



ANCC FOUNDATION Did You Know?



ANCC U.S. Open Qualifying Tournaments

The USGA holds qualifying tournaments on two tiers – local and sectional. On three occasions ANCC hosted USGA Open qualifying tournaments, one local qualifier (1982) and two sectional qualifiers (1981 and 1986).

1981 U.S. Open Sectional Qualifier at ANCC

USGA Open qualification is held in two tiers – Local (late April through mid-May) and Sectional (held in early June). Any professional golfer or amateur with a handicap index of 1.4 is eligible to enter. Players who advance through the local qualifiers and those players exempt from local qualifying (based upon past performance), advance to the Sectional qualifiers. Sectional qualifiers are a 36-hole, single day event that advances players to the United States Open.

The 1981 United States Open was held at the Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, PA, June 18-21. There were 58 local qualifiers and eleven sectional qualifiers held in 1981. A sectional that produced four Open qualifiers was held at Army Navy Country Club, Arlington, VA on Tuesday June 9th.

Included below is the Washington Post article describing the results of the qualifier.

DeFrancesco 141 Tops Qualifiers; Elder Earns Spot

By Ben Gieser
Specialist to The Washington Post

Amateur Wayne DeFrancesco of Reston pushed aside the pros yesterday at Army Navy Country Club in Arlington and led four qualifiers into the U.S. Open golf championship.

The slender 23-year-old former Louisiana State player shot three-under-par 69 in his afternoon round and finished with a 36-hole total of 141 strokes to gain the Open, to be held for the fourth time at Merion in Ardmore, Pa., June 18-21.

Another amateur, former University of Maryland player Mark Lawrence of Richmond, was next at 73-70 — 143, with 12 birdies in 36 holes. Pro Al Green III, Crownsville, Md., scored a

triple-bogey 7 on the 14th hole after a morning delay caused by an electrical storm, but still qualified with 73-71 — 144.

Lee Elder of Langston, who led after a morning round of 69 but ballooned to 77 in the afternoon, won a four-man playoff with a birdie on the first extra hole. The other three players in the playoff at 146 were amateur Greg Carpousis of the host club (71-75), Tom Hanna of State College, Pa., (76-70) and Mark Alwin of Woodholme (74-72).

DeFrancesco's putting improved when the winds picked up in the afternoon and he birdied six holes. He said that a bogey at No. 14 — where he visited water and sand before salvaging a 5 with a 15-foot putt — was important. He then birdied the next two holes.

Elder, 46, who won \$15,600 by tying for third in the Atlanta Classic over the weekend, appeared to tire on his final 18 holes.

The most notable of the qualifiers was Lee Elder who in 1975 became the first African American to be invited to play in the Masters' and in 1979 the first African American to make the Ryder Cup team. Overall, Elder won four times on the PGA Tour:

1974 Monsanto Open

1976 Houston Open

1978 Greater Milwaukee Open

1978 American Express Westchester Classic



Lee Elder joined the PGA Senior Tour in 1984 where he won eight times. He passed away on November 28, 2021 (age 87).