

New Jersey's Feng leads 14-under division of SRM

By: Steve Hemphill
May 18, 2024

Rayhao Feng hitched a ride with his father and sister to this weekend's Scott Robertson Memorial golf tournament.

He's doing his best to earn his keep, leading the way in the 14-under division going into Sunday's final round at Roanoke Country Club.

Feng, whose sister Rayee is tied for 14th in the girls' 15-18 division, shot a 1-under-par 34 in the weather-shortened second round of the tournament. Both the boys and girls 14-under groups had their days cut short due to a late-afternoon thunderstorm that caused nearly an hour suspension of the play and concerns that the storms would return led tournament officials to make some changes for the sake of safety.

Feng, who lives in Short Hills, New Jersey, said he would have liked to play the back-nine because there are two par-5 holes coming in compared to just one on the first nine. However, he still goes into the final round with a one-shot advantage over another New Jersey player, Rory Asselta.

"I like the course," Feng said. "It's up-and-down, and narrow. There's a lot of turns. It's fun."

Feng was part of a three-way tie for first after the first round, after he put together a one-birdie, one-bogey round of even-par 71. His nine holes on Saturday had a little more variance. He birdied three holes, while taking bogeys on two others.

"I'm trying to get better with my short game," Feng said. "I'm hitting my long irons real well, but I've been struggling with my short game. But it's getting better. I've been working pretty hard on it."

In the boys' senior division, a couple of Virginians lead the way going into what should be an exciting final round.

Michael Lee of Fairfax has a one-shot lead over Logan Reilly of Lovettsville after Lee shot 68 for the second consecutive day. Reilly, who was part of four-way first-round tie, finished with a 69 on Saturday.

There are eight others within four strokes of Lee, including defending champion Tayler Mawhinney, who shot a second-round best 67 after shooting 73 on Friday. Trying to come from behind is nothing new for Mawhinney, who rallied from six shots back last November to win the AGJA Rolex Tournament of Champions in San Antonio.

He added that in most high-level junior events like the Scott Robertson, jammed leaderboards are the norm.

"It's like this all the time," said Mawhinney, who birdied four straight holes on the back nine Saturday to get himself back into contention. "Sometimes people run away with it. But you can always come from behind in big events."