ALFRED DUNHILL
CHAMPIONSHIP

Leopard Creek Times

DAILY NEWS ROUND 4 SUNDAY 4 DECEMBER 2016

Brandon Stone.

Charl Schwartzel.

Stone rock solid in Alfred Dunhill Championship lead

Brandon Stone is on the brink of his second European Tour victory this year as he takes a three-stroke lead into today's final round of the Alfred Dunhill Championship at Leopard Creek.

Stone pulled away from the field with a solid 66 in Saturday's third round, lifting him to 17 under par overall.

His nearest challengers are fellow South Africans Charl Schwartzel and Keith Horne, and England's Chris Hanson on 14 under.

But Stone is as focused and relaxed as he's ever been for this challenge. It showed with his fast start to the third round when he went out with four birdies in his first six holes.

"Anytime you have a good start like that it makes it easier," said Stone. "I played great and holed some nice putts. I feel very confident with my game. One more day of it all coming together will be nice."

Schwartzel remains a threat only three off the lead and is hoping he can have a faster start on the front nine on Sunday.

"Brandon's playing good golf so I know I'm going to have to bring something special to the final round.

"I need to put myself in play more on the front nine. I'm putting beautifully but I need to give myself more opportunities."

And England's Hanson will be hoping for something similar.

"I've given myself a great opportunity to go out there and shoot score, and then see what happens," he said.

Leopard Creek demands experience, says Grace

Branden Grace has come a long way in his career since he first played Leopard Creek in the Alfred Dunhill Championship, and he admits experience is vital to success on this golf course.

"Experience is key here. I was walking down the eighth and I told Zack, my caddie, that the first time I played here, holes eight and nine were nerve-wracking holes to finish. It shows you how you grow up and how you mature through the years.

"It definitely helps knowing your way around this place, and where to make your misses. You can go after a couple of sucker pins and you're going to make mistakes, and that's what you have to stay away from."

Grace was paired with Charl Schwartzel, arguably the master of Leopard Creek, for the first two rounds and says it was an education watching him approach the course. "My approach is a bit more aggressive, while he really maps his way around the course. He plays it really strategically and it's interesting to watch."

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- Branden Grace

Branden Grace.

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FINAL ROUND DRAW
SUNDAY 4 DECEMBER

Game	Time	Tee	Name	Country	Attachment	R1	R2	R3	R4	Agg	Par
1	07:01	10	Matthieu PAVON	FRA	Golf du Médoc	72	69	71		212	-4
			Justin HARDING	RSA	Stellenbosch GC	68	71	73		212	-4
			Jaco AHLERS	RSA	Koro Creek CC	68	70	74		212	-4
2	07:12	10	Jean HUGO	RSA		67	69	76		212	-4
			Colin NEL	RSA	Maritzburg GC	68	75	70		213	-3
			Paul MADDY	ENG	Gog Magog GC	74	69	70		213	-3
3	07:23	10	Damien PERRIER	FRA	CORDON GOLF TEAM	69	73	71		213	-3
			Madalitso MUTHIYA	ZAM	Lusaka GC	70	71	72		213	-3
			Jamie RUTHERFORD	ENG	Knebworth GC	68	75	71		214	-2
4	07:34	10	Keenan DAVIDSE	RSA	De Zalze Golf Estate	73	70	71		214	-2
			Neil SCHIETEKAT	RSA	Royal Jhb & Kensington GC	70	72	72		214	-2
			Jbe KRUGER	RSA	Serengeti Golf Estate	71	70	73		214	-2
5	07:45	10	Doug McGUIGAN	RSA	Ebotse Links	70	70	74		214	-2
			Nathan KIMSEY	ENG	Brocket Hall	69	69	76		214	-2
			Andrew CURLEWIS	RSA	Margate CC	75	68	72		215	-1
6	07:56	10	Grégory HAVRET	FRA	Golf du Médoc Hotel & Spa	70	73	72		215	-1
			Clément SORDET	FRA	Lyon Salvagny GC	73	69	73		215	-1
			Garth MULROY	RSA	Umkomaas GC	69	73	73		215	-1
7	08:07	10	Anthony MICHAEL	RSA	Randpark GC	69	72	74		215	-1
			Vaughn GROENEWALD	RSA	Kingswood Golf Estate/ Lumenrock CC	70	73	73		216	0
			Chris SWANEPOEL	RSA	The Els Club, Copperleaf	76	66	74		216	0
8	08:18	10	Pontus WIDEGREN	SWE	Stockholms Golfklubb Kevinge	71	71	74		216	0
			Hennie DU PLESSIS	RSA	Sesambos GC	73	69	74		216	0
			Christofer BLOMSTRAND	SWE	Falsterbo GK	72	71	74		217	1
9	08:29	10	Simon GRIFFITHS	ENG		73	70	74		217	1
			Jens FAHRBRING	SWE	Sollentuna GK	70	72	75		217	1
			Rhys WEST	RSA	Glendower GC	70	73	75		218	2
10	08:40	10	Callum MOWAT	RSA	Modderfontein GC	73	70	75		218	2
			Morten Ørum MADSEN	DEN	Silkeborg GC	72	70	76		218	2
			Adrien SADDIER	FRA	Esery GC	68	74	76		218	2
11	08:51	10	Zander LOMBARD	RSA	Woodhill CC	74	68	76		218	2
			Matthew NIXON	ENG	Ashton under Lyne GC	71	72	78		221	5
			Christiaan BEZUIDENHOUT	RSA	Silver Lakes CC	70	67	84		221	5
12	09:02	10	Peter KARMIS	RSA	Clovelly CC	70	71	81		222	6
			Ockie STRYDOM	RSA	GFG Academy	72	71	80		223	7
			Shaun NORRIS	RSA	Silver Lakes GC	71	72	81		224	8

Horne hoping Leopard Creek luck continues

South Africa's Keith Horne has always enjoyed Leopard Creek, and he'll be hoping his past good fortune in this event carries through to a maiden Alfred Dunhill Championship victory here on Sunday.

Horne signed for a 67 to place him right in the mix on 14 under par and three strokes behind leader Brandon Stone going into the final round.

"I've always played well here," said Horne. In 2012 he had an incredible tournament when he scored two holes-in-one on the same hole and in consecutive rounds.

That year Horne aced the par-three 12th twice in successive days and using the same club – an eight iron.

Today he'll be hoping for even better form as he chases the title. "If we can keep going like I have and eliminate a few mental errors, I'll be in with a chance on Sunday," said Horne. "It's always nice to be in the mix. I just want to get off to a solid start in the final round. Then the back nine will be key, as it always is here."

The wild heart of African golf

European Ryder Cup captain and 2011 Open champion Darren Carke was given a real taste of Africa this week when he spotted a leopard on his way home one evening.

"I am staying in a house on the estate and we were driving, in a car, to the pro-am dinner just after dark when this leopard just appeared in front of us. Fantastic. But I thought back to last year when I did the same trip in a golf cart and it sent a little chill down my spine thinking about it because I'm so glad I didn't come across a leopard then!"

Leopard Creek is as famous for its animals and proximity to the Kruger National Park as it is for its world-class golf course.

South African golf journalist Grant Winter caught up with a few of the professionals in this week's Alfred Dunhill Championship and asked them about their love for the local wildlife and one of the most unique settings in world golf.

"I'm crazy about animals and I've already gone into the park three times this week," said South Africa's Anthony Michael.

"I like to go in by myself, just me, my camera and the animals. Thursday morning was a particularly good day for sightings and I saw elephant, rhino, buffalo and a leopard no more than a kilometre-and-a-half from the Malalane Gate. And then there was this hyena with its cub chilling right beside the road.

"I also saw on a pin board that there was a lion sighting near to where I was driving but I missed it although (fellow professional) Jaco Ahlers who was driving 40 minutes behind me did see it. This place is just fantastic."

As fellow South African professional Doug McGuigan pointed out, you don't even have to go into the park to see animals.

"We're staying in a B&B in Malalane overlooking the Crocodile River and just from there on the banks of the river we've seen rhino, elephant, buffalo, hippo, impala, warthog and of course the odd croc."

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