

## Drenth, Sergeant ready for JDC qualifier

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Dusty Drenth and Ryan Sergeant — teammates this past season on the St. Ambrose men's golf team — have pretty simple Fourth of July holiday plans.

Both are hoping they spend the weekend getting ready for Monday's John Deere Classic qualifying tournament at Pinnacle Country Club. Before they can focus on that, however, they must survive Friday's pre-qualifier at Pinnacle in which the Top 50 players and ties from a field of 152 advance to Monday's "Four-spotter" for the chance to play in the local PGA Tour event. There could be 100 more golfers in Monday's field, as well.

Other notables in Friday's field are local teaching professionals John Panek, Aaron Krueger, Mitch VanZuiden and Sean McCarty along with Moline native Ben Weir, who toiled on the mini tours for a bit.

Both Fighting Bees are in the qualifying process thanks to both the Quad City Amateur Tour and, in part, Ben Peters. The local amateur tour provides two spots in the qualifier — to the previous season's Player of the Year and the current points leader. Peters holds both of those honors but is not able to play. As a result, Drenth last year's Tour Championship winner, earns one spot as last year's No. 2 in the POY race. Sergeant sits at No. 2 in this year's points race.

"It kind of fell into my lap," said Sergeant. "To be here does feel good, and I appreciate the opportunity. I thank Ben for giving up his spot because he has game and he should be doing this. I thank the QCAm Tour for giving me this opportunity."

For Drenth, it is the third straight year he has reached the qualifier through the QCAm Tour. It is a major goal of his to play in the JDC and also play professionally some day. He even requested a sponsor's exemption this summer — a request JDC tournament director Clair Peterson couldn't honor with some big-name touring pros needing help to get into the 2010 field for the 40th anniversary event.

"My goal for Friday is to get through and play well," said Drenth, a spring SAU graduate who has survived the first stage of qualifying each of the last two years. "Maybe there is more pressure wanting to play in the JDC so badly, but I don't think I'm putting too much pressure on myself. It's not the end of the world if I don't get in. I'm going to go out and have some fun. God has a plan for me."

This is a big opportunity for Sergeant, a senior-to-be at SAU, who said this might be the only chance he has to play in the qualifier, which has a \$400 entry fee.

"I'm not going to pay that kind of money," said Sergeant, not even for the pot of gold that could be at the end of that rainbow.

"I expect myself to get to Monday, but I'm not going to sit here and say that I expect to compete for one of those four spots. That's just not my game right now. I guess what I'm looking to get out of it is a good, fun experience in which I get to measure myself against some really good players. ... There are going to be some seasoned pros playing in qualifying that I might get a chance to play with if I get to Monday. You can measure yourself — see exactly how far away you are or see how close you might be. It's going to be a good motivator to get back to this point."

If either or both survive Friday's cut, they will have some work to do. Because of new USGA groove rules that were implemented on the Tour this year, both will have to switch to conforming clubs for Monday's play. They hope they have to worry about that.

Ironically, even if neither one earns one of those four spots on Monday, they will be plenty busy with JDC-related activities next week. Drenth works for the Deere Run club in outside operations and Sergeant will be helping with coverage for The Dispatch and The Rock Island Argus.