



Rafael Campos (Johnnie Walker Cup Champion) & Edward Figueroa (2012 PR Amateur Champion)
Photo Courtesy: Ginelys Dahl / PRGA Staff

Final Recap

PRGA Championships crown Campos and Figueroa

by Alberto C. Medina / PRGA Staff Writer

Río Grande, PR - For the fifth consecutive time, and second as a pro golfer, Rafael Campos has earned the title of Puerto Rico's national champion by dominating the field at the **PRGA Championships, presented by Johnnie Walker**, and played at the Trump International Golf Club in Río Grande.

Campos shot a 70 on Sunday to improve his overall score to an impressive -10. The Puerto Rican pro, who recently finished the **Tour de las Américas** (TLA) and will soon compete in the inaugural **PGA Tour Latinoamérica**, displayed remarkable consistency throughout: he was the only player in the field to shoot below par in all four rounds. With a calm demeanor and steady play that focused on hitting fairways and greens, Campos avoided bogeys where others fell prey to them and went for birdies only when the opportunities presented themselves.

"These last few years I feel like I've really gotten the most out of this tournament," said Campos about the increased skill and maturity level that has led to his continued success here. As in other years, Campos' win at the PRGA Championships grants him a spot on the PGA Tour's 2013 Puerto Rico Open, something which the golfer described simply as "an honor."

While Campos' victory was all but certain from the start, the tournament's big surprise was young Edward Figueroa, who saved his best round for last. The Florida-based 18-year-old, shot a closing-round 70 to finish up at

-1 and become the only player, besides Campos, to finish the tournament under par. Figueroa placed second overall and was crowned the new amateur national champ.

"I really didn't expect to play as well as I did," said Figueroa. "I'm so happy that I played so well; this was a great experience, and playing with Rafa (Campos), who's a great player, it was just awesome."

Figueroa, who recently won the AJGA's Puerto Rico Junior Open, a prestigious international juniors event, is beginning to look like one of the most promising Puerto Rican golf prospects. He mentioned that wins like this weekend's are vital to his development as a player. "It definitely gives me a lot of confidence, to win on a course like this against all these great players," said Figueroa, who is about to begin his NCAA career at Florida Gulf Coast University.

The rest of the overall top-5 was: Max Alverio (even), who finished second among pros; Jerónimo Esteve (+7), the second-place amateur; and, in fifth place, pro Miguel Suárez. Among the mid-amateurs who shared the course with the elite players, Felipe Colón came out on top with a score of +14.

Robles 'three-peats'

In the Ladies category, Paola Robles finished at +5 after 54 holes to win her third consecutive title at this event. Robles, whose 70 on Saturday was the only round under par among the female competitors, took advantage of the lead she built with that score and closed with a solid 78 to comfortably outpace Yudika Rodríguez and Kristina Ortiz, who shot +17 and +18 overall and finished second and third, respectively.

Like Robles, Venezuelan Fernando Díaz was able to hold the lead he built on Saturday, when he managed -3 (also the only score under par in his category) en route to being crowned the winner among Seniors. Díaz shot 78 on Sunday to finish at +9 and beat Norman Tello, who lagged far behind at +19 and beat out César Serrano in a tiebreaker for second place. The fight for first was stiffer among the Super Seniors, and Elvin González, Sr., had to give his best effort to shoot a final-round 79 and finish at +19, just one stroke better than Israel Ortiz, whose 78 on the final day was just not enough and left him at +20.

In the 1st Flight, for players with higher handicaps, Jerry Jiménez (+23) led the amateurs, Jeannie Belaval (+25) was the best female, and Enoc Ramos (+23) the top senior. Julio César Cortina finished at +22 and triumphed in the 2nd Flight group. All of these categories played 36 holes. Puerto Rico Golf Association president Sidney Wolf extends his congratulations to all the winners and participants, who had nothing but laudatory words about the tournament.