



PGA WINTER CHAMPIONSHIPS | JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2021 | PGA GOLF CLUB | PORT ST. LUCIE, FL

## Sonny Skinner, Dick Mast Win Quarter Century Championship At PGA Winter Championships

By Craig Dolch  
Special to PGA of America

*Final results: Quarter Century A (64 and under)*

*Final results: Quarter Century B (65 and over)*

PORT ST. LUCIE (Jan. 7, 2021) - Sonny Skinner of Sylvester, Ga., birdied four of his last eight holes Thursday to win the Quarter Century Championship (ages 64 and under) and kick off the PGA Winter Championships at PGA Golf Club.

Skinner fired a 5-under 66 on the Ryder Course to win by two shots at 8-under 134. He started the day two shots behind leader Frank Esposito, but made six birdies against a bogey to finish two ahead of four players.

Skinner said he had no idea where he stood - there's no live scoring - but he knew he was in great shape when he birdied the difficult par-3 16th. He also birdied the 11th, 13th and 15th holes.

"I can count the number of times I have birdied No. 16 on three fingers, and one of them was today with a 40-footer," said Skinner, a PGA Teaching Professional at Spring Hill Country Club in Tifton, Ga. "You never know when you're going to play well. On No. 15, I hit it to a foot for a birdie. That's more my style."

Skinner was two ahead after the birdie at 16, but had to work for pars on the 17th and 18th holes. On the par-5 17th, he had to make a 7-footer to avoid a three-putt bogey and on 18, he went into a greenside bunker but knocked it to a foot again.

"I just wanted to go out and shoot a good number," said Skinner, who was named PGA Professional of the Year in 2008 and Senior PGA Professional of the Year in 2010. "Sometimes you can play your best and still get beat by two or three shots. I just wanted to worry about my own game and nobody else's. Maybe I should do that more often."

Jack Druga of Southampton, N.Y., matched Skinner's 65 to finish tied for second with Bob Sowards (69) of Dublin, Ohio, Jeff Whitfield of Weldon Spring, Mo., and Esposito (70) of Florham Park, N.J.

In the 65-and-over division of the Half Century Championship, Dick Mast of Forest, Va. shot a pair of 6-under 66s -- three strokes below his age -- on the Wanamaker Course to cruise to an eight-shot victory.

"I putted so well both days," said Mast, a PGA Teaching Professional at Poplar Grove Golf Club in Amhurst, Va. - the last course designed by Hall of Famer Sam Snead.

"These greens (on Wanamaker) are so fast, if you don't putt well, it's going to be a struggle. When you putt well, it's like a pool table. I don't know how many putts I had, but I know this: I didn't miss a putt over 5 feet, and I made my share (of longer ones)."

Mast started Tuesday with a four-shot lead and birdied four of the first six holes to quickly pull away. Mast, who played in a combined 545 events on the PGA Tour and PGA Tour Champions, remained aggressive.

"I was playing with Mike San Filippo and James Mason, and I know those guys can take it deep," Mast said. "I never felt safe until I had about five holes left. I was thinking, 'only eight more holes left, let's make more birdies' instead of 'let's just try and get it to the house.'"

Mike San Filippo of Hobe Sound, the 2019 champion, shot consecutive 70s to finish tied for second at 4-under 140 with Chuck Milne (69) of Vancouver, Wash. The 73-year-old Milne bettered his age both days (71 and 69).

Bill Schumaker (68) of Columbia City, Ind., finished fourth at 3-under 141, a shot ahead of Bobby Heins (69) of White Plains, N.Y., and James Mason (71) of Dillard, Ga.

In the Half Century championship, where players must be a PGA of America member for at least 50 years, Jim Logue of Canton, Ohio, finished birdie-eagle-bogey on the Wanamaker Course for a 75 to edge Nunzio Ciampi of Palm City by a shot at 6-over 150. Ciampi (75-151) also bogeyed the final hole. Tom Joyce of Huntington, N.Y., (78-155) who won the last two years, was five back.

The PGA Winter Championships are presented by GolfPass and PrimeSport.

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#### **Media Contact:**

John Dever, PGA of America, [jdever@pgahq.com](mailto:jdever@pgahq.com)