Youngster begins PGA Tour journey

PHOENIX (AP) — Ty Tryon brought a yardage book and a math book to the Phoenix Open. He also has some ''history stuff'' to study so that he doesn't fall too far behind, but the 17-year-old is more interested in making history of his own.

He already has.

The proof is a PGA Tour card, which Tryon secured two months ago with a 66 in the final round at Q-school to become the youngest player to ever to earn his playing privileges. He carries the card in his wallet, somewhere in there with his student ID from Dr. Phillips High School in Orlando, Fla., where Tryon is a junior.

"I've been dreaming about the PGA Tour since grade school," Tryon said, pausing to think about what he just said before finishing the thought. "Which wasn't too long ago."

He will be playing in the group behind David Frost, who went through Q-school the year Tryon was born. A threesome ahead will include former U.S. Open champion Scott Simpson, who is older than Tryon's father.

The rest of the field features stars Tryon was watching on TV not long ago — Phil Mickelson, David Duval, Vijay Singh, Nick Price.

"He hits the ball long and straight and putts it great, and that's all there is to the game," Mickelson said. "He's going to have a long career, and I hope he gets off to a great start."

The reality of his new job sunk in when Tryon was asked to take part in Tuesday's festivities — a Skins game with Arizona Diamondbacks first baseman Mark Grace; a long drive contest that included John Daly and Mickelson; a gallery on the TPC at Scottsdale unlike anything he had ever seen in his previous three ventures on the PGA Tour.

"I was pretty nervous," Tryon said. "John Daly was standing right next me when I'm hitting my drive. I hit it out there with Phil, but John was way by me."

The biggest difference of all?

"Everybody knows me," he said. "I feel like I belong. I earned my way here."

His story is one of the most amazing in golf for someone so young.

Tryon qualified for the Honda Classic last year as a 16-year-old, then became the youngest player in 44 years to make the cut in a PGA Tour event, tying for 39th. He played again at the B.C. Open and had a share of the first-round lead before tying for 37th.

What stunned the establishment even more was his next move. He turned pro, right after opening with an 80 in the U.S. Amateur and failing to qualify for match play.

"I think it's a joke. It's a terrible decision," Scott Hoch, a family friend, said at the time.

Hoch wasn't the lone voice of opposition.

"Those years in school give you a maturation you just can't get otherwise," said Hale Irwin . "I think you need to be in your peer group.

Seniors

Continued from page 1B

Those five seniors, combined with more strong play from sophomore Jessica Roland, who is No. 73 in the nation, have the Aggies set for another strong run this season.

"The chemistry on this team is very good," Kleinecke said. "Everyone knows they have a role to play on this team."

Roland said she is stronger, both physically and mentally, and the team is better prepared for this season.

"We have a lot of experience this year," Roland said. "It will definitely show in our matches and in the Big 12 conference tournament."

Karlikova, who struggled with injuries last year, said she wants to start strong for the team.

"Everyone wants a ring," Karlikova said. "And this is our last chance. I believe that we can win the Big 12. We all know what our goals are, now we just have to achieve them."

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Aggies fall to Baylor, 95–61

WACO (AP) — Danielle Crockrom and Sheila Lambert each scored 18 points to lead No. 15 Baylor to a 95-61 win over Texas A&M Wednesday night.

LaToya Rose led A&M (10-8, 2-4) with 13 points.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Classifieds continued from page 2B

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