



BILL KILPATRICK/News-Press

First-round leader Dick Stackhouse blasts from a bunker at Bonita Bay Friday.

Stackhouse leads state seniors

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BONITA SPRINGS — Saying he never hit the ball better, Boynton Beach's Dick Stackhouse fired a 2-under-par 70 Friday to take the first-round lead of the 54-hole Florida State Golf Association's Senior Championship being played at Bonita Bay Club.

"I hit 17 greens," said Stackhouse, 62, "something I haven't done since I was a kid. I putted for 17 birdies, and if I hadn't rimmed a couple of 4- to 5-footers, I could well have come in with a 66."

Tied for second three strokes back with 73s were Jack Brick of Palm Beach Gardens and Wes Paxon of Jacksonville, both of whom, like Stackhouse, competed in the Championship Flight (0 to 4 handicaps).

In third place with 74s were defending champion Pursie Pipes of

Boca Raton and first-flight (5 handicaps) leader John Miller of Naples.

Alone in fourth with a 75 was John Yates of Plantation, the second-flight (6 to 7 handicaps) leader.

Bunched at 76 were Charlie McCormick, a name familiar to Southwest Florida golfers as a result of his outstanding play for years as a member of Lochmoor; Jack Rountree of Lake City; Bob Westerling of Daytona Beach; and Don Whelan of Deerfield Beach.

In sixth place with 77s were the fivesome of Dave Davis of St. Petersburg, Charlie Lentz of Winter Haven, Orv Robertson of Orlando, and Bo Williams and Moot Thomas, both of Ocala. Thomas competed in the first flight, Robertson the second flight.

Stackhouse, who owns a public play golf course in Fort Lauderdale, said he drove the ball as well as he ever has.

"I hit it 230 to 250 yards dead

center in the fairways," he said, "and that sure helps when it comes to scoring."

Taped across the top of his driver, incidentally, is the type-written legend, "SLOW-EXTEND-SLOW."

"Plus," Stackhouse continued, "this golf course is in superb condition . . . incredible condition, in fact. It's immaculate. If you can't play well on this course, then maybe golf isn't your game."

Stackhouse said he failed to break 80 during Thursday's practice round over the 6,225-yard (from the dark green markers) Bonita Bay layout. However, he had only one three-putt green Friday; it took him three to get down from 50 feet on the par-4 second hole.

The second round of the stroke-play tournament continues this morning with the Championship Flight leaders scheduled to tee off at 10:30.