

Pineau, 10, shakes up North Face 5K

Kelly Hould

The Recorder

Sam Pineau, 10, of Ponte Vedra Beach placed first overall in the North Face Endurance Challenge Southeast Regional 5K this month in Atlanta.

That's not first in his age group, mind you. That's first in the race.

His time for the 5K was 24:18.9, which means he ran at an average pace of 7:51 per mile. That time wouldn't necessarily win a 5K on flat ground, but the North Face Endurance Challenge features rough, uphill terrain.

"I just wanted to not fall," Sam said, recalling the rocks, downed trees and other hazards on the course. Earlier in different events on the same course, Sam's mother, Bonnie, had watched other runners coming off the course with cut knees and bloody arms.

"I thought, 'Oh no... what have we signed up for?'" Bonnie said.

Sam is the son of racers Bonnie and Ben Pineau—both runners—and the brother of young runner Sophie. But for now, Sam just runs for fun. He's participated in other 5K races such as the Matanzas 5K, where he placed first in his age group—but for now he is too young to run cross country at his school. Sam plays other sports like soccer, and was recognized as the Storm



Photo provided by Bonnie Pineau

player of the year for U9 last year.

"I just like running—and Dad runs, Sophie runs," Sam said. "It's challenging."

Bonnie agrees: it's a family thing. Sam's father and sister also ran the 5K

that day, while Bonnie ran a 10K the day before (placing in the top 5 in her category) and Ben ran a marathon the day before (placing second in his category and in the top 20 overall).

Despite a strong background and a family encouraging him, everyone was shocked by Sam's win.

"Everyone said, 'you won't believe it—Sam won!'" Bonnie said. "I thought he must have just won his age group."

Sam was honored in a ceremony after the race, and got to meet some running stars, including Hal Koerner, winner of the previous day's 50-mile race and one of the racers featured in "Unbreakable" about the 100-mile Western States race.

Sam's technique for running the 5K included trying to "not go too fast, not sprint through the whole thing." The technique of alternating intensity throughout the race is popular with many racers at all levels.

"I'll think about it usually and switch to go faster, then a bit slower and then faster," Sam said.

Bonnie hopes that Sam's running and healthy lifestyle will help influence his friends and peers.

"He tries to focus on being healthy and staying well," she said.

PV freshman delivers golfing talent, passion

Barbara Boxleitner

Special to The Recorder

Steven Mencia has made an impact in just his first season for the Chestnut Hill College (Pa.) golf team.

The Ponte Vedra resident posted the lowest scoring average on the team through three fall tournaments. Mencia averaged 76 strokes in the two events he competed, more than four better than his nearest teammate. "I'm very blessed," he said.

The freshman has done well despite rebounding from biceps tendonitis and a labrum injury suffered from playing basketball at the beginning of the summer. "It wasn't a smart injury," he said, noting that he had intense physical therapy for five weeks to be ready for the college season.

He said the shoulder is not sore when he swings but is sore after he

Funk uses success to multiply community efforts

Lilitera R. Williams

Special to The Recorder

When Fred Funk started playing golf at age 10, he immediately knew that it was something he wanted to be involved with for the rest of his life, and age is just a number when considering his professional stats.

At 56, he is one of the oldest active players still racking up accolades. Funk has won eight titles on the PGA Tour and now eight times on the Champions Tour. He recently birdied his final hole to win the Greater Hickory Classic at Rock Barn on the Champions Tour by one shot over Duffy Waldorf on Oct. 14. He finished at 15-under par, posting rounds of 6-under 66 on Friday and Saturday and a 3-under par 69 on Sunday.

Funk describes his golfing technique as "very basic fundamentals. No pitches or loops, just a simple strategy." A strategy that he likely perfected when he served as the Head Men's Golf Coach at University of Maryland from 1982-1988.

The Ponte Vedra Beach resident headed into the Winn-Dixie Jacksonville Open presented by Planters this past weekend with high hopes of successfully teeing up on the Web.com Tour that took place at the Dye's Valley Course at TPC Sawgrass. The event was Funk's first start in a Web.com Tour. Although he was aiming to advance further, he fell short of becoming the seventh player to win an event on the PGA TOUR, Champions Tour, and Web.com Tour.

"That would be pretty cool, a nice little feather in the cap, but I'm really out here just to play. I'd love to win but I just aim to play well," Funk said before heading into Thursday's opening.

University of Georgia graduate Russell Henley was crowned the winner, his third official victory and second Web.com Tour. Funk was still excited to compete along with future young stars in his own backyard, as well as support the tournament's charitable efforts. One-hundred percent of ticket sales were donated to local charities, and Funk was personally invited by Web.com Tour President and close friend, Bill Calfee, to build publicity around the event.

Grow Your Business



For just
\$495.00
a 25-word classified
ad in the Community
Papers of Florida
network will reach
more than
4.5 million homes
and over
8 million readers.
So what are you
waiting for?
Call today!

Call The Ponte Vedra Recorder Today!
904-285-8831



Photo provided by Barbara Boxleitner

Ponte Vedra resident Steven Mencia is a freshman at Chestnut Hill College (Pa.) where he posted the lowest scoring average on the team through three fall tournaments.

Boxleitner

Continued from 26

completes rounds. "I put ice on it, and I'm fine," he said.

Chestnut Hill head coach Eric McNamee is pleased with Mencia's contributions.

"Steven has many unique skills, including a strong passion for golf, he wears his heart on his sleeve and has high expectations of himself to help the team succeed," McNamee wrote in an email. "The other team members will learn from his example and heart."

Mencia was a medalist at the Richard Stockton College Invitational, carding a 76. He said he made a 6-foot putt on the last hole to win. He tied for sixth in Chestnut Hill's tournament, again leading the team. Mencia said he hasn't had anything worse than a double bogey, though he said the key to his success has been hitting the fairways to get a good start on each hole.

He said his putting has been strong, especially given that he's not familiar

with the courses. "They've got very strategic pin placement. The greens are two-tiered and three-tiered," he said. "The greens are a lot faster. They're very difficult to read. It's just getting the hang of it."

McNamee said he is looking forward to having Mencia for four years. "Without a doubt, he currently has the most potential on the team to be a leader and a top player in Division II golf," he said. "With that said, he will need to focus on his attitude, his golf maturity and his ability to be a leader to reach these goals that are very much within possibility."

More men's golf

Fleming Island High graduate Brady Hollenbacher of Mount Olive College (N.C.) shot a 232 (77-82-73) to tie for 23rd in the Jay Jennison Memorial. He was second among Mount Olive's golfers.

Send updates about area athletes to Barbara Boxleitner at BKLE3@aol.com.

Funk

Continued from 26

Funk prides himself on giving back to the community, with assistance from his growing fanbase, affectionately referred to as "Funk's Punks".

His most notable contribution was sparked when he met JT Townsend, a high school football player who was injured during his senior year on the field. "JT really affected me a lot and I was just happy that the community was able to rally around the cause and give him a chance to have a normal chance at life. He's just a great, uplifting guy," Funk said.

JT is also grateful for Funk's contributions to help improve his health and allow him to live more comfortably. In response to his personal relationship

with Funk he said, "Fred is definitely someone that my family and I love and adore deeply. We are so blessed to have him in our lives, not only as a person but as a great and loyal friend."

There's certainly no "par-fect" way to measure Funk's generosity. He is just happy that his success allows him to give back. His numbers, in this case, are always a hole-in-one.

Naming his 2005 Players Championship win as the greatest accomplishment in his career so far, Funk also won the Insperity Championship in Houston earlier this year. He leads the Champions Tour in driving accuracy and will enter this year's AT&T Championship in San Antonio, hoping to become the first player to win Champions Tour events in two major cities in Texas in the same year.

Send us news about local athletes!

Email pvrecorder@opcfla.com or call (904) 285-8831.

GEORGIA vs FLORIDA
BULLDOGS GATORS
FOOTBALL
JACKSONVILLE FLORIDA
XXL
"RIVALRY ON THE RIVER"

SPORTS MANIA
Your Florida/Georgia Headquarters

**Game Day T's - Hats - Polo's -
Jerseys - T Shirts
and much MORE!!!**

**ALL YOUR GAME
DAY AND
TAILGATING
ACCESSORIES!**

CELEBRATING 13 YEARS AT THE BEACHES

924 North 3rd Street • 242-0640
Jacksonville Beach
1 mile north of Beach on A1A or 3 miles N. of J.T. Butler