

Chappell, Tickle shine at Pinehurst

By BILL KIRKLAND

Raleigh's Paul Simson captured the 95th North and South Amateur at Pinehurst, but not before a pair of Prestonwood golfers shared the spotlight in earlier rounds.

Prestonwood veteran Dean Channell reached the quarterfinals. Chuck Tickle, a club member for a year and a half, was one stroke off the lead after the first day of qualifying for the June 6-12 event at the fabled No. 2 course at Pinehurst Resort & Country Club.

And while Tickle intends to compete again in 1996, Channell said he probably won't return for reasons other than golf.

"My wife, Kathy, is expecting twins in mid-August," Channell said. "We also have a three-year-old son, so I don't think I'll be in a position to take that much time off."

Channell qualified for the 64-player field with a two-day total of 146, then picked up three consecutive 3 and 2 victories.

The first was over Harley Henning, a Florida International University golfer who is the son of long-time PGA pro Harold Hen-

ning. The two also met in 1994 when Channell advanced to the final 16 in his first North-South appearance. "I beat him two years in a row," said Channell, "but I doubt if I could do it again. His game is really improving."

After eliminating Henning, the 35-year-old Channell then ousted two more collegiate golfers: Clemson's Charles Warren and Florida's Gary Shankland. He then fell in the quarterfinals, 1-up, to SMU's Jason Enloe.

"We were even after nine, but then I bogeyed the next two holes to go two down," recalled Channell. "I couldn't get any closer than one after that."

Channell had chances to pull even on both 16 and 18, but missed a pair of 15-foot putts. "I wouldn't have had a chance to tie at 18, though, if I hadn't come out of the bunker and one-putted on the 17th to stay within one," he said.

Channell's success at Pinehurst came as no surprise to his Prestonwood competitors. The Preston Pines resident has won three club championships in the last six years and captured five straight match

play titles before losing this year.

Channell, who is a sales representative for Potpourri Designs of Greensboro, didn't take up golf until after graduation from Virginia Tech, where he was a member of the tennis team. He credits Vance Hefner, the director of golf at Prestonwood, as a major factor in bringing his game to a championship level. "Vance is so good I can just watch him and learn things," Channell said.

Despite his dominance at Prestonwood, Channell was in awe of Chuck Tickle's performance in the opening round of qualifying. Tickle's par round of 71 was good enough for second place after day one.

"What Chuck did was phenomenal," Channell said. "It was raining so hard that all you could do was just run out from under the umbrella and hit. I kept thinking that they were going to call the thing, but the sandhills just kept absorbing all that water."

"It was the most miserable weather I've ever played in," said

Tickle. "All I tried to do was hit the ball and hold onto the club. I just kept hitting the fairways and greens."

The next day, Tickle finished with a 74, which put him in a five-way tie for sixth, one stroke ahead of Channell. He was scheduled to play Jody Vasquez the next day, but had to withdraw.

"It was over a business matter," he said. "Some things you have no control over and I hated to withdraw. But business had to come first."

The 33-year-old Tickle, who will move from Apex to Preston Arbor after his September wedding, inherited his love of golf from his father, Charles "Bugs" Tickle of

Pulaski, Va. The senior Tickle has several titles to his credit in Pulaski, and Chuck Tickle first attracted attention as an amateur when he earned Division 2 All-America honors at Radford University. The Tickle's have a common business thread as well: both are State Farm Insurance agents.

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