

Quail Ridge uses fast start to secure Golf Road Cup



Quail Ridge Country Club jumped ahead at the outset and went on to a victory over Delray Dunes in the annual Golf Road Cup for neighborhood bragging rights. From left, front row: David Rowley, Dan Brosnihan III, Mario Forget and Henry Shean; and back row: Jacques Authier, Donald Cloutier, Francois Duquette, Charlie Price, Kevin Hammer, Woody Greene, Dennis Walter, Hugo Cloutier, Pierre Duranleau and Mike Korenoski. Not pictured are members Dennis Walter, Chris Perrin and Matt Corey. (Courtesy)

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Quail Ridge Country Club won the first five matches and cruised to a 16-8 victory over Delray Dunes Golf & Country Club in the Golf Road Cup, an annual competition between these two private country clubs situated one mile apart on Golf Road.

The two clubs, which include players from Delray Beach and Boynton Beach, have battled it out for supremacy on the links for years. This year's win by Quail Ridge snapped a four-year losing skid to their rivals and gave them bragging rights and a 9-8-1 record in the series.

Leading by 9 1/2-2 1/2 entering Sunday's singles play, Quail Ridge won five matches and had three halves to clinch the victory. The two-day event was played in harsh weather conditions on Quail Ridge's North Course that included unseasonably cool temperatures and brisk winds.

"What's nice about winning is it keeps things competitive and fresh," said Quail Ridge captain Kevin Hammer, a former top-ranked junior player who went 2-1 in his matches. "We dominated for a while and they have dominated lately. Both clubs have a long history of helping each other and there is a lot of camaraderie and similarities between the two clubs."

Hammer, who noted that he has played in the event about 10 times, was pleased that Charlie Price served as honorary Quail Ridge captain and indicated that he "did a good job and was very inspirational."

"It is a rare club event," Hammer said. "Both of these clubs have a long connected history in many different ways. Both have grown up together. Both of the directors of golf for many decades were very close friends and they both had the same original developer."

Delray Dunes played without longtime member Bob Murphy, who won a combined 16 times on the **PGA Tour** and PGA Tour Champions. The 73-year-old Murphy said balance issues have bothered him, but was on hand to watch.

Murphy's absence probably didn't matter, given the way Quail Ridge dominated from the start.

"Quail Ridge played beautifully," said Delray Dunes member Jay Sigel, a two-time U.S. Amateur champion who won eight PGA Tour Champions titles. "I don't know if we played our best, if that would have been good enough."

Delray Dunes head golf pro Brad McCallum, who also played in the Golf Road Cup, called it one of the premier events for both clubs.

"As far as the level of competition goes, it is basically our best players against their best players," McCallum said. "It is definitely for bragging rights."

Delray Dunes held a 36-hole stroke-play qualifier to determine its participants, while Quail Ridge had a 54-hole qualifier that was tied into its club championship. Both teams carried 12 players, which included the golf pros from both clubs and they played in a format similar to the Ryder Cup.

Woody Greene and Mario Forget earned three points for Quail Ridge — two of those points earned together. Hugo Cloutier and Francois Duquette earned the same score.

"There were a couple of hundred spectators at the event and that is fantastic," Hammer said. "The other thing that makes it unique is the club golf professionals are playing and compete each year, alongside the members and that is wonderful because the members get to know them better. It is a lot of fun and it is always a different animal and a fun way to kick off the new year."

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