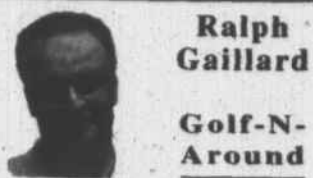


Gibson wins The Vantage Championship, \$225,000



Ralph Gaillard
Golf-N-Around

Trevino, Hale Irwin and Jim Dent, just to name a few. However, Fred Gibson, relatively new to the tour, showed the big fellas he's got game too. Gibson shot 69-62-64 for the tournament and pocketed the \$225,000 winning check.

African American pro Jim Dent was the first-round tournament leader, carding a 63, his best-ever score at Tanglewood. Dent knew he had it "going" after playing with a new putter and a new set of irons in Thursday's pro-am tournament, when he made an eagle on par-5 hole 18. Dent went on Saturday to capture the Super Seniors 36-hole tournament and pocketed \$30,000. Dent, who says he has been playing golf for 45 years, finished The Vantage tied

for 10th place.

African American caddy Mike Green has been caddying for Dent for only four weeks. Green comes to the senior circuit from the PGA Tour, where he caddied for Chip Beck.

Green joked, "Beck has made four cuts on tour since I left." Green said, "Since the prize money has gotten so big, many pros on both tours now have family caddying for them." He said there are about five African American caddies on the senior circuit and about the same number on the PGA Tour. Green said he's been a caddy for 35 years.

Walter Morgan, Booby Stroble and Jim Thorpe also competed in the tournament. Stroble finished

tied for 27th and Morgan tied for 39th. Jim Thorpe withdrew on Friday because of a back injury.

Winston-Salem native Walter Hall tied for 23rd and pocketed \$15,375, while Jim Holtgrieve tied for 32nd and earned \$9,471. Hall, Holtgrieve and Morgan hosted "The Clinic at The Lakes" on Sept. 28. All three pros said how pleased they were with the clinic and are looking forward to coming back next year. Dent and Larry Ziegler have also indicated they want to participate in next year's clinic. More on this subject next week. This may be the start of something big, y'all.

Other "Vantage" happenings: Did you know that Perry Leazer, a "brother" who works at Winston-

Salem State University, has been a volunteer at The Vantage for 11 years? For most of those 11 years, the "brother" has been out there by himself. Well, Leazer had some company this year as Don "Hound" Adams, James Blackburn, Hiawatha Bethea, Robert "Heavy" Bethea, Charles Dowdy, Lewis Green, "Dirty" Harry Transou and "Butch" Wheeler were volunteer marshals at holes 13 and 14 during the tournament. Ruppert Bell and other "brothers" from the Kiwanis Club were also there vol-

unteering in the concession stand next to the 13th green.

Volunteer time working at the tournament is accrued and financial donations are made to an organization of the volunteer's choice. You volunteer to work when you can. Any volunteers for next year?

Until next time, keep it in the fairway.

If you have ideas for Golf-N-Around, call The Chronicle at (336) 723-8428 or e-mail Ralph Gaillard at ralphg@bellsouth.net.



Photos by Ralph Gaillard
(Left to Right) Volunteer marshals Harry Transou and Don Adams "fish" for golf balls at the Vantage Championship.

Local golf pro Kevin Logan with volunteer marshals Lewis Green, Robert Bethea and Charles Dowdy at The Vantage. The marshals are pretty good golfers themselves.

Fleisher regains No. 1 position in earnings

By RALPH GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

African American Senior PGA Tour professionals Jim Dent, Walter Morgan, Bobby Stroble and Jim Thorpe were in town last week, and almost all fared well in the 13th annual Vantage Championship golf tournament at Tanglewood Park in Clemmons.

Dent put a new Odyssey T-3000 putter and a set of the new Calloway Hawkeye irons in his bag last week and fired a 7-under 63. He led Bob Duval (David's father), Bruce Fleisher, Tom Jenkins and Gary McCord by two strokes after Friday's first round.

Dent said, "You always want to look at something new (putter and irons) because it may be good."

Dent, playing with Lee Trevino and Hale Irwin, said, "It's great to get it going, when playing with two great champions."

Morgan finished play on Friday with a 1-under-par 69, while Stroble carded a 2-over-par 72. Roxboro native Thorpe withdrew from competition on Friday after playing just 11 holes due to shoulder and neck pain. He was 7 over par at the time of his withdrawal.

Jenkins carded his second consecutive 65 and was alone in first place at 10 under after the second round on Saturday.

Dent shot a par 70 on Saturday and was in fifth place. Dent, who is 61 years "young," cruised to his third Super Seniors victory of the season, defeating Terry Dill by four strokes. Dent's 36-hole total of 7 under earned him \$30,000.

The Super Seniors tournament is played at all Senior PGA competitions and is "the tournament within the tournament" for pros 60 and over.

Also on Saturday, Morgan shot a 72 and Stroble carded a 69.

Fred Gibson shot a 64 on

Sunday and won the Vantage Championship, taking home \$225,000. It was his first Senior PGA Tour win, and he became the 11th different first-time winner this year, the most in the history of the senior circuit.

Gibson finished eighth in last year's national qualifying tournament to regain his tour card. Afterward, Gibson said he learned three things from his first win: "Stay out of your own way, stay out of your own way, and stay out of your own way."

Fleisher finished second in the tournament, shooting a final round 65. He earned \$132,000. Fleisher regains the number one position in earnings on the senior circuit from Irwin; having won \$1,949,630 thus far this season. Irwin now in the second position has earned \$1,919,732 this season.

Fleisher joked after the tournament; "You can count

on Hale playing in at least the next two tournaments."

Jay Sigel finished third and David Graham and Bob Duval finished tied for fourth in the tournament.

Dent carded another 70 in the final round and tied for 10th place with Jim Colbert and Ray Floyd, earning \$36,000. Stroble finished the tournament with a round of 67 and tied for 27th place. He earned \$12,450. Morgan shot a 69 on Sunday and tied for 39th place, pocketing \$6,900.

Gallery attendance at this year's event was down from previous years. RJR's decision not to televise the event this year is being blamed for the low attendance. The new restrictions recently placed on tobacco companies does allow events such as The Vantage to be televised. More important, will RJR continue the tournament after its current contract with the Senior PGA Tour runs out in 2001?



Senior Tour pro Jim Dent putts on the last hole of the Vantage.

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