

Locals take their lumps
Final four golfers all out-of-state collegians
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The train of golf carts trailing Louisiana Tech signee Matthew Harvey around Bayou DeSiard Country Club the last few days are unlikely to return for today's semifinals and finals of the W.E. (Winnie) Cole Cotton States tournament.

Harvey and the other two local competitors — Louisiana-Monroe's Casey Russell and David Hene — all advanced past Friday morning's session before falling in the quarterfinals in the afternoon. ULM's Pat Collogan also dropped his match in the round of 16 to Harvey, leaving no local competitors for the final day of competition.

One of four out-of-state college golfers will bring home the top prize. Tulsa's Rob Laird and Arizona's Creighton Honeck will face off in one semifinal at 8:30 a.m., while Illinois' Mark Ogren and SMU's Brandon Destefano will follow at 8:45 a.m.

The final match is likely to start around noon, depending on how quickly the semifinal matches end.

"I just didn't hit it as well today as I had been," said Harvey, who lost 3 and 2 to Destefano. "Today, I just couldn't get it going."

Harvey got out to an early lead in that match, paring and winning the first two holes. But Destefano rebounded and won the next three to turn a two-hole deficit into a one-hole lead.

Leading by one after 12 holes, Destefano made his move on the 13th to take control of the match, getting up and down from the front of the green to win the hole.

Then on the 14th, the SMU senior hit his second shot within a couple feet of the hole for an easy putt to take a three-hole lead with four holes to play.

From that point on, Destefano said all he had to do was make par to close out the match.

"I was in the fairway with about 250 yards to the hole, and I wanted to hit a 3-iron," Destefano said. "My caddie (Scooter Jefferson) told me to go with a 5-wood. I hit it within five feet."

Honeck edged Russell, 1-up, in the other late quarterfinal, making some tough shots



Terrance Armstard/The News-Star

Former ULM golfer Casey Russell, above, did manage to eliminate defending champion Andrew Dresser in Friday's third round before losing in the quarterfinals.

around the green on the last few holes to seal the win.

Winning the 14th hole to go one up, Honeck really took charge with an eagle on No. 16 to give himself a two-hole lead with two to play.

Both players had putts for eagle on that hole from opposite ends of the green. Russell's just missed.

"I thought the key on that hole was that I got to putt first," Honeck said. "When mine went in, that put more pressure on (Russell) to make his."

Russell — who knocked out defending champion Andrew Dresser from Texas Tech 2 and 1 in the morning — didn't go away easy. He won the 17th to cut the lead back to one.

Then on No. 18, Honeck put his approach in the sand trap to the right of the hole, while Russell was just in front of the green. Once again, though, it was Honeck putting the pressure on with a clutch shot that nearly holed out for an easy par.

That put Russell in a position where he had to chip in to win the hole and tie the match. But his shot went long of the hole.

"I told (my caddie) that I was going to make it, and I nearly did," Honeck said of that shot out of the sand. "I was just trying to throw it up in the air and let it run. Once again, I was glad I got to hit first because that put all the pressure on (Russell)."

Honeck dominated his morning match, 5 and 4, against top-seeded Stephen Cox for the biggest win of the day. Hene was also strong in the morning, defeating Rory Smith 4 and 3.

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