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Joanna Coe posts Championship-record 64 to lead PGA Women's Stroke Play Championship, while Rob Corcoran, Yong Joo and David Muttitt share a two-shot lead in the PGA Stroke Play Championship

By John Dever
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PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. (Feb. 11, 2019) - Seul-Ki Park signed for a 71 on her second-round scorecard and graduated to the practice putting green at PGA Golf Club to sharpen her stroke. This made sense, as she was leading the PGA Women's Stroke Play Championship.

Then it started to drizzle, so Park (70-71, 141) sought cover inside.

Then she was in second place. Joanna Coe, playing in the morning's final group, posted a PGA Women's Stroke Play Championship single-round record 64 on the Ryder Course to seize a jolting one-shot lead. Alison Curdt (72-71, 143) of Los Angeles is three back in solo third.

Meanwhile, Yong Joo (68-71, 159) of Ashburn, Virginia, David Muttitt (70-69, 159) of Albuquerque, New Mexico and Rob Corcoran (70-69, 159) of Melbourne, Florida are tied for the 36-hole lead in the PGA Stroke Play Championship. John O'Leary and Frank Bensel are two shots back with two-day totals of 141.

Both Championships are being played at PGA Golf Club in Port St. Lucie, Florida, and are 54-hole events played on both the Wanamaker and Ryder Courses.

Coe's 64 was remarkable in any circumstance, but most especially in contrast with the 76 she opened with in Sunday on the Wanamaker Course.

Twice on Monday, Coe (76-64, 140) summoned four consecutive birdies, once on the front 9 (holes 3-6), and again on back (Nos. 11-14). There were no bogeys and little stress. Just solid play from the PGA Assistant Professional from Baltimore Country Club.

"I putted a *LOT* better as opposed to yesterday, when I had four 3-putts and just made a bunch of bad errors," said Coe. "Today was my first time playing the Ryder (Course) and I kept it simple. In the fairway, hit my wedges close and I made a bunch of putts."

While Park's perch atop the leaderboard was undercut late by Coe, it was not for poor play.

“I just put new irons in my bag,” said Park, a PGA Assistant Professional at Winchester Country Club in Winchester, Massachusetts. “I wanted to work on my greens in regulation. I am very pleased with the number of greens I am hitting. I gave myself as many birdie opportunities as possible.”

What will Tuesday hold for Coe? For as spectacular as she was today on the Ryder, tomorrow’s final round will take her back to the Wanamaker Course, which was not very hospitable Sunday.

“I like the Wanamaker Course,” countered an upbeat Coe. “Yesterday was just putting. I am good friends with Seul-Ki (Park) too, so it will be a nice pairing.”

Joo, the PGA Director of Instruction at Topgolf in Loudoun County, Virginia will sleep Monday night as an unlikely co-leader. With a bogey on the 11th hole, he was 3-over for the round. Joo answered with birdies on 4 of his last 7 holes, including the Wanamaker’s difficult 18th. He had righted his own ship to salvage a 1-under par 71 and a share of the lead.

“To win tomorrow, I need to minimize my mistakes,” said Joo. “I made a few too many today and it slowed me down.”

A self-employed PGA Professional from Los Altos Golf Course in Albuquerque, Muttitt teed off in the morning and avoided the eventual damp conditions. A double-bogey on the Wanamaker’s par-4 14th (his fifth hole of the morning) left him at even par for the Championship.

Like Joo did, Muttitt surged. At one juncture, he posted 6 birdies in a 9-hole stretch. A final hole bogey, on Wanamaker’s 9th hole, left him tied for the lead with Joo.

Looking back, it all started with a mid-round pep talk from a familiar voice.

“I had a ridiculous three-putt for par on 16 and I started talking to myself,” said Muttitt, who will draw off the experience of playing in four career PGA Championships, including each of the last three. “I told myself to settle in. I was striking the ball well, that was not the problem. But I was not putting like I need to. Fortunately, a made a few putts coming in and now I’m in in a good position.”

Corcoran battled the wettest conditions of the three co-leaders, yet his five birdies Monday diluted a pair of bogeys. The last of Corcoran’s five birdies came on the par-4 9th hole, his last of the day.

Corcoran, a PGA Assistant Professional at Poxabogue Golf Center in Bridgehampton, New York, can score with the best of them. He has an eagle (Sunday, 13th hole on Wanamaker) and 8 birdies through two rounds.

Following the second round, the PGA Stroke Play field was cut to the Low 42 and ties. Due to a smaller field, the PGA Women’s Stroke Play does not include a cut. Both events are scheduled to conclude Tuesday.

Due to the threat of inclement weather on Tuesday, the Final Round of the PGA Stroke Play Championship will be a split-tee start off Nos. 1 and 10, with leaders teeing off last on the first tee.

The PGA Winter Championships are presented by GolfAdvisor.com and PrimeSport.

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