

Villegas: The PGA Tour's Colorful Colombian

Photo by Clarence Sormin

Camilo Villegas played in the 2003 Western Amateur, Point O'Woods Golf and Country Club

By Kelly Hill
Managing Editor

While Tiger Woods wears red on Sunday's Camilo Villegas prefers orange.

Orange may not be the colorful Colombian's color of choice every Sunday, but it was his color during the final round of the PGA Tour's Ford Championship at Doral, early this season.

Villegas, 24, a native of infamous Medellin, Colombia, who thrice played in the Western Amateur Championship at Point O'

Woods Golf and Country Club in Benton Harbor, wore orange shoes and an orange belt in honor of his alma mater, the University of Florida. Villegas, who still lives in Gainesville, graduated from Florida with a degree in business in 2004. That is the same year he turned professional. During his playing career in Gainesville, Villegas was named a second-team All-American in 2002 and a first-team All-American in 2003.

Villegas' Gators-orange duds could not propel him to victory at Doral, but he did finish second, by one stroke, to Tiger Woods.

Villegas shot a 19-under 269 and finished tied with David Toms for second. Villegas also earned \$484,000 for his efforts.

"We are talking about the best player in the world here," Villegas told PGATOUR.com senior editor Joe Wojciechowski. "I never thought about that I have Tiger up there. I can't control what they do so I was trying to focus on myself. And I'm proud of the way I handled myself this week."

Villegas' runner-up finish at Doral was his second of the season as he also finished second in the

FBR Open, played on the par-71 TPC of Scottsdale. J.B Holmes won the \$5.2 million tournament, but Villegas collected \$312,000 when he finished tied for second with J.J. Henry, Steve Lowery, Ryan Palmer and Scott Verplank.

Following his second second of the season, Villegas was ranked No. 13 on the PGA Tour money list, having earned more than \$850,000 this season.

While a student at the University of Florida, Villegas, who stands just 5-foot-9 and who weighs just 142 pounds, played three times in the Western Amateur Championship at the Robert Trent Jones-designed Point O' Woods course in Benton Harbor. In 2002, Villegas shared the Western Amateur Championship's medalist honors with Kevin Stadler. That also was the year in which Villegas enjoyed his best performance in the Western Amateur Championship. He advanced to the Sweet 16, before being eliminated by Brady Stockton, 5 and 3.

The 104th playing of the Western Amateur Championship is scheduled for late July at Point O' Woods Golf and Country Club in Benton Harbor.

A lover of music and a with a flair of style, Villegas obviously is enjoying his career on the PGA Tour.

"I think I've learned to like big crowds," Villegas told PGATOUR.com's Wojciechowski. "I played with Michelle Wie in Hawaii and that felt great." **MG**

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