

## Big day looms for Drenth at Short Hills Am

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Dusty Drenth called the start to his **Short Hills Amateur** tournament round on Friday "a rude awakening with how fast the greens were."

He left himself with two 7- or 8-foot comeback putts for par after blowing his birdie tries way past the hole. He made the first, but missed the second.

His second nine, though, started much differently with a pair of birdies on Nos. 10 and 11. He rode a smoother inward nine of fairways and greens to a back nine 34 en route to a 1-under 71 for the round. He sits in good position after the opening 18 of the scheduled 36-hole Quad City **Amateur** Tour event at the East Moline facility, but will have two carrots to chase today in the final round.

The first, and maybe not the most important, will be his third victory at SHCC in four years. To get that, though, he will have to catch former St. Ambrose University teammate Ben Hanson, who carded a solid 4-under 68 on Friday to lead the tourney.

The other race, though, is of much more importance. Drenth can earn one of the two QCAm Tour spots into the PGA Tour's John Deere Classic qualifier. Drenth, the former SAU NAIA All-American, is second in the season-long QCAm Tour points race behind reigning Player of the Year Ben Peters, who earned the other qualifier spot for his POY honor. However, Peters has already opted out of the spot because of previous commitments, giving that qualifier spot to 2010 POY runner-up Tyler Pitlik.

That leaves Drenth, second in 2011 points behind Peters, needing to hold off David Lawrence (Friday 74) in today's final round for that coveted spot in the qualifier at Pinnacle Country Club. Tim Flaherty (Friday 77) is also in the 2011 points race for the qualifier but is also not able to take the spot, leaving it a Drenth-Lawrence battle for the opportunity in the JDC qualifier.

It would be the third year in a row that Drenth would have a shot in the prequalifier. He has made it through that both years and into the official Monday four-spotter for a spot into the JDC.

"I want to make it through Pinnacle," said Drenth. "I know I can shoot 67 there; it's not that hard."

He was close to carding that number on Friday at **Short Hills**.

"It's all about confidence for me right now," said Drenth, whose two front-nine bogeys were both three-putts. "The front nine, I was all over the place and I made a couple of good par putts. The back nine was more my style of golf. I really felt I could birdie every hole on the back and should have had five in a row. I left a lot of shots out there."

Hanson, who roomed with Drenth on SAU road trips his senior season, did not have a 5 on his scorecard as he birdied all four of the par 5s and added another at the par-4 second. His lone bogey at his home course was on the par-3 7th.

"I've been playing good lately, but I haven't been playing as much," said Hanson, winner of the 2010 Glynn's Creek Am. "The familiarity of being on my home course helps, there are no surprises."

Matching Drenth at 71 – making it just a foursome under par -- were Matt Solis and Tom Lathrop. Jamie Hallstrom checked in at even par and Joe Demory, Pitlik and Peters all carded 1-over 73.

**Seniors:** Fred Lukasik also took advantage of playing his home course to race to the lead in the Seniors Division with a 3-under 69. His round included an eagle (3 on the par-5 13th), five birdies, two bogeys and a double bogey. That gave him a two-stroke lead over John Peters (71). They were the only two players in red numbers.

