

Headline: Mike Howell wins the 2021 Northern Virginia Senior Amateur Championship in sudden death playoff

Belle Haven Country Club, Alexandria, VA, Tuesday, June 29th, 2021 --- Mike Howell (International Country Club) won the 2021 Northern Virginia Senior Amateur Championship in a dramatic sudden-death playoff with 1st-day leader Tom Riley (Belle Haven Country Club) after both players finished tied after 36 holes with a score of 1-over par 145.

Howell, after shooting an opening day 1-under par 71, began the day two strokes behind first-day leader Tom Riley (Belle Haven Country Club) who shot an impressive 3-under par 69 in the opening round. Howell still trailed Riley by 1 shot coming to the 18th hole in round 2.

Both players had short approach shots on the finishing 18th hole but the hole was tucked in a very difficult location just behind the left greenside bunker and both players played conservatively to about 20 – 25 feet beyond the hole.



Photo above --- Mike Howell putting for a birdie on the 18th hole.

Howell was away and almost made his tricky downhill birdie attempt which finished about 3 feet past the hole. Howell elected to continue putting and made his par. Riley's downhill birdie attempt ran out about 5 feet beyond the hole toward the edge of the green; his second putt looked like it was going into the hole but a horse-shoe lip-out left the ball about 1 foot away. Riley tapped in for his bogey and fell back into a tie with Howell at the end of regulation play.



Photo above --- Tom Riley grimaces after his par putt lips out of the hole on #18.



Photo above: Tom Riley's playoff tee shot misses the fairway into the right rough across the cart path.

The sudden-death playoff began on the par 5 #1 hole. Howell's tee shot landed in the fairway well short of the pond, too far to reach the green in 2 shots, so he laid up about 95 yards short of the green in the fairway. Riley's tee shot went to the right side across the cart path and his approach to the green was blocked by several trees. He punched a shot under some tree branches and his ball ended up about 40 yards from the green in the left rough. Howell hit his wedge shot about 10 feet hole-high left leaving him a good birdie opportunity. Riley answered with a tremendous short wedge shot from the rough over the bunker and finishing about 15 feet past the hole. Riley was away and his birdie attempt just missed low on the left side. Howell didn't miss his opportunity to win as he drained his birdie putt to claim the 2021 championship. Congratulations Mike!



Photo above: Mike Howell (left) and Tom Riley (right) after the playoff



Photo above: Winner Mike Howell with tournament chairman Mark Boedicker

Dan Derisio (Springfield CC) made a big move from 8th place after day 1 to finish 3rd in the Senior Division by shooting the best round of the day with a 1-under par 71. Other top finishers include: Jon Zampedro (Ft. Belvoir) was 4th; Harry Thomas (Washington Golf & CC), the 2015 Champion, was 5th; Paul Gural (International CC) was 6th; Drew Smith (Mt. Vernon CC) was 7th; Steve Castro (Laurel Hill) was 8th; Scott McNabb (Lansdowne) was 9th; and Mike Johnston (Evergreen CC) was 10th.

In the Super-Senior Division Tim Vigotsky (RTJGC) was a run-away winner by 7 shots with a 2-over par 146 over Bill Howard (Belle Haven CC). Dave Prokop (Evergreen CC) made a big move with a second round score of 76 to go from 15th place after day 1 to finish 3rd. Other top finishers include: Joe Wallenfelsz (Blue Ridge Shadows) 4th; Chris Coyer (Chantilly National) 5th; Jeff Johns (Dominion Valley) 6th; Jerry Nepodal (Laurel Hill) 7th; Don Iffland (Chantilly National) 8th; Joe Magnone (Evergreen CC) 9th, and John Osborne (Spring Creek) finished 10th.



Photo above: S/S Division winner Tim Vigotsky (left) with tournament co-chairman Lynn Wessman

We would like to extend our thanks and sincere appreciation to Belle Haven Country Club for hosting this event. The course was in outstanding condition and the tricky green complexes presented a formidable challenge to the field. Thanks to Michael Maud (PGA Head Golf Professional) and his staff for their hospitality and support. Also a special thanks to Chip Beveridge for his efforts to obtain club approval for the tournament, and to the Golf and Greens Committee for their support of this event.

Mark Boedicker (Tournament Chairman) and Lynn Wessman (Tournament Co-Chairman)

