

Army Navy CC wins 2024 Northern Virginia A-Team Championship in Sudden-Death Playoff

20 April 2024 --- At Army Navy CC and Springfield CC: In a repeat of the NVGA A-Team finals match last year, the Army Navy CC A-Team faced off against a Springfield CC A-Team determined to fight hard for a victory that eluded them last year.

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.

Last year's match ended up with Army Navy winning by a mere 1 point with a score of 9.5 to 8.5. As might be expected with two teams this closely matched, this year's contest ended in a tie in regulation play with each team scoring 4.5 points both at home and away and a cumulative 9-9 tie when the home and away scores were combined. When a match ends in a tie in regulation play, the winner is determined in a sudden-death playoff with one 2-man team representing each club. The two team captains, Matt Bravo for Army Navy and Dan Derisio for Springfield, selected themselves and their playing partners for today's match as the playoff team. Those same four players had played against each other for the entire match in the 3rd group at Army Navy CC (Matt Bravo and Scottie Fore for Army Navy, Dan Derisio and Carlos Aranda for Springfield).

The playoff began on the par 4 Red #1 hole, a relatively short downhill hole with a steeply sloped green located across a depression with some new sod over a covered drainage creek. Carlos Aranda hit his approach shot from about 140 yds into the right green-side bunker. Dan also hit his approach from about 140 yards to about 20 feet below the hole. Matt hit an excellent wedge approach shot from about 100 yds to about 7 feet below the hole. Scottie hit his tee shot all the way to the bottom of the hill into the depression below and about 30 yards in front of the green. Scottie's approach ended up about 40 feet from the hole.

Carlos' bunker shot went long and above the hole; his par putt missed. Scottie's long birdie attempt ran well past the hole and led to a bogey. Dan putted next from about 20 feet and nearly made his birdie putt for a conceded par. Matt quickly rolled in his birdie putt to win the playoff.

Congratulations to the Army Navy CC team on winning the 2024 Northern Virginia A-Team championship and winning the title two years in a row! Well done to the Springfield CC team that reached the finals match two years in a row and came very close to winning both times.

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

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At Springfield Golf and Country Club

Match #1



L-R: Luke Malanchuk and Chris Ironroad (Army Navy) vs. Eric Walker and Rob McGregor, Jr. (Springfield)

Springfield was up early but suffered a 3-putt bogey on #5 to change the momentum some. Coming to hole #9 Springfield led 1-up. Army Navy had a nice 2-putt par on #9 and both Springfield players missed their par putts to halve the front nine.

On the back Army Navy took control on the par-3 11th hole with an 18-inch birdie putt. Army Navy later went 3-up on #15 with a 20-foot eagle putt. Springfield was unable to close the gap and Army Navy wins the back nine and 18.

Result: Army Navy 2.5 Springfield 0.5

Match #2



L-R: Matt Stallings and Beau Kyster (Springfield) vs. Chris House and Ryan Peters (Army Navy)

Army Navy won the front nine 3-up. The back nine began with halves on #10 and #11 and both teams birdied the difficult 12th hole. Springfield then won 3 holes concluding with a 20-foot birdie putt on #17 to pull even on the day. Both teams parred #18 to end with a split on the day.

Result: Army Navy 1.5 Springfield 1.5

Match #3



L-R: Kevin Dillard and Kyle Cardenas (Army Navy) vs. Brandon Luxenburg and Trey Parrish (Springfield)

Springfield won the front nine 2-up highlighted with an 80 yard eagle 2 on the par-4 #8 hole. Springfield went 1 up on the back until they suffered a bogey on #17 and Army Navy secured a par to even up the back nine. Coming to #18 Army Navy had the last chance for birdie and just missed the putt from 12 feet and the hole and back nine was tied.

Result: Army Navy 0.5 Springfield 2.5

The playing conditions were firm and fast at Springfield Golf & CC making scoring difficult. Stellar golf was played by both teams.

Overall result at Springfield: Army Navy 4.5 Springfield 4.5

At Army Navy Country Club (played on the Red and White nines):

Match #1



L-R: Ryan Miller and Assist. Golf Professional Jimmy Kowalski, PGA (Army Navy) vs. Alexandra Austin and Springfield Director of Instruction Robert Simpson, PGA (Springfield)

Standout women's amateur golfer Alexandra Austin (a former Virginia Woman Amateur of the Year who later turned professional briefly but has regained her amateur status) teamed with Springfield's Director of Instruction Robert Simpson, PGA. The front nine was a back-and-forth affair. Alexandra birdied the par 4 Red #1 to put Springfield 1-up but Jimmy responded with a nice sand save par on Red #2 for a win to even it up. Ryan won Red #3 with par but Robert birdied the par-5 Red #4 to win and square the match again. Holes #7 and #8 were traded and #9 tied with the front nine ending all square.

On the back Army Navy opened a big lead winning four holes in a row (W2 through W5) to go dormie (4-up with 4 to play). Springfield closed the gap with Robert's birdie on W6 and Alexandra's birdie on W7 but their rally was stopped on W8 when the hole was tied with pars and Army Navy winning the back nine 2&1.

Result: Army Navy 2.5 Springfield 0.5

Match #2



L-R: Mark McKinnon and Steve Galing (Army Navy) vs. Sam Schmitz and Steve Silveroni (Springfield)

Army Navy jumped out in the lead early with Mark's birdie on R1 but Springfield won R5 and R7 with birdies and won R8 with par to go 2-up. Army Navy closed the gap winning R9 with par but still lost the front nine 1-down.

Army Navy never trailed on the back nine winning W1 with Steve's birdie and winning W5 with pars to go 2-up. Springfield won W7 with par, then Army Navy held on with ties on W8 and W9 to win the back nine 1-up.

Result: Army Navy 1.5 Springfield 1.5

Match #3



L-R: Army Navy A-Team Captain Matt Bravo and Scottie Fore vs. Carlos Aranda and Springfield A-Team Captain Dan Derisio

Springfield easily won the front nine winning R2 and R3 with pars and Red 7 with birdies to win the front 3-up.

The back nine was close all the way with Springfield winning W1 with Dan's birdie, and Army Navy squaring it up with Matt's par on W4. Army Navy wins W6 with pars and holds a 1-up lead with 2 holes to play. Dan wins W8 with par to square the back nine coming to the last hole. All four players make bogey, two from the right green-side bunker and two from just over the back of the green. The back nine is tied giving Army Navy the crucial $\frac{1}{2}$ point needed to tie the overall match.

Result: Army Navy 0.5 Springfield 2.5

Photo of the Army Navy team with trophy:



L-R: Jimmy Kowalski, PGA, Steve Galing, Ryan Peters, Mark McKinnon, Luke Manachuk, Kevin Dillard, Scottie Fore, A-Team Captain Matt Bravo, Kyle Cardenas, Ryan Miller, Chris House, Chris Ironroad



Matt Bravo sinks the wining birdie putt on the first playoff hole