

BRainerd DISPATCH

SPORTS

Mike Bialka • SPORTS EDITOR

• 218-855-5861 • mik@brainerd.comwww.brainerddispatch.com

Sunday, July 22, 2018



IT'S ALL HAPPENING

A golfer tees off on the 10th hole of Bobby's Legacy Championship Golf Course on Thursday, July 19, at Cragun's Resort on Gull Lake.

Kelly Humphrey / Brainerd Dispatch

Dondelinger signs on as title sponsor for golf showcase

By Jeremy Millson
Sports Writer

D.J. Dondelinger saw little downside and a big upside with his investment as the new title sponsor of the Brainerd Lakes Area Tour Showcase, set for Aug. 22 at Cragun's Legacy Courses in East Gull Lake.

Dondelinger Auto's big thinking sparked others like Xcel Energy to follow suit. That's got Chuck Klecatsky, director of golf at Cragun's, excited for this inaugural event.

"(Dondelinger signing on) made the event able to happen," Klecatsky said. "Once we got Dondelinger on board, Xcel Energy came on as a presenting sponsor and we've had great success selling putting green sponsors and printing

partners and all of the things that go into doing something like this happen with business owners saying 'yes.'"

The event, a brainchild of Ron Sanders of Sartell, started with Sanders asking a question nine months ago. That question? "Wouldn't the Brainerd area be a great place for a Web.com Tour event?"

The first step toward that goal will be the Dondelinger Brainerd Lakes Area Tour Showcase. This inaugural "Happening" will be a pro-am event featuring present and future PGA players, along with a host of Minnesota celebrities for the benefit of area charities. The hope is this one-day event morphs into a week-long Web.com event.

"This one is different than what is going to happen in the future because this one we're just showcasing the idea basically to potential sponsors," Klecatsky said. "Next year, we'll have an event where spectators would come because we'll have people playing tournament golf. This year, those players will just be part of the group. We'll have a celebrity player and three sponsors. Next year, the sponsors won't be playing during the tournament. We'll have a pro-am the day before, but then we'll have a three-day event."

The ideal growth is for this event to grow with expanded player fields and entertainment galas until it is a regular stop on the tour.

The Web.com Tour is the developmental tour for the PGA Tour. Think the minor leagues of

TWINS REPORT

Sano advances to Triple-A during All-Star break

By Mike Berardino
St. Paul Pioneer Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Fort Myers portion of Miguel Sano's reboot is over.

Sano was promoted to Triple-A Rochester on Friday, July 20, after spending the past four days back home in the Dominican Republic, where he was visiting his mother as part of a team-excused absence.

"I haven't spoken to him since he returned yet," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "I just know she's dealing with some things and he wanted to get down there, which was the right thing."

Sano, 25, played in 19 games for the Miracle after being optioned on June 14. In 77 plate appearances he hit .328 with a .442 on-base percentage and a .453 slugging percentage. He struck out 21 times (27.3 percent) and hit just two home runs and two doubles while driving in 12.

Sano played just two games with 19-year-old shortstop Royce Lewis, the Twins top prospect who was recently promoted from Class A Cedar

Rapids. Both games took place last weekend in Lakeland, Fla., and Sano played third base next to Lewis in only one game (July 14).

In Sano's final at-bat in his return to the Florida State League, he hit a two-run double to center that scored Lewis.

The plan is for Sano to be in uniform on Saturday for the Red Wings and increase his game schedule after playing roughly four games a week in the Florida State League.



Sano

Rodney returns

Veteran closer Fernando Rodney, who became a U.S. citizen on Monday in Miami,

expressed his appreciation to the Twins and Ramon Pena, the scout who signed him for the Detroit Tigers at age 20 back in 1997.

Rodney, 41, said the hardest part of the process was passing the initial test in May 2017. He recalled having to name one country that bordered the U.S., one of the original 13 colonies and

REPORT: Page B4



Twins third baseman Eduardo Escobar is congratulated by teammates after scoring Friday against the Kansas City Royals in the fourth inning at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City.

USA TODAY Sports

Duffy goes 7 strong as Royals hold off Twins, 6-5

Field Level Media

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Lucas Duda homered and had three hits and three RBIs and Danny Duffy gave up just one run and five hits over seven innings as the Kansas City Royals held on for a 6-5 victory over the visiting Minnesota Twins on Friday night, July 20, at Kauffman Stadium.

Duffy (6-8) struck out four and walked three while yielding

five singles as Kansas City won for just the third time in its last 16 games.

Salvador Perez had a two-run double, and Alcides Escobar added two hits for the Royals. Brandon Maurer got the final out during a nail-biting three-run ninth by the Twins to earn his first save.

Minnesota loaded the bases with no outs in the ninth off Wily Peralta. Eddie Rosario drove

in Jorge Polanco, who doubled to open the inning, with a forceout at second. Brian Dozier then grounded to third to drive in Jake Cave, who had walked.

After Eduardo Escobar walked, Maurer replaced Peralta and gave up an infield single to Robbie Grossman to load the bases again. He then walked Mitch Garver to force in a run to make

TWINS: Page B4

Major League Baseball or the developmental league for the NBA. The tour features professional golfers who have either not yet reached the PGA Tour, or who have done so, but then failed to win enough FedEx Cup points to stay at that level. Those who are on the top 25 of the money list at year's end earn a PGA Tour membership for the next season.

Since the 2013 season, this type of tour has been the primary pathway for those seeking to earn their PGA Tour card.

Sanders helped start the Senior PGA tour event the 3M Championship in Blaine. That event will now be a PGA Tour event next year. But Sanders is older and hopes this inaugural "Happening" turns into a Web.com Tour event sooner.

"I didn't think this would happen so quickly," said Klecatsky, who was on board with the idea the first time he heard it nine months ago. "That was the whole thing, when they started it down at the 3M Championship, they had four or five years of just pro-am type of tournaments to try and get the thing going. As Ron has said, he's getting older, so he wants to speed this thing up. That's been exciting to have this type of founder's event roll right into a tournament event next year."

"It's been exciting to work with Ron and the whole team because it started just as a dream, but now there is community support and people are excited to bring something like this to Brainerd. Anytime we can partner with things that are good for Brainerd that's good for all

the resorts and Cragun's included."

"The objective of the Aug. 22 event is to secure an official Web.com Tour event in the area within three years," Sanders said in a press release. "The strategy is to start with a smaller event in 2018 to gain community attention and support. As no opening exists on the Tour Schedule at this time, the Brainerd effort is to position the partners so as an opening presents itself, the Team will be ready to accept the opportunity."

That opportunity is what got Dondelinger excited.

"All PGA events are all nonprofits and I didn't know that," Dondelinger said. "We have some great nonprofits in this area that could really benefit from an event like this. If this golf tournament really gets going great you could see \$2(00,000) to \$300,000 going to area nonprofits. That's why I thought it was important to get this thing to town."

"I think this will be a great deal for the area. The resorts are kind of slow the last couple of weeks in August because everyone's kids are getting involved in sports and that kind of stuff so the timing is perfect. Get people coming to town. Get people from St. Cloud coming up with some energy. I think it's going to be a great deal."

Klecatsky said hole sponsorships still remain and with the purchase of those comes a playing spot in the Aug. 22 event. For more information on these and other opportunities, people can contact Sanders at 612-386-1100.

"We're always looking for more help from the area," Klecatsky said. "We really want this to be a community event."