

Birdie tear propels Indiana's Carter in Society of Seniors Championship

BOYNTON BEACH - It took just one hole for Ron Carter's lead to evaporate when Bill Zylstra opened with a birdie in Thursday's final round of the Society of Seniors Championship at Quail Ridge Country Club.

"I figured, 'Game on,'" Carter said. But not for long. Carter responded with six birdies on his next nine holes on the demanding North Course and the game was no longer on.

Instead, it was game over. Carter closed with a 4-under 68 to claim a four-shot victory over Zylstra in the Dale Morey Division (55 and older) of the second-most-important event for U.S. senior amateurs. The Monticello, Ind., native shot rounds of 69-68-68 to finish at 11-under 205.

"You get in that zone where you start making birdies and you want to keep making birdies," said Carter, coming off a nine-shot win in last month's Porter Cup. "It's one of those things where you're able to concentrate, stay in the moment and not pay attention to what's going on around you. It takes some time to learn how to do that."

Zylstra is no stranger to the top of the leaderboard, having won more than 30 senior amateur events. But the Plymouth, Mich., native had no answer when Carter went on his birdie binge.

"I birdied the first hole, and after that, he said, 'You're not going to see me the rest of the day,'" Zylstra said. "He birdies 2, 3, 6, 8, 9 and 10. I said, 'OK, that's enough.' It was fun to watch. You like to see good golf."

Carter gave Zylstra a flicker of hope when he bladed a bunker shot into a palm tree at the par-5 11th for a double bogey. But the lead never got less than four shots the rest of the round.

"I hit the ball in the tree, but I knew I could still make a 6 or a 7," Carter said. "You've got to keep playing. You're going to make mistakes. I still had to finish the hole."

Tim Miller of Kokomo, Ind., shot his third consecutive 70 to finish third at 210, a shot ahead of Joe Sommers (71-211) of Stamford, Conn., and two in front of Chris Maletis (68-212) or Portland, Ore.

In the John Owens Division (65-74), Larry Boswell of Jamestown, N.C., saw his three-shot lead shrink to one with two holes to play, but held on for a three-shot victory over David Spannbauer of Green Cove Springs. Both shot 74s. Bowell finished at two-under 214. Paul Quigley of Jupiter and Jim Holbrook of North Andover, Mass., tied for third at 218.

"I never expected to win," Boswell said. "I just came down to see my friend, Ronnie Grove (a Quail Ridge member) and have a good time. It was a struggle at times today; I wasn't comfortable in the lead. But I'm excited to win. I've never won anything this big on a national level."

In the Grand Masters Division (75 and over), Joe Estes of Atlanta shot a 75 to finish five shots ahead of Wendell Kop (75-229) of Honolulu. Estes went wire-to-wire.

"I've competed against these guys for a long time," Estes said. "Sometimes you win,



Over a stretch of nine holes in the final round, Ron Carter netted six birdies to win the Dale Morey Division of the Society of Seniors Championships.

Photo by Scott Wiseman

and generally you lose. But today I won and I'm very happy about it. These guys have beaten me many times. It's just fun being around them.

The SOS Championship will return to Quail Ridge in 2014.

South Florida finishers

Dale Morey Division

- T7 Rick Woulfe, Fort Lauderdale 69-71-74-214
- T10 Tom Knapp, Tequesta 68-76-71-215
- T19 Lenny Loyd, Port St. Lucie 74-74-71-219
- T21 Van Lefferdink, Palm Beach Gardens 71-72-78-221
- T29 Bob Ethridge, Plantation, 75-74-74-223
- T46 Steve Earsley, Hobe Sound, 79-76-72-227
- 52 Mark Rubin, Coconut Creek, 73-72-84-229
- T58 Steven Sim, Ft. Lauderdale, 74-74-84-232
- T74 Norman Swenson, Boynton Beach, 81-72-85-238
- T79 James Bounds, Boynton Beach, 80-84-76-240
- 86 John Latowski, Port St. Lucie, 88-83-83-254

John Owens Division

- T3 Paul Quigley, Jupiter, 72-73-73-218
- T18 Tom McLean, Boynton Beach, 75-75-76-226
- T29 Barry Van Gerbig, Palm Beach Gardens, 76-76-76-228
- T47 Bob Rogoff, Coral Springs, 77-79-78-234
- T51 Jan Blick, Palm Beach Gardens, 77-75-83-235
- T72 Jim McGuigan, Boynton Beach, 79-85-82-246
- T57 Bob Ferrel, Boynton Beach, 77-78-82-237
- T70 Terry Louis, Palm Beach Gardens, 88-78-79-245
- T72 Jim McGuigan, Boynton Beach, 79-85-82-246
- T83 Alan Gillison, West Palm Beach, 83-84-WD-WD
- 87 Ron Goldberg, Delray Beach, 82-80-162

Grand Masters Division

- T5 Bob Harris, Boynton Beach, 82-73-78-233
- 14 Bud Allen, Palm Beach Gardens, 83-80-81-244

- Information compiled from news releases and Web sites.

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