



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 18, 2019

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### First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Robby Shelton	65 (-7)
	Chase Seiffert	65 (-7)
3	Matt Every	66 (-6)
	Chad Campbell	66 (-6)
	Austin Smotherman	66 (-6)

## **Robby Shelton and Chase Seiffert share lead at Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Championship**

**PRATTVILLE, Alabama** – Robby Shelton and Chase Seiffert carded matching 7-under 65s to hold the first-round lead at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Championship. The duo combined for 17 birdies in windy conditions at The Senator Course. Play was suspended due to darkness with three players on the course.

Starting on the 10<sup>th</sup> hole, Shelton birdied five of his first eight holes – including three straight from Nos. 13-15 – to turn in 32. The 23-year-old added four more on the back (against two bogeys) to earn a 65, his lowest round on Tour since last May. His nine birdies led the field at the 7,654-yard course.

“It means a lot [to get off to a good start] because I have a bunch of family out here watching,” said Shelton. “Starting out hot is the key for me because my first round is usually around par. When I go low in the first round it is usually a good week ahead.”

The University of Alabama product grew up playing tournaments on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail and won a couple at the junior level on The Senator Course.

“I’ve played out here almost 20 times with junior golf, state high school tournaments and just playing out here with my buddies,” said Shelton. “Knowing the course helps a lot out here. It probably seems tougher to the guys who don’t know it because there are a lot more bailout shots that they don’t know about. And then the green complexes, it’s really quadrant golf. You can hit it 30 feet away and watch it funnel down to six feet from the hole.”

Shelton has made five cuts and added two top-25 finishes this year in his sophomore season on Tour. Last year, Shelton earned two top-10s and made 12 cuts in his rookie campaign.

On a day with winds up to 25 miles per hour, Seiffert led the field by hitting all 18 greens in regulation. The 27-year-old was 1-over through three holes before tallying eight birdies over his final 15 holes.

“The long game was great for me,” said Seiffert. “I drove it well today, I think I only missed three or four fairways, but I hit every green. To hit every green on a windy day like today is really nice.”

Seiffert began his college career at Central Alabama Community College about an hour north of Prattville before transferring to Florida State to finish out. The 65 was his lowest round since the final round of last



year's Web.com Tour Championship. That score led to a T8 finish and allowed the Panama City Beach native to earn full status this year for the first time in his professional career.

"We snuck into the Web.com Tour Finals on the number at 200 and were so excited," said Seiffert. "Then to secure my card and be able to take some time off for the first time since I turned pro was huge. I was able to sharpen my game instead of being at Q-School."

On a links-style course with few trees, Seiffert referred to the wind as the toughest first-round adjustment.

"The toughest part was that a lot of my lines off the tee changed," said Seiffert. "I play practice rounds pretty early when there isn't a lot of wind, and I came out today and had to adjust. I had to stare at fescue off the tee. It's tough to start it over trouble and let the wind bring it back."

Both Seiffert and Shelton are seeking their first Web.com Tour win. Matt Every, Chad Campbell and rookie Austin Smotherman sit T3 with opening-round 66s. Second-round tee times will run in two waves from 6:30 a.m. to 2:07 p.m. on Friday.

#### **THURSDAY NOTES:**

- \* Thursday's weather: Mostly Cloudy, high of 81, winds S/SE at 8-16 miles per hour with gusts up to 25 miles per hour. Play was suspended due to darkness with three players still on the course.
- \* Chad Campbell (66, T3) competed at The Senator Course with the Web.com Tour previously, earning a solo-fourth finish in 2001. The top-5 finish solidified Campbell's status as the top money earner on Tour in 2001 with three wins and five additional top-10s.
- \* After visiting with his college coach in Auburn early on this week, Matt Every (66, T3) didn't play a practice round at The Senator Course before his low first round. The 66 is his lowest round since the 2018 RSM Classic on the PGA TOUR.
- \* Austin Smotherman (66, T3) carded a back nine 32 to ascend the leaderboard. The 24-year-old – and former SMU teammate with Bryson DeChambeau and Harry Higgs – earned a top-10 finish in his Web.com Tour debut in Exuma earlier this year.
- \* Jonathan Randolph carded an opening-round 68 to sit three back. Randolph recalled attending the Web.com Tour Championship as a kid in the early 2000s at The Senator Course and watching players like Ryuji Imada and Brendon de Jonge compete before moving on to the PGA TOUR.
- \* Akshay Bhatia (+1, through 17 holes), a highly-touted amateur making his Web.com Tour debut, was one of three players not to finish. The 17-year-old Bhatia Monday qualified into the tournament after making his PGA TOUR debut last month at the Valspar Championship.
- \* Trey Shirley (+1, through 17 holes), a Campbellsville University alum, also made his first Web.com Tour start. Shirley carded a 67 in the Monday qualifier to earn the start.
- \* After a withdrawal from Jimmy Beck on Thursday morning, Matt Harmon gained entry into the field at the last minute. The Michigan State alum carded an even-par 72 to sit T67 after the first round.
- \* Coming off a T12 finish in Savannah, his best since 2017, Nicholas Thompson carded a first-round 73. Thompson is the brother of LPGA star Lexi Thompson, who earned her first LPGA win at The Senator Course in 2011.



\* This is the first Web.com Tour tournament in the state of Alabama since 2005. The Web.com Tour Championship was hosted at The Senator Course from 2001-2005.

\* Robby Shelton and Chase Seiffert are each looking to become the third consecutive first-round leader/co-leader to go on to win the tournament. The 18-hole leader/co-leader did not go on to win in the first five events of the year before Vince Covello (Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by MISTRAS) and Dan McCarthy (Savannah Golf Championship) accomplished the feat over the past two tournaments.

\* This week's purse is \$550,000, with \$99,000 going to the champion. The champion will also earn 500 points in the Web.com Tour points system.

\* Forty-seven former Web.com Tour champions are competing in the field, amounting to 68 victories, as well as 10 PGA TOUR champions (equaling 25 victories).

\* The par-4 18<sup>th</sup> hole (457 yards) ranked as the toughest hole on the course on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.418.

\* The par-5 10<sup>th</sup> hole (616 yards) ranked as the easiest hole on Thursday. The hole played to an average of 4.436 and yielded seven eagles and 86 birdies to the 156-player field.

\* The Senator Course Scoring Averages:

	<b>Front (36)</b>	<b>Back (36)</b>	<b>Total (72)</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
<b>R1</b>	<b>35.596</b>	<b>35.899</b>	<b>71.495</b>	

*For highlights from today's round, or any 2019 event visit <http://bit.ly/webcom2019video>*

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