

## *ILLINOIS OPEN CHAMP AIMS FOR PGA CAREER*

### **PROFILE: Joe Affrunti**

**HOMETOWN:** Crystal Lake, Illinois  
**BIRTHDATE:** August 1, 1981  
**BIRTHPLACE:** Crystal Lake, Illinois  
**COLLEGE:** University of Minnesota & University of Illinois  
**DEGREE:** Speech & Communications  
**TURNE D PROFESSIONAL:** May, 2004

Joe Affrunti is a young, aspiring, recently-turned professional golfer, who is working hard to make his career as a professional golfer. Growing up in the northwestern suburb of Crystal Lake, Illinois, Joe was a sports enthusiast at a very young age, actively playing hockey, baseball and golf. His initial childhood dream however was to play professional hockey for the NHL, not professional golf. As Joe got older and he realized he wasn't going to get any taller, his childhood dream of playing professional hockey became a fleeting thought, and the sport of golf entered into the picture. Joe started to get serious about the game in his freshman year of high school, wherein he began traveling to play in golf tournaments all over the country. He had to see if his golf game really had a chance. In 1998, Affrunti won his first national tournament, an AJGA event. At that moment, he knew "I had a chance at the game".

Affrunti's college years took him to Minnesota for the first three before he transferred to the University of Illinois where he became Big Ten All-American. Under Mike Small's coaching direction at the University of Illinois, Joe's game began to really mature. His college tournament highlights included the Inverness Invitational at Inverness Golf Course (74, 73, 75 & 74); the Windom Memorial Classic at North Shore Country Club (73, 66, 70, 72); the Alister MacKenzie Collegiate Invitational at Meadow Club (68, 68, 70, 72); the Duke Golf Classic at Duke University (73, 72, 73, 78); and Big Tens at University of Michigan (69, 72, 69, 72) to name just a few. He also held the title in both 2001 and 2002 of Chicago District Golf Association Amateur Champion.

Upon graduating in May, 2004 with a Speech & Communications Degree, Joe decided to take the leap to professional golf. During his first year as a professional golfer, Affrunti had realized some pretty extraordinary accomplishments; one of them included becoming the winner of the 55<sup>th</sup> Illinois Open in 2004, which is held annually at The Glen Club, a nationally-acclaimed championship course, located in Glenview, Illinois. Finishing 3 golf rounds with scores of 73, 70 and 67, Joe claimed the Illinois Open Championship title after an exciting three-hole playoff. This fast start into the professional ranks "has been so exciting and a big confidence booster" for the beginning of a long professional career in golf.

**Affrunti's advice to aspiring professional golfers:** *Follow your dream ... even if the odds are against you! With hard work and great desire, combined with excellent coaching and a strong will to overcome any obstacle, anything is possible.*