the most complicated day of all. I started in a big way but in the middle of the round I had some problems. I’m happy with what I’ve been doing throughout the week.” –**Andres Gallegos**

“I really didn’t think I would be in this position in my first year as a professional. Everything has happened very fast.” –**Andres Gallegos**

**Tournament Fast Fact**

The first two Dominican Republic Opens that were part of the PGA TOUR Latinoamerica schedule were at Cana Bay Golf Club in Punta Cana. In 2014, the tournament moved to the Teeth of the Dog in La Romana, the host until 2016 when the tournament moved to Playa Dorada Golf Course in Puerto Plata.

**Third-Round Weather Report**

Mostly cloudy, windy and warm, with a high of 84. Wind variable at 13-17 mph.