

PRESS-REGISTER

Point Break

Snedeker takes last shot at PGA Tour by competing on golf reality show "Big Break X: Michigan"

Friday, August 01, 2008

By GARETH CLARY

Sports Reporter

Two-time Mobile Metro champion Haymes Snedeker, driven by a dream to play against his younger brother on the PGA Tour and also to help a close friend, may get to do both in one swing, thanks to The Golf Channel.

Snedeker will be appearing in "Big Break X: Michigan," the reality show on the 24/7 golf network in which the winners earn one-time exemptions into PGA or LPGA tour events.

The 11-week series was filmed in July on four courses at the Boyne Highlands Resort in Harbor Springs, Mich., and will begin airing on Oct. 7.

"It was the most stressful thing I've ever done," said Snedeker, who is a municipal court judge in Fairhope. "It was one last bite at the apple for me."

Due to a strict confidentiality agreement, Snedeker can't reveal how he fared on the show.

Big Break X features a new format of eight male-female teams battling in skills challenges that test all phases of their games.

Snedeker's partner is Bernadette "Bernie" Luse of Naples, Fla. They met and became good friends at Ole Miss where Snedeker was an All-Southeastern Conference golfer and later an assistant coach for the Rebels and Luse played for the Lady Rebels.

Luse went on to become the first Ole Miss golfer to make it to the LPGA. She played for two years before losing her exemption and her sponsors.

"The dynamic of the team is what sells the team," said Big Break X producer Darryl Marshall, who helped interview, audition and select the teams from nearly 5,000 applicants.

"Haymes is very interesting because of his judgship. His brother being on tour really had no bearing. His application was quite funny. He described his swing as an octopus falling out of a tree."

Snedeker's unique description of his unusual swing and Luse's hard-luck story grabbed Marshall's attention.

"We see so many swings that look robotic," Marshall said. "That swing that he has looks funny at first but the more you see it, you see how really good it is. Their interview was just awesome. He's so well-spoken and has that Southern charm."

"Bernie was on the LPGA but just ran out of money. She broke down talking about her parents and how much they had done to support her. It tugs at your heartstrings to hear her story."

Snedeker said the idea for applying for the show actually came from his brother Brandt, who was the 2007

rookie of the year on the PGA Tour.

Luse and Snedeker were invited to Orlando in the spring to interview and hit some golf shots. They got the call later that they had been selected for the show.

"The format is similar to the other Big Breaks with special challenges and competitions," said Snedeker, who celebrated the birth of his second child, a son named Wells, with his wife Amy 11 days ago.

"With it being the 10th in the series, they treated it very special. It was pretty intense competition."

After his outstanding college career, Snedeker never really pursued pro golf. His parents, who now live in Gulf Shores, each had surgery right after his college career ended and he started working in the family business.

Then, he returned to Ole Miss for law school and "just kind of lost that fire," to pursue the PGA Tour.

The Big Break opportunity rekindled that fire, particularly when it means the opportunity to compete against his brother.

"The last time we competed in the same tournament was the Labor Day Invitational in 2002," Snedeker said. "It's one thing to play a round with your brother, but it's another thing to compete on the same stage.

"We all get together at the Masters to watch Brandt and that's a big deal for us. It would be really special for our family and friends to have the boys back together again competing in the same tournament."

Snedeker's other motivation was to help Luse.

"She's one of the nicest girls you could ever meet," said Snedeker. "We played a lot of golf together in college. She had it and lost it and now she's trying to get it back. She's very deserving, so I was hoping to help her fulfill her dream. That's what is so intense about the team format. It's not just your dream on the line."

Marshall believes viewers will enjoy the series, not only because of the compelling storylines but also because of the quality of play.

"The competition was pleasantly surprising," Marshall said. "You never know with a team format how the golf is going to be but the golf exceeded expectations. I think the public will enjoy this one. It's different."

One of the other teams on the show is David Mobley of Huntersville, N.C., and Sally Dee of Tampa, Fla., who met on the professional long-drive circuit. Mobley is a former resident of Mobile, who worked at the downtown YMCA.

©2008

© 2008 al.com All Rights Reserved.