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## **JAGA'S 2019 "FIRST COAST AMATEUR" FIELD FULL WELL IN ADVANCE OF ENTRY DEADLINE**

**-78 Elite National and International Golfers Headed to Jacksonville/Hidden Hills Golf Club Jan. 19-21-**

JACKSONVILLE, FL - The Jacksonville Area Golf Association (JAGA) today announced that it has reached a full field of 78 entries for next month's **2019 JAGA First Coast Amateur**, to be played at the Arnold Palmer-designed **Hidden Hills Golf Club** in Jacksonville. JAGA received the 78<sup>th</sup> and final player commitment on Friday, which was three weeks earlier than the sign-up pace for this past January's championship.

The third edition of the First Coast Amateur will be played over the Martin Luther King holiday weekend, Jan. 19-21. It is the only JAGA-run event that is promoted nationally and features multi-state and multi-national participation. The 54-hole stroke-play championship attracts some of the nation's top amateur, collegiate and junior talent, along with many of the best golfers from North Florida and the state of Florida.

The top finishers will receive World Amateur Golf Ranking points.

Of the 78 contestants, 51 have plus handicap indexes, with 10 more registering indexes of 0.0.

Ages range from 16 to 64, with the average age being a shade over 22. At 16 years, five months, **Gordan Brixi** of Potomac, Md. is the youngest player in the field.

All 78 competitors will vie for the First Coast Amateur title. A separate tournament within the tournament for mid-amateurs - those age 25 and older - will also be conducted.

**Cole Bradley** of Purdue University, who claimed a one-shot victory in January, is scheduled to return to Hidden Hills to defend his First Coast Amateur title. Bradley is the son of former University of North Florida assistant coach (2009-12) and current Purdue head coach, **Rob Bradley**.

Twelve players will vie for the two titles, including 1990 JAGA Jacksonville Amateur champion **Mike Bodney** of TPC Sawgrass, who at age 64 is the most veteran competitor in the field. Also in both fields are 2011 JAGA Senior Amateur champion and 2019 Underwood Cup Amateur team captain **John Milton** of Queen's Harbour Golf Club (one month plus younger than Bodney) and 2016 JAGA Match Play champion **Mike Smith** of TPC Sawgrass.

“This year’s response from top golfers from all over the eastern half of the United States has been fantastic,” said **Jeff Adams** and **Joel Lamp**, JAGA directors and co-chairmen of the First Coast Amateur. “Word of the JAGA First Coast Amateur is clearly spreading, and the players are taking advantage of the opportunity to play an elite level event in January, particularly the college golfers, who are in between their fall and spring seasons and looking to stay sharp against strong competition. The First Coast Amateur is providing that opportunity. We think the championship is gaining momentum and notoriety on the national amateur golf scene.”

JAGA is accepting additional entries from players who wish to be placed on the priority waiting list in anticipation of player withdrawals prior to the start of the tournament.

Players who wish to be added to the JAGA First Coast Amateur alternates list may do so by going to [www.jaxareagolf.org](http://www.jaxareagolf.org) and clicking on “2019 First Coast Amateur” under the schedule on the home page.

Click on the following link to view the list of 78 contestants and the alternates list (select “2019 JAGA First Coast Amateur” at bottom of schedule).

<https://jax.bluegolf.com/bluegolf/jax18/schedule/index.htm>

The First Coast Amateur is sponsored and conducted by the Jacksonville Amateur Golf Association, which annually promotes Jacksonville’s top-level amateur competitions and has since 1954.

Veteran rules official **Jim Kavanagh** will oversee course set-up, rules and general competition needs. He will be supported by prominent rules experts who have current or former affiliations with the PGA TOUR, USGA, FSGA and California State Golf Association.

-JAGA-



## ABOUT JAGA

Established in 1954, JAGA celebrates its 66th year in 2019. It is a not-for-profit 501 (c) (4) corporation comprised of approximately 40-member golf clubs located in the Northeast Florida area. JAGA’s mission is to promote golf and goodwill through tournaments and related events and activities. It conducts 11 tournaments, including six championship events and five others that feature team formats. JAGA manages a

scholarship program that currently provides college funding for 25 area students. Since 1974, the program has generated approximately \$1.75 million in financial aid to approximately 350 students.

Anyone interested in receiving monthly "JAGA News & Notes" and announcements about JAGA tournaments via email may do so by signing up at [WWW.JAXAREAGOLF.ORG](http://WWW.JAXAREAGOLF.ORG). Simply click on the home page link that reads "Subscribe to JAGA Email".

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