

Sports

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NO REGRETS

MaliVai Washington stands by decision to turn pro after two productive years as a collegian

By CRAIG T. GREENLEE
Chronicle Sports Editor

It's been two years since MaliVai Washington packed his bags and left Ann Arbor, Mich. in order to pursue a career as a pro tennis player. To this day, he has never had any doubts that he made the right choice.

Washington left the college ranks in '89 after being named the college player of the year as a sophomore. So when he announced that he was forgoing his final two years at the University of Michigan, more than a few folk felt that his departure was premature.

After all, he was the No. 1 rated college player at 19. An All-American in singles and doubles. In some people's minds, staying two more years would only enhance his chances to succeed on the tour.

Washington, now 22, felt otherwise.

"People always ask me if I ever think that I turned pro too early," Washington told *Chronicle Sports*. "I don't have any regrets. Never have. I'm healthy, in shape, and playing well. I feel I'm on target to keep improving my game every time out."

MaliVai (pronounced Malee-VEE-ah) has demonstrated that he can perform at the world-class

level. Last year, he was ranked among the Top 100 players on the planet. This year, the goal is to crack the Top 50 by season's end. Within three years, he sees himself ranked in the Top 10.

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If this year is any indication, we could be hearing a lot more from Washington in the near future. Coming into the Flow Motors tournament, he had made it to the semi-finals of four major events, including the USTA Clay Court Championships and the Volvo Championships. He has also played at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open.

Life on the pro tour isn't always very smooth, especially when you're in your first years. And in most cases, there's not much difference between winning and losing.

Last week's Flow Motors Invitational provided ample proof.

Washington, the Flow champion last year, was knocked out of the Flow title picture when he lost to Jim Grabb in the semi-finals, 6-2, 6-7 (2), 5-7.

Even though Grabb won the last two sets, the final outcome could very easily have gone the other way.

"I thought I played OK for the whole match," Washington said. "But if there was a turning point, I'd have to say it was when he won the tiebreaker. After that, his serve was right. When you play someone like that who has a big serve and they have it going for them, there's not a lot you can do."

Washington's on-court style isn't flamboyant. But he's very aware of what's happening with himself and with his opponent at all times during a match. He's not especially overpowering, but has an innate sense of where he places his shots.

That's not to imply that his serve goes unnoticed. Washington gets his share of aces and when he's on, few are able to return his serves.

The best is yet to come from MaliVai. He has an even temperament which is well suited for this sport. Let's not overlook the fact that he's simply a good young player who will only get better with

Photo by T-Lee

Washington follows through on a serve during the singles semi-finals at the Flow Motors Invitational.

Bethea's second round propels him to CI&T victory

By Chronicle Staff

The second round proved to be a charm for Robert Bethea who distanced himself from Ed Greene to win the championship flight of the first annual CI & T Golf Classic at the Winston Lake Golf Course on Sunday.

Bethea and Greene staged a two-man duel from the beginning, but in the end, Bethea triumphed with a two-day total of 143 to win by seven strokes over Greene.

At the end of the first day, Greene held a one-shot lead over Bethea after carding a one-under 71. But in the final round, Greene's game evaporated and he ended the day with a 79 for a two-round total of 150. Bethea shot 72-71 for the tournament. Rounding out the top four were Curtis Hatton (154) and Tommy Gavin (158).

The senior men's flight was highly competitive with the top four finishers being separated by only four strokes. Amos Lewis emerged as the victor at 150. Lonnie Wellman and Leonard Jackson ended up at 152, but Wellman captured second place on the tie-breaker. Lester Carpenter finished up in the No. 4 spot at 154.

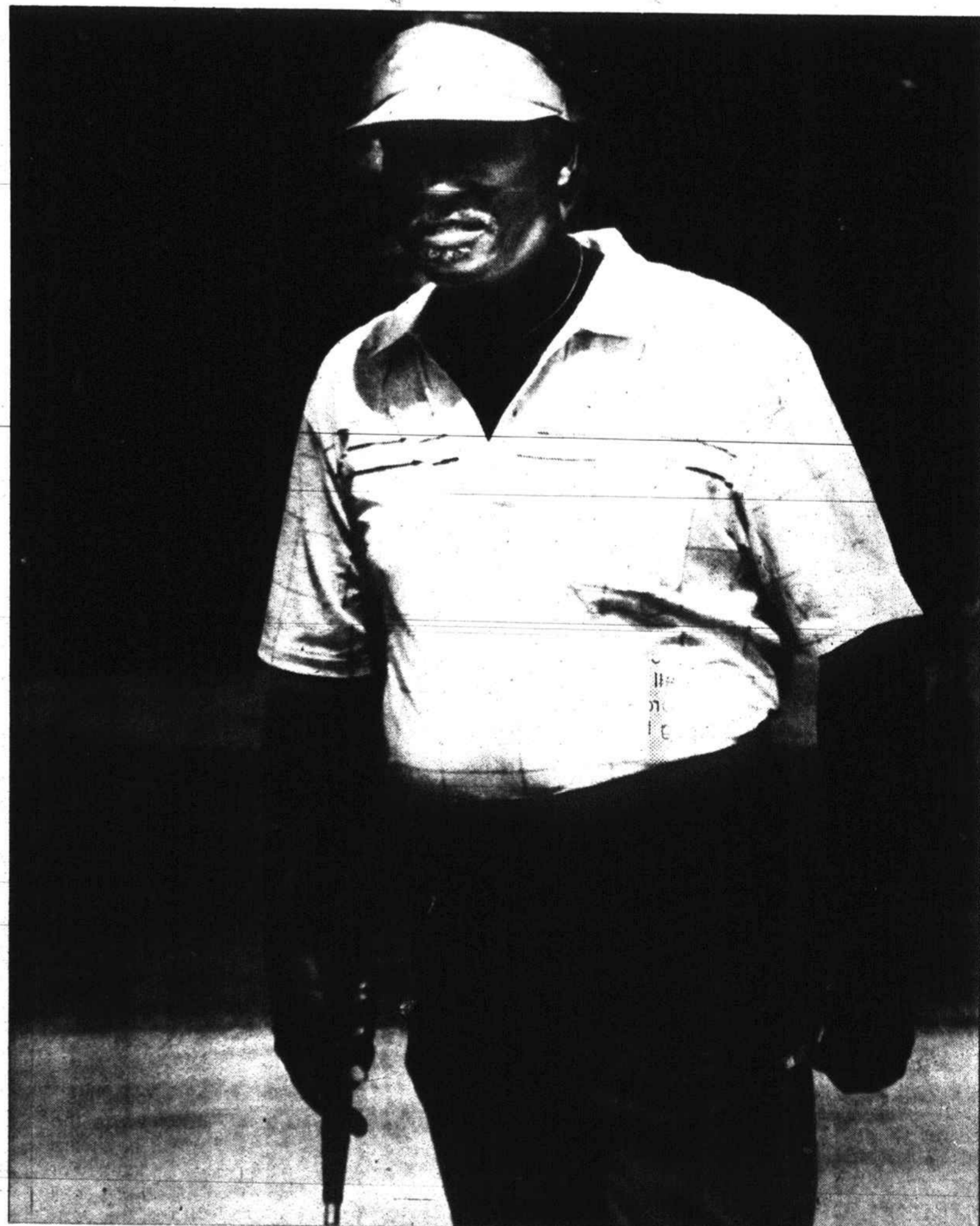
Charlie Manns grabbed a one-stroke lead after the first round, then added to his cushion with a 77 on the second day to secure the trophy in the first flight. Manns totaled 155, beating out second-place Ernie Pitt, who was three strokes off the pace at 158. Bub Spagh was in contention until the end. He placed third with a 159.

In the second flight, Jay Farabee started strong and finished with a rush to win by five strokes. Farabee's 88 in the first

Tournament Scorecard

PLAYER	ROUNDS	TOTAL
Championship flight		
Robert Bethea	72-71	143
Ed Greene	71-79	150
Curtis Hatton	75-79	154
Tommy Gavin	76-82	158
Abron Griffin	75-84	159
Ladies championship flight		
Alberta Harvey	90-98	188
Shirley Scott	116-126	244
Seniors flight		
Amos Lewis	75-75	150
Lonnie Wellman	75-77	152
Leonard Jackson	76-76	152
Lester Carpenter	76-78	154
Joe Harvey	82-73	155
Harry Dillard	79-76	155
Harry Davis	77-79	156
First flight		
Charles Manns	78-77	155
Ernie Pitt	79-79	158
Bub Spagh	80-79	159
Fred Marshall	No card	
Second flight		
Jay Farabee	88-81	169
Raymond Oliver	90-84	174
Thomas Trollinger	93-87	180
H.L. Golden	91-90	181
Michael Trollinger	91-93	184
Third flight		
Russell Harper	102-101	203
Robert Scales	99-107	206
David Faison	106-109	215
Alan Foster	135-121	256

- Men's Closest To The Pin Contest**
 Bub Spagh on No. 12
 Leonard Jackson on No. 2
 Harry Davis on No. 4
 Tommy Gavin on No. 16
- Men's Longest Drive Contest**
 Tommy Gavin on No. 9
 Lester Carpenter on No. 18
- Women's Closest To The Pin Contest**
 Shirley Scott on No. 4
 Alberta Harvey on No. 16
- Women's Longest Drive Contest**
 Alberta Harvey on No. 9 and No. 18
- Putt-Putt Winner**
 Robert Bethea



Robert Bethea held steady to win the CI&T's championship flight by seven strokes. Photo by Chronicle Staff

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