



## Alex Beach outduels Danny Balin in Metropolitan PGA showcase to capture the 52nd PGA Professional Championship

By Bob Denney  
PGA of America

**BLUFFTON, S.C. (May 1, 2019)** - Champions can point to a pivotal moment that clear a path to victory. Alex Beach paved his way from the left rough on the 15<sup>th</sup> hole - the No. 1-ranked toughest hole at Belfair's West Course Wednesday afternoon. It is destined to be video footage that Beach will never grow tired of playing.

Nursing a one-stroke lead and facing a 171-yard approach from the left rough over trees to a tucked pin position on the 474-yard, par-4, Beach decided his caddie clubbed him right. He launched a high-arching 8-iron to within four feet of the flagstick.

The 29-year-old PGA Assistant Professional at Westchester Country Club in Rye, New York, then rolled the birdie putt home, and cruised from there to capture the 52<sup>nd</sup> PGA Professional Championship presented by Cadillac, Club Car and OMEGA.

Beach posted a closing 3-under-par 69 for a 72-hole total of 10-under-par 277 and a two-stroke victory over Danny Balin, the PGA Head Professional at Fresh Meadow Country Club in Lake Success, New York, who finished with a 71. Beach pocketed \$55,000 from a \$650,000 purse in the largest all-professional national championship. He also joined 2013 Champion Rod Perry as the only left-handers to win the title.

It was a day the Metropolitan PGA Section Members shined in the national spotlight. There was the Beach and Balin match -and the rest of the field never making a threat for the Walter Hagen Cup. Beach offset a three-putt bogey at No. 5, by stringing three consecutive birdies from Holes 6-8 and added birdies at 13 and the momentous 15<sup>th</sup> hole.

Balin had four birdies, and grabbed a temporary one-stroke margin at No. 7. But, Beach went on his birdie run to give him a cushion. Balin's chances wilted with three straight bogeys - from Nos. 9 through 11, the latter a one-foot par putt that spun off the hole at 11.

"I can't say that I played bad, I can't say that I played great. I missed two short putts that cost me," said Balin. "That said, I still hung on and shot a good score on a hard golf course in a tough final round with a lot at stake.

"It's a hard day. It's nice to play with somebody that you know. But at the end of the day, it's golf; it's on you. Try not to think about what everyone else is doing and know that if I play my game that I can beat anybody out here. Not to sound conceited - just knowing my game and given the situation and circumstances, Alex played great."

Stuart Deane of Arlington, Texas, (70) finished third at 283, while Jason Caron of Oyster Bay, New York (70) and Ben Cook of Caledonia, Michigan (71) shared fourth at 285.

Beach became the eighth individual Metropolitan PGA Member to capture the Championship, with the Section owning nine overall titles. In March, Beach succeeded Balin at Westchester Country Club, adding another historic footnote. That renowned facility becomes the first to employ two PGA Professional Champions. Bruce Zabriski was a former Westchester PGA Assistant Professional when he captured the 1997 Championship.

"This has been a lifelong goal ever since I became a PGA Professional, knowing this is the highest level that we can compete," said Beach. "I know that playing a guy like Danny Balin one-on-one is not easy. The only way I handled it today is because I've done it before. I'm going to have to do it all season. I got him this time, but I guarantee you he's going to have a few more trophies. It was fun being out there with him. A guy like him makes me play better. I was lucky to come out on top today.

"In professional golf, it's all about taking advantage of opportunities. One week a tournament can change your life and your whole outlook on everything. For me, the PPC is that week. The goal was always to do this."

The Met PGA landed five players among the 20 low scorers earning berths in the 101<sup>st</sup> PGA Championship, May 16-19, at Bethpage Black Course in Farmingdale, New York.

“The wind swirls at Belfair and you never sure which way it’s going,” said Beach. “But, he (caddie Jared Seitters) did a great job of monitoring that, and he was great all week. thought it was a soft 7-iron, but he was confident it was a hard 8. He was right.

To turn a moment where the momentum was kid up in the air, and turn where it could have been anything into a birdie took a lot of pressure off going into the final three holes.”

Joanna Coe of Baltimore, Maryland, and Ashley Grier of Springfield, Pennsylvania, who were part of a record foursome of female PGA Members in the Championship, finished 51<sup>st</sup> and 76<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Coe, an Assistant PGA Director of Instruction at Baltimore Country Club, posted a 76 for a 294 total. Grier, a PGA Assistant Professional at Overbrook Country Club in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, had a 76 and 297. Both will compete in the KPMG Women’s PGA Championship, June 20-23, at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minnesota.

Began in 1968, the PGA Professional Championship is presented by Cadillac, Club Car and OMEGA; with supporting partners Nike, TaylorMade Golf, Titleist/FootJoy; Golf Channel and the PGA TOUR.

**Note:** Eight players earned their way onto the 2019 U.S. PGA Cup Team today. [Click here](#) to view the current roster. The final two spots will be determined after the 101<sup>st</sup> PGA Championship at Bethpage Black in Farmingdale, New York. Past PGA President Derek Sprague will Captain the U.S. PGA Cup Team at Omni Barton Creek Resort and Spa in Austin, Texas, September 23-29.

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