

# Bevy of past champs coming to Angus Glen for Bell Canadian Open

*Tiger Woods not expected to make a decision until registration deadline*

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA  
Staff Writer

When Scott Verplank visits Unionville's Angus Glen Golf Club to defend his Bell Canadian Open title Sept. 2-8, he won't be the only former champ.

On Thursday, several past Canadian Open winners announced their intention to play in this year's event, which has a total prize purse of \$4 million U.S.

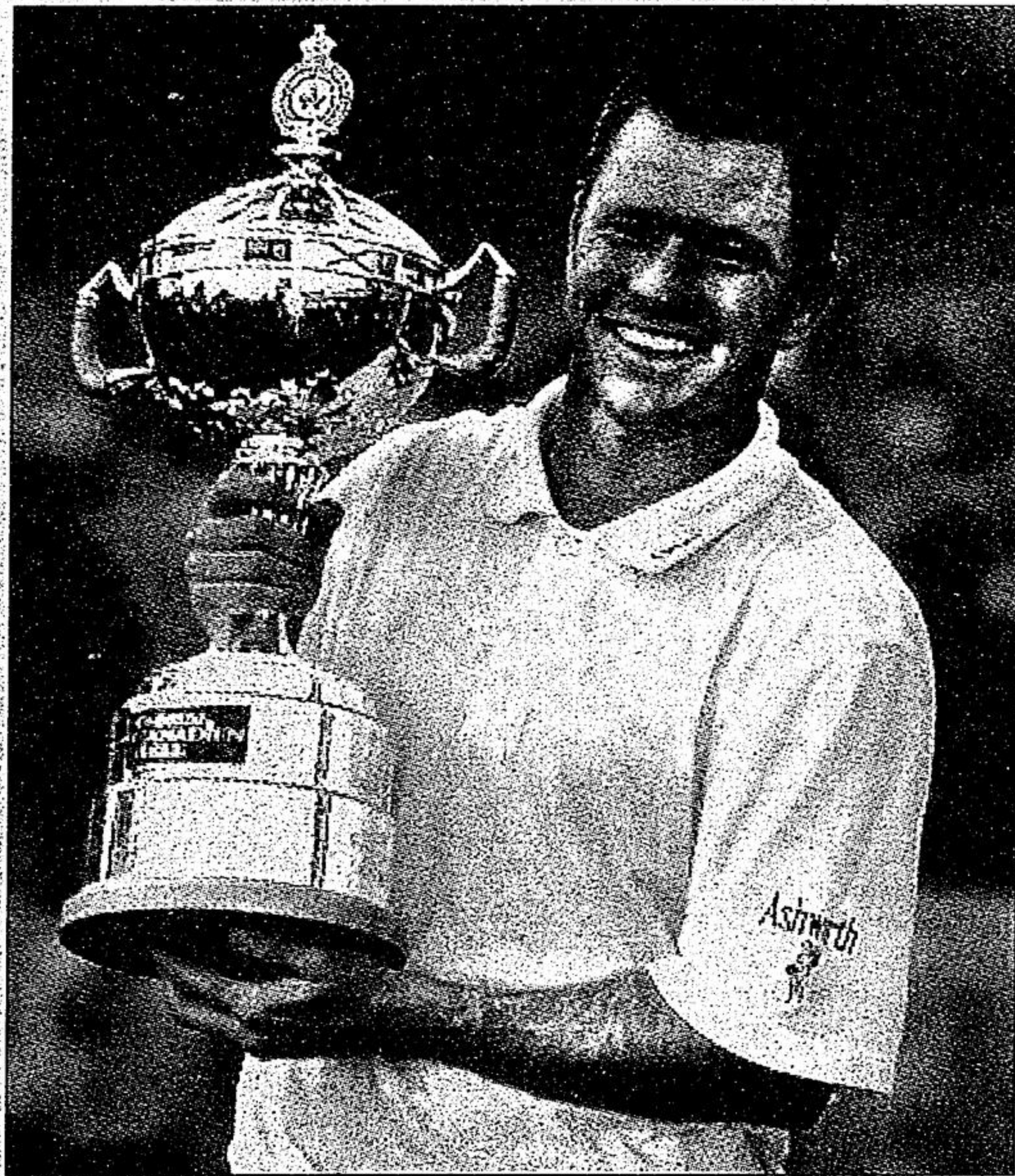
In fact, seven of the last eight Canadian Open champions — including David Frost (1993), Nick Price ('91 and '94), Mark O'Meara ('95), Dudley Hart ('96), Steve Jones ('97 and '89), Billy Andrade ('98) and Hal Sutton ('99) will tackle the club's south course in an attempt to dethrone Verplank.

While the cast of ex-champs is an impressive array of talent, the one name who has yet to make a commitment is 2000 Canadian Open winner Tiger Woods.

Kevin Thistle, Angus Glen general manager and director of golf operations, speculated Woods will not decide until the registration deadline, which is one week before the start. This, he noted, has been Woods' pattern prior to entering most events.

Thistle remains optimistic the world's top-ranked player will be on the Angus Glen fairways. Should Woods show up, Thistle said it would add icing to the cake.

"Sincerely, I think there's a good chance Tiger will come. He loves Canada and the hospitality.



Scott Verplank, last year's Bell Canadian Open champion, is coming to Angus Glen Golf Club, to defend the title he won in Montreal. This year's tournament is from Sept. 2 to 8.

"Having Tiger here would put us over the top. But regardless if Tiger comes or not, this will be one of the best Bell Canadian Open fields."

Thistle's comment is based on confirmations from such top performers as Phil Mickelson, the second-ranked player in the world, Vijay Singh (last year's Telus Skins Game champion at Angus Glen), Jesper Parnevik and Mike Weir.

Unable to attend a Thursday media conference at Angus Glen but speaking via teleconference, Verplank believes the Canadian Open ranks with some of the top Professional Golf Association tournaments.

"I'm proud to be the defending Canadian Open champion and I hold the tournament in high regard," said the 38-year-old Dallas, Texas native.

"In years past the Canadian

Open was like a fifth major. I've always recognized that.

"This is my 17th year on the tour and while the economy and landscape of golf has changed, the Canadian Open has been held in high regard.

"I was thrilled to win it last year. It may not be one of the four majors, but it's just a notch below it.

"The Canadian Open has a lot of history behind it. It's a world-class event.

"I've had success with this event in the past and to win last year was my dream come true."

Verplank's trip to Angus Glen will mark his first visit to the course.

Acknowledging his fondness, for obvious reasons, with last year's site — The Royal Montreal Golf Club — Verplank has heard nothing but good things about Angus Glen.

"I guess I'll have to take Mike Weir (who has played Angus Glen) out to dinner to find out what the course is like," he said.

"But I expect Angus Glen to be at a level like Royal Montreal and Glen Abbey (another former Bell Canadian Open site). I expect to go out and play well."

Although the Canadian Open marks Verplank's last victory on the PGA tour, he believes the timing is right for his game to get back into high gear as he prepares to join the United States entry for the Ryder Cup.

The Ryder Cup is in England after the Bell Canadian Open from Sept. 27 to 29.

"Although I haven't achieved the results like I should have, physically I'm hitting the ball well. I feel like I'm doing all right and am going in the right direction."

## Macri has a short stay at Trois-Rivieres

Jonathan Macri's day at the CART Toyota Atlantic race at Trois-Rivieres, Quebec was one that was cut short.

Beginning Monday's feature race in the seventh position in his P-1 Racing-NTN Bearings/Miller Genuine Draft/Battlefield Equipment Rental Swift 014.a racing machine, the 20-year-old Gormley resident manoeuvred his way into fifth position before adversity struck.

While approaching corner eight on the seventh lap, Macri's vehicle was clipped when Luis Diaz attempted to pass him from the outside.

Unfortunately, Diaz's front wheel clipped Macri's rear wheel, sending Macri spinning into the wall. After a successful run up through the field, and a potential podium position, Macri's race came to an abrupt and early end.

Fortunately for Macri, he was all right.

"The weekend hasn't ended well, at all," he said. "The team managed to make all the right changes after the warm-up."

"The car was quick, so I was able to work my way through the field. It's upsetting. We started the weekend well, but didn't qualify high enough.

"That becomes a real problem because you usually find yourself in more trouble the deeper you are in the field.

"This race, though, was going really well. I knew I had the car to really challenge for at least a podium finish once I settled into fifth spot."

Michael Valiante took the checkered flag.

For Macri, he currently sits in seventh place in the overall standings and is 30 points away from third-place driver Ryan Hunter-Reay.



JONATHAN MACRI

Was bumped out of the race by Luis Diaz.

## Stouffville's Taws relieved to find missing vehicle

What began as a nightmare for Ashley Taws and her AIM Autosport racing team on Monday turned into a happy ending on Tuesday.

After taking part in a Canadian Formula Ford series race at Trois Rivieres, Quebec and finishing fifth in one of two races, the 18-year-old Stouffville resident and her team spent Sunday evening in a motel near Trois Rivieres.

Waking up early Monday to return home, Taws and her crew discovered their truck and trailer were gone. They contained tools and

equipment in addition to her Be Anything With Barbie at Wal-Mart car and the vehicle of teammate Louis-Philippe Dumoulin.

After a frantic search, Taws' trailer was found Tuesday afternoon in Saint Aime, Quebec, while the tow vehicle, a white Ford F-350 truck, was found near Cornwall.

Inside the trailer was Dumoulin's car, but the Barbie car, a Barbie scooter and assorted parts and equipment were not at either scene.

Taws' car was found that same day by police in a corn field in Yamaska, Quebec.

"It sounds like the car is okay and I'm so happy that I'll be able to finish out the season with my Barbie car," said a relieved Taws.

"I'm very grateful to the police in Québec as I understand there was a big hunt for the car and they even used a helicopter. It's amazing how fast they tracked everything down."

The Barbie car is currently impounded by police while they collect evidence. But Taws hopes to travel to Québec in a few days and be reunited with it.

## Stouffville 'Storm's off with five softball victories

The Stouffville Storm squirt boys have played some impressive ball recently, winning five of their last six softball outings.

Buoyed by a three-hit effort from Erick Espirito-Santo, the Storm began its six-game foray with a 16-9 win over Newmarket.

Brian Hector, Kohl McVicar, Robert Kay and Nolan Benoit added two hits each.

Bruce Cringan, Alex Mangotich, Derek Eickmeier, Ryan Gregory each had one Espirito-Santo was the winning pitcher.

Stouffville then played a doubleheader against host Port Perry and came away with a split, winning the first game 8-5 and dropping

the second 9-1.

In the victory, Espirito-Santo collected four hits while McVicar, Hector, Kay, Alex Mangotich and Gregory also added one apiece.

Tyler Heffenan executed a great sacrifice bunt in the top of the seventh to score the go-ahead run. Cringan was the winning pitcher.

In the loss, Hector and Gregory had the only hits for the Storm.

Stouffville then played another road game in Vaughan and defeated the host Vipers 12-7.

Espirito-Santo and Mangotich ignited the offense with three hits each.

Others were added by Kevin MacKay,

Gregory, Benoit, Kay, McVicar and Hector. Espirito-Santo picked up the win.

Facing the Markham Meteors in its next game, the Storm received three-hit efforts from Hector and Mangotich en route to an 11-9 win.

Hits were also added by Espirito-Santo, McVicar, Kay and Kevin MacKay. Cringan was the winning pitcher.

The Storm rounded out its six-game slate with a 3-0 win over the Bramalea Indians.

Hector had Stouffville's only two hits, but good bunting by McVicar and Eickmeier led to the runs. Eickmeier was the winning pitcher.

## Herder karts off with series title

Kyle Herder might have finished second to Rob Oakman in the seventh round of the Canada Senior series at Shannonville Motorsports Park on Aug 3.

But it was enough to propel the Stouffville resident to the Sunoco Ron Fellows Karting title, the first of four available class championships in the series, with two rounds remaining.

Herder did gain a measure of revenge in the eighth round as he took the checkered flag over Shawn Gardner and Oakman.

In other categories, Pearce Herder, younger brother of Kyle, took the checkered flag in round seven of the Canada Junior division.