



Ogletree on cusp of maiden professional win in Egypt

November 12, 2022 – Cairo: Former US Amateur champion Andy Ogletree continued to put together one of the finest tournaments of his short professional career today when he took the third-round lead at the US\$1.5 million International Series Egypt at Madinaty Golf Club.

The American, helped by a brilliant birdie-eagle finish shot a five-under-par 65 to reach 15 under for the tournament and open up a three-shot lead from Austrian Bernd Wiesberger, who also made a fine eagle on 18 for a 65 of his own, and second-round leader Richard T. Lee from Canada (69).

Last year's US Amateur champion American James Piot (64) and his compatriots Jarin Todd (67) and Sihwan Kim (68), Thailand's Prom Meesawat (66) and Jinichiro Kozuma from Japan (68) are tied for fourth, four behind the leader.

Ogletree started one back from Lee but pulled ahead of the pack with three birdies on the trot from the fifth and narrowly stayed ahead of a crowded leader board all day until his fantastic finish. He holed a 12-footer for birdie on the par-five 17th before reaching the 345-yard par-five 18th in one with an eye-catching drive before he holed out from 30 feet.

"I had a slow start early on, took me a little bit of time to get into the round," said 24-year-old Ogletree, who turned professional in 2020 a year after winning his country's National Amateur.

"I was playing well but three putted two which was super frustrating. I kept telling myself to stay patient, there are a lot of birdies out there. I never beat myself up and I knew that I would make some birdies coming in."

Wiesberger looked set to finish the day in the pack before holing a 20-foot eagle putt on the final hole – brandishing the 'broomhandle' putter that he has been using since July to great effect.

He said: "It is a little bit of a mystery ride for me on the greens. I am really struggling on the greens, with reading them and trusting them. But as Jamie my caddie said my patience was rewarded today - nice to roll one in for eagle on the last."

Overnight leader Lee, so impressive over the first two days on the front nine, failed to get going and went out in level par before making a double on 13 which saw him tumble down the leaderboard. However, he got back into contention with four birdies in the last five holes.

Said the two-time Asian Tour winner: "Yeah, I was struggling with my swing a little bit, and think I was trying to make birdies too early, trying to pressure myself a little bit. But I am happy with how I came back with a few birdies on the back nine, and let's see what happens tomorrow."

First-round leader Scott Hend from Australia bounced back from a disappointing second day 74 shooting a 64 and is tied for ninth five behind the leader.

The four regional representatives in the field had mixed fortunes on day three. Moroccan Ayoub Lguirati, who had started the day tied ninth at -7, made triple bogey on his first hole, and settled for a three over round of 73 to move to four under for the tournament, alongside Shergo Kurdi after the Jordanian carded a 67.



Lguirati's amateur compatriot Mehdi Al Fakori is a shot further back on -3 after a 68, while Adam Bresnu is on -1 for after a one-over round of 71.

Kurdi was pleased with his mental strength after a round which contained six birdies in total, negating a poor run of three bogeys in five holes which threatened to derail his efforts.

He said: "The good thing is I came back strong and finished the strongest of all three days. I'm learning a lot more about myself, I still have a lot more to learn. There's lots to learn about swing, conditions and more every time you play, but mentality is the most important thing and I'm learning about the right mindset that is good for me, not necessarily good for everyone else."

Fakori added: "It went well, I went three under in the first nine but I wasn't lucky in the second nine. I went two over and that got me to one under today and three under in total, which I'm happy with. It's a great confidence boost since I didn't make the cut last weekend in Morocco and this puts me in a good position for the next tournaments."

Bresnu added: "That was very difficult, my putting was not good and I started with two or three bad shots in a row, so my confidence wasn't great. I knew it would be very difficult and I am pleased I was able to fight back.

"This is my second Asian Tour event and it is a big boost to my confidence to be playing against the best players in the Asian Tour and some of the best in the world."

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