

Record score carries Atwal to tied second in Chattanooga Classic

An ailing Arjun Atwal fired one of the most stunning sequences with nine birdies over his last 10 holes and an overall 12 in the last 14 holes to card a record 12-under 60 that took him to tied second in the Chattanooga Classic golf Friday.

Atwal was at overnight tied 15th position but carded 60 which was a tournament record and the lowest round on the Tour this year.

A win or a second place could well assure Atwal a place in the top-25 and a PGA Tour card for 2009. He is currently 34th and even a third place will bring him tantalisingly close to the top-25. There are two more events on the Nationwide Tour, the \$625,000 Miccosukee Championships next week and the \$1 million Tour Championships two weeks after that.

'I showed up Thursday and took a lot of pain-killers,' said Atwal, who this year won the Malaysian Open, a co-sanctioned event on the Asian and European Tours.

'I honestly thought I was eight or nine under, I had no idea,' added Atwal. 'My caddie said I had a chance at 59 and I hit it to a foot at the eighth. On the last, I hit it right at the flag,' he said of the 166 yard 7-iron to four feet, which he holed for his 12-under 60.

With the Black Creek Club handing very favourable to real low scoring, Atwal opened with four pars and then went on an overdrive. He found each and every green in regulation and with 26 putts for the round he came back in 60.

The leader was still Webb Simpson who shot a 8-under 64, tying the lowest 36-hole score in Nationwide Tour history at 19-under-par 125. Webb Simpson owns 20 birdies and a bogey through his first 36 holes. Tied for second, one stroke back, at 18-under with Atwal was Scott Stallings (62).

Bill Lunde (62) and Matt Weibring (66), are tied for fourth at 15 under. Two veterans, Skip Kendall (67) and Tom Gillis (64), finished at 14 under, tied for sixth.

Atwal had pulled out of Wednesday's pro-am with a bad back and he did not play a practice round. There was a time he even contemplated pulling out because of the pain.

Atwal, No. 34 on the money list, started at the 10th hole and got away to a slow start with pars at the first four holes. Three birdies in a row on holes 14-16, and another three in a row at holes 18 had him six-under for the day before closing with six consecutive birdies and a back nine of 28.

Simpson made nine birdies and a lone bogey at the 12th hole, Friday's most difficult hole, when he drove into the rough and had to lay up on the 458-yard par 4.

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