

ULM's McKendrick takes two wins in Cotton States

By Matthew Reynolds

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The 64-player field was narrowed down to 16 in the W.E. (Winnie) Cole Cotton States Invitational at Bayou DeSiard Country Club on Thursday.

The final 16 players had to fight through morning and afternoon matches to advance to the quarterfinals that begin this morning.

One of those final 16 is ULM product and Australian native David McKendrick.

McKendrick started off strong in the first match of the day—defeating John Dowdall of Houston, Texas 2 and 1.

"I started out really good, getting up by four holes at one point pretty early," said McKendrick. "Unfortunately, I struggled a little in the later part of the match allowing him (Dowdall) to get three holes back, but was able to finish the last few holes strong."

McKendrick says he felt slightly more comfortable in his 3 and 2 defeat of Beaumont native, Dusty Smith in his second match.



David McKendrick tees off Thursday during the W. E. Cole Cotton States Amateur tournament at Bayou DeSiard Country Club.

"I felt like my rhythm was better in the second match," added McKendrick. "I'm just taking it one match at a time and looking forward to the third round."

McKendrick will square off against fellow countryman Daniel Popovic of Victoria this morning.

Tech golfer Matthew Harvey handedly defeated LSU product Beck Troutman 5 and 3 in his first match of the day, but ran into the No. 1 seeded Oliver Bekker in the afternoon match and was defeated 2 and 1 when Bekker drained a seven-foot par put on the 16th hole to seal the match.

"It was a grind all day," said the Bekker, who shot the lowest two-day qualifying score of 13 under. "I wasn't hitting the wedges quite as good as I would have liked too, but I found away to get the wins," said Bekker as he continued hitting balls on the range after his match.

Bekker — a native of Stellenbosch, South Africa — defeated Georgia signee Thomas Lowery in the morning match by the close margin of 2 and 1.

"It was two tough matches today," said the Lamar Cardinal. "Both Lowery and Harvey played well and I had to work hard for the victories."

Bekker will face off with Southern Nazarene golfer Blake Tremble this morning. Tremble, a transfer from UNLV and Houston native, dominated his competition on Thursday. Tremble won 4 and 3 over Jacob LeJuene of Sulphur — then gave a 6 and 5 thumping to Andrew Loupe of Baton Rouge.

"I hit a lot of fairways and greens today," said Tremble. "To get to this point you have to keep the ball in the fairway and give yourself birdie opportunities."

Defending champion and Illinois player Mark Ogren finished 1 up on Brian Noonan in his morning match —before TCU golfer Scott Roudebush won a back-and-forth second match on the last hole, eliminating last years champ from the tournament.

The remaining field of 16 will dwindle down to four by day's end. Morning rounds begin at 7:30 and will be followed in the afternoon by the quarterfinals with the remaining 8 players.

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