

Waddell 2 Behind In State PGA Junior

MACON, Ga. — Wright Waddell came up two strokes short in his bid to give Columbus the Georgia Junior PGA championship for a third consecutive year here Wednesday.

The Hardaway High School star bogeyed the 18th hole to finish two shots behind Neal Morrison of Savannah and Mark Drury of Brunswick.

They met in a sudden-death playoff for the championship and Morrison birdied the first hole to win the title and qualify for the National PGA Junior championship at Callaway Gardens later this summer.

Waddell threw three birdies at the leaders within a five-hole stretch on the back nine to move into strong contention to repeat his championship of a year ago but then finished with a bogey for an even-par 72 and 145 total for third place.

Columbus' Johnny Hammond won the title two years ago.

Fort Benning's Fred Wadsworth shot a 73 Wednesday to finish in a tie with Gene Sauers of Savannah for fifth place. Sauers had one of two 71s, low score for the day.

Hugh Royer III of Columbus, who led the 14-15-year-old age group after Tuesday's first round, finished bogey-bogey-triple bogey-par on the front nine to blow himself out of contention.

"This was awful," he said. "Yesterday, at least, I putted good. Today I couldn't do anything."

He began the round one-under through five holes but a bad lie in the fairway on No. 6 caused a bogey and broke his concentration.

Morrison swatted a mediocre drive off the tee on the playoff hole and then drilled a 9-iron three feet above the cup. Drury drove behind a tree on the right, hit his approach short and then stroked a pitch shot that left him about a two-foot putt for par.

But Morrison never let him hit it. The Savannah Country Day student rolled his birdie putt into the cup and then raised a clenched fist in exultation.

Both Morrison and Drury turned in up-and-down, even-par 72s, that, when matched with opening-round 71s, gave them 143 totals and a two-shot margin over the rest of the field.

Bill McDonald, playing from the front tees, also shot a 71 Wednesday and walked away from the 12-13-year-old age division field. He had shot a 76 Tuesday.

Roswell's Jay Hagen shot a 75 Wednesday to win the 14-15-year-old group.

Other area players included: Mike Rullan of LaGrange in the 12-13 age group, 102-100—202; in the 14-15 division, Brian Greenfield of Fort Benning 88-88—176, Dale Hammond of Columbus 93-89—182, Jenny Holder of Columbus 89-82—181 and Gordon Smith of LaGrange 96-86—182; 16-17 division, Paul McGillicuddy of Columbus 75-77—152, Brad Braxton of Columbus 81-81—162, Robert Greenfield of Columbus 81-80—161, Johnny Hammond of Columbus 79-76—155, Bill Tarpley of Columbus 81-72—153, Steve Teal of Columbus 82-80—162 and Billy Watts of LaGrange 79-81—160.