

## **Army Navy CC wins 2023 Northern Virginia A-Team Championship in Rain-delayed Thriller**

22 April 2023 --- At Army Navy CC and Springfield CC: The Army Navy CC A-Team ended a 33-year drought without a win in the Northern Virginia A-Team Championship matches today by defeating Springfield CC in a rain-delayed thriller final match by a score of 9.5 to 8.5. Army Navy had previously won the A-team title 7 times (1977, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1986, 1989 and 1990) and also had finished runner-up 5 times (1983, 1992, 2008, 2016, and 2019).

The A-Team matches consist of 12 players from each club with half playing on their home course and half playing away at the opposing team's course. The matches are played from the Championship tees in a 4-ball match play format with Nassau scoring (1 point front nine, 1 point back nine, 1 point for all 18 holes) and played at scratch. One player on each team's roster may be a professional while all others must be amateurs.

Play began at each course at 11:30 am but a line of strong thunderstorms came through the area and play had to be suspended about 1:30 pm with play not yet completed on either course on the front nine. After waiting 2 hours for the storms to pass through, play was finally able to be resumed about 3:30 pm. With darkness approaching the match came down to the final group at ANCC about 6:45 pm with Army Navy needing to tie the hole to win 2 points in their match ---- losing the hole would have resulted in a 9-9 tie and a sudden-death playoff. Having lost the front nine 1-down, the Army Navy team of Matt Bravo and Scotty Fore were able to secure a tie with a par score on the par 3 18<sup>th</sup> hole to win the back nine 2-up and win 2 points in the anchor match to secure the overall win for the championship.

Congratulations to the Army Navy CC team on winning the 2023 Northern Virginia A-Team championship! Well done to the Springfield CC team that fought hard and finished as the runner-up. In a match as close as this one the outcome could have reversed easily with just a few putts being made.

Read on for photos and details of each of the six matches.

Article by Lynn Wessman, Northern Virginia Golf Association (NVGA)

At Springfield CC:



Group 1 – Chris Ironroad and Kevin Dillard (ANCC) vs. Lauren Greenlief and Larkin Gross (Professional) (Springfield)

The first group at Springfield featured two notable players on the national stage and together they make a formidable team. Lauren was the 2015 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur Champion, the 2017 VSGA Women's Amateur Champion and 2017 VSGA Women's Player of the Year and sports a lofty +5 index. She is not the first woman to have participated in the Northern Virginia A-Team matches (Alexandra Austin has played for Springfield CC in previous years) but this is believed to be the first time a woman has competed in the A-Team finals match. Assistant Golf Professional Larkin Gross, PGA finished 4th in a field of 312 PGA Professionals at the 2021 Club Professional National Championship which qualified him to play in the 2021 PGA Championship at Kiawah Island Ocean Course. Larkin was also recognized as the 2021 Middle Atlantic Section PGA Player of the Year and the 2021 PGA of America Player of the Year.

The Army Navy team of Chris Ironroad and Kevin Dillard never trailed in this match. After getting ties on holes 1-3 with pars, Chris won the par 3 #4 with a par and Kevin followed up with a birdie on the par 4 #5 to put ANCC 2-up. Lauren and Larkin bounced back to win #7 with pars but Chris struck again with a birdie on #8 and after #9 was tied ANCC took a 2-up lead after the front nine. On the back nine Larkin struck first with a birdie on the par 3 #11 but Chris answered with a birdie on the par 3 #13 to get back even. The remaining holes on the back were tied with pars and the back nine was tied.

Result: ANCC 2 ½ Springfield ½



Group 2 – Jamie Agnew and John Hassan (ANCC) vs. Beau Kyster and Joe Leightner (Springfield)

Army Navy jumped out to a lead on the front nine with John's par on #1 and Jamie's par on #2. Joe bounces back for Springfield to win #4 and #5 with pars to get back even. Jamie wins #7 with par but Joe wins #9 with par to tie the front nine. The back nine is all Springfield who win #10 and #12 with par and #14 with birdie to get 3-up. Army Navy wins #15 with par but Springfield wins #16 with birdie to close out the back nine 3&2.

Result: ANCC ½ Springfield 2 ½



Group 3 – Ryan Peters and Kyle Cardenas (ANCC) vs. Matt Stallings and Eric Walker (Springfield)

Army Navy strikes first with Ryan and Kyle winning the par 3 #4 with par and the par 4 #7 with birdie to go 2-up. Springfield answers with a par on #8 to win the hole and #9 is tied giving Army Navy a 1-up win on the front nine. On the back nine Springfield wins #10 with par and Army Navy bounces back with a birdie to win #12. Springfield strikes back to win the par 3 #13 with par and the par 5 #14 with birdie to go 2-up. Holes 15 through 18 were tied with pars and Springfield wins the back nine 2-up and wins the 18 1-up.

Result: ANCC 1 Springfield 2

**Total at Springfield: ANCC 4 Springfield 5**

**At Army Navy CC – the matches were played on the Red and White nines:**



Group 1 -- Eric Miller (Professional) and Nick Chauvenet (ANCC) vs. David Ross and Garrett Lasnier (Springfield)

Army Navy jumps out to an early lead with Nick's birdie on the par 4 #1, Eric wins the par 5 #4 with birdie and Nick wins the par 3 #8 with a nice up-and down from the back fringe to put ANCC 3-up. David gets a win on the par 4 #9 after the rain delay to reduce the Army Navy lead to 2-up at the turn.

On the back nine Eric wins the par 4 #10 with birdie but David wins the par 3 #12 with par to get back even. Eric strikes again on the par 5 #13 when he is in the front left bunker in two shots, catches the ball thin from the bunker flying it 40 past the hole to the back of the severely-sloped green but the backspin and slope of the green bring the ball back to about 3 feet above the hole and Eric makes the putt for birdie to win the hole. Eric also wins the par 4 #14 with a par to put ANCC 2-up on the back. Springfield wins the par 5 #16 with par to cut the Army Navy lead to one but Nick makes a nice 2-putt from above the hole on the tricky par 4 #17 green to win the hole and close out the back nine 2&1.

Result: ANCC 3 Springfield 0



Group 2 – Nathan Henderson and Chris House (ANCC) vs. Carlos Aranda and Dan Derisio (Springfield)

Springfield jumps out to an early lead on the front nine winning the par 4 #1 with Carlos' par, Dan and Carlos win the par 4 #3 with pars, and Dan wins the par 5 #4 with a nifty up-and-down birdie from left of the green in two shots to give them a 3-up lead. Chris bounces back to win the par 3 #8 with a par and with a tie on #9 Springfield has a 2-up lead after the front nine.

On the back nine Springfield wins the par 3 #12 with pars but Chris bounces back with a birdie on the par 5 #13 to get back even. On the par 4 #15 Dan makes a lengthy 30+ foot birdie putt but Chris answers with his 5 foot birdie putt to keep the back side tied. After ties on #16 and #17, Dan has about a 15-foot birdie putt on the par 3 #18 to win but it just misses by inches and the hole is tied with par and the back nine is tied.

Result: ANCC ½ Springfield 2 ½



Group 3 – Matt Bravo and Scotty Fore (ANCC) vs. Brandon Luxenburg and Steve Siveroni (Springfield)

The front nine is a see-saw battle with Springfield winning the par 4 #1 with Brandon's birdie, Scotty winning the par 4 #2 with par, Army Navy taking the lead on the par 5 #4 with Matt's birdie but Springfield winning the par 4 #7 with Steve's par to get back to even on the front. After the rain delay Steve wins the par 3 #8 with birdie and after #9 is tied Springfield takes a 1-up lead after the front nine.

On the back nine Army Navy bounces back with Matt's birdie on the par 4 #10 and Matt getting another win on the par 3 #12 with par. Springfield answers with Brandon's birdie on the par 4 #15. After #16 is tied the match stands even with Springfield having won the front nine 1-up and Army Navy 1-up on the back nine. Scotty hits a great approach on the challenging up-hill par 4 #17 to very close range for birdie to win the hole and put Army Navy 2-up on the back and 1-up on the match.



Army Navy players, Director of Golf Brad Myers and General Manager Patrick King gather around to watch the anchor match on the 18<sup>th</sup> green.

Play at Springfield had been completed and the Army Navy team was gathering around the par 3 #18 hole to watch the anchor match. Both Matt and Scotty miss the green to the right and a little short of the hole while Brandon for Springfield is on the green about 30 feet above the hole. Matt chips to about 4 feet below the hole while Scotty's chip finishes about 5 feet left of the hole. Brandon has a lengthy downhill birdie putt to force a playoff but his putt just missed by a few inches. Matt Bravo (ANCC A-Team captain) steps up and sinks his 4-foot par putt to close out the back nine 2-up and get the needed full point for the 18.





ANCC A-Team Captain Matt Bravo sinking his par putt on the 18<sup>th</sup> green to win the match.

Result: ANCC 2 Springfield 1

Total at ANCC: ANCC 5.5 Springfield 3.5

**Overall total: ANCC 9.5 Springfield 8.5**



L-R: Chris House, Nathan Henderson, Ryan Peters, Eric Miller (Professional), Jamie Agnew, Nick Chauvenet, Team Captain Matt Bravo, Team Co-Captain Chris Ironroad, Team Co-Captain Kevin Dillard, Scotty Fore, Kyle Cardenas. Not pictured: John Hassan