

2011 Niswonger Golf Classic a fundraising success

The 2011 Niswonger Children's Hospital Golf Classic drew 117 golfers to

the Blackthorn Club at the Ridges Monday to support the region's only children's hospital. With pro sports stars in attendance, including Dallas Cowboys' Jason Witten, PGA golfer Corey Pavin and former UT basketball coach Bruce Pearl, the event raised more than \$300,000.

"We are thrilled at the outpouring of support we've seen from our community this week," said Pat Holtsclaw, president of the Mountain States Foundation. "We raised \$70,000 more than last year, thanks to the efforts of countless volunteers and, of course, Mr. Scott Niswonger and

his special guests."

Niswonger, the hospital's namesake and chief benefactor, said he was pleased to see the great turnout and the fundraising success.

"Everyone here feels like this is their tournament, and their hospital, and it is," said Niswonger. "I'm humbled by the fact that Corey Pavin would take the time to come here from Hartford, Ct. when he has to be in Montreal, Canada to play a tournament tomorrow."

"It's events like this that really help children, and this is a cause that touches my heart," said PGA star Pavin after finishing up his game on Monday. "After touring the hospital last year, I knew I wanted to continue to be involved."

Niswonger said Pavin has offered to help the Foundation take the tournament to the next level in the future.

"He's giving us advice on what to do this coming



Bruce Pearl, Scott Niswonger, Jason Witten and Corey Pavin, left to right, at the golf tournament.

year," Niswonger said. "He has suggested that he will bring a few of his friends, so next year could be very exciting."

The event, limited to just over 100 players, has sold out for the last six years.

"We've come a long way since our first tournament more than 20 years ago," said Clarinda Jeanes, chair of the Mountain

States Foundation Board of Trustees. "A lot of people have commented on what a professional golf tournament this is. The Foundation has built on what the community started a long time ago, and it has just grown tremendously over the years."

On Sunday evening, a Par-Tee gathering at the Blackthorn Club raised \$170,000 of the event to-

tal through a live auction. Items for sale included tickets and round-trip air to a Dallas Cowboys game and a vacation for 12 to the Bahamas on Scott Niswonger's private yacht.

Money raised by this year's golf classic will be used to purchase advanced ventilator technology for the neonatal intensive care unit at Niswonger Children's Hospital.

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