

The PGA's comeback kid

Posted on Jan 31, Posted by [Webmaster](#) Category ["My Bid"; By Joe Biddle](#)

Nashville's Brandt Snedeker has become the PGA Tour's Comeback Kid.

Earlier in his career the former Montgomery Bell Academy and Vanderbilt golfer would find ways to lose tournaments on Sunday.

Snedeker has managed to come roaring out of the pack on the final round to win three tournaments.

None will go down in history as more improbable than what Snedeker pulled off Sunday in the final round of the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines in sunny Southern California.

It wasn't so much what Snedeker did, as it was what 24-year-old former Clemson golfer Kyle Stanley didn't do.

I have watched and covered a lot of golf tournaments through the years. None had a more bizarre finish than the chapter Stanley wrote.

Stanley came to the final hole with a three-stroke lead over Snedeker, whose birdie on the final hole left him alone in second place and in the media tent going over his tournament with Stanley still on the course.

You know what happened. Stanley shot a snowman, an 8 in golf parlance. Eight strokes on the par-five. In the water on his third shot. Back of the green on his fifth shot. Two putts to get his ball in the cup and claim his first PGA Tour win.

Stanley 3-jacked the green and Snedeker shockingly found himself paired against Stanley in a sudden death playoff.

Snedeker has a knack of pulling these Sunday stunners. He came from five shots back to win his first Tour event in 2007 with a 63 at the Wyndham.

Last year, he fired a final round 64 to make up six shots, knocking off the No. 1 golfer in the world, Luke Donald, at the Heritage.

Sunday he pushed the envelope to a 7-shot deficit, only to get unexpected help from Stanley and make Snedeker's 67 put him in the playoff.

Snedeker has had his share of Sunday heartbreaks during his career. No one can forget the 2008 Masters. After an eagle on the second hole, Snedeker grabbed a share of the lead. Could this be a signature win, his first major? Eight bogeys later, we had the answer.

Snedeker's emotions got away from him that day in the interview room afterwards. He choked back tears, could not get his words out. He covered his face with a towel, sobbing. It was heart-wrenching to see the pain in his face.

But even Snedeker had never lost a tournament the way Stanley did, triple-bogeying the final hole when he had led the tournament from the first day until the final hole.

"I haven't quite done one like that yet," Snedeker admitted, "but I've had a couple where I really had some devastating finishes. You never want to see anybody go through that. ... not even your worst enemy on the planet."

It was only Snedeker's second start of the season, having left the Tour last fall to have a second

hip operation Nov. 1. He was born with a congenital condition that would eventually require surgery on both hips. Two months ago, Snedeker was still relying on crutches to navigate around Nashville.

Media looked at the finish and made the story Stanley's collapse, which it was. But it was also about a 31-year-old Brandt Snedeker who found a way to win what would be a two-hole playoff.

I'm not sure there has ever been an ending where the champion conducted a media interview about his runner-up finish, then an hour later re-appeared in the media tent with a trophy.

"Round two," Snedeker informed the media.

Someone in the media called his victory "tainted."

Snedeker bristled.

"If anybody wants to see the trophy, it will be at my house the rest of my life," Snedeker smiled. "It's not tainted at all. Winning out here is hard to do."

Kyle Stanley found that out the hard way.

Contact Sports Columnist Joe Biddle at joebiddle11@gmail.com .

Tags: Untagged