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Oradell's Jim McGovern wins New Jersey Senior Open in a playoff

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EDISON — Fifty is shaping up to become a very, very good year for Jim McGovern.

The 50-year-old from Oradell won his debut at the New Jersey Senior Open Championship after outlasting former titlist Chris Dachisen in a three-hole playoff Wednesday at Metuchen Golf & Country Club.

McGovern, the former PGA Tour pro and current club pro at White Beeches in Haworth, prevailed after rolling in a 25-foot birdie putt on that third extra hole, the par-4 17th.

"I actually started to like 50, for some reason," McGovern joked during the customary victory speech.

Winning the 27th annual State Senior Open title marked McGovern's third victory in the past month. He won last month's New Jersey PGA Head Pro title and last week earned a trip to his first U.S. Senior Open by sharing co-medalist honors at a sectional qualifier.

McGovern and Dachisen, 58, a Warren resident and longtime pro at North Jersey in Wayne, headed to the playoff after each shot par-72 to finish the two-day, 36-hole event tied at 1-under 143.

McGovern and Dachisen led a strong showing by North Jerseyans. Pros Marty Vybihal of Apple Ridge and Mike Burke of Montammy finished in a tie for fourth at 147 with low amateur Ron Vannelli of Forsgate, one shot behind [Mark Yannotta of Anchor Center](#). Vybihal closed with 72 and Burke 73.

McGovern's 25-foot birdie putt on the 17th came shortly after he three-putted for bogey from almost the exact same spot. That opened the door for the resurgent Dachisen, who was bidding for his first State Senior Open title since 2008.

"No complaints," Dachisen said. "He made a nice putt on the last hole, and what are you going to do?"

"I knew that was the slowest putt I would have anywhere this week, and the first time I didn't get it, didn't want to juice one by the hole," McGovern said of the 17th. "And the second time I just said, 'Give it a good rip,' and it held its line all the way."

McGovern and Dachisen bogeyed the first playoff hole, the par-3 18th, after Dachisen pulled his tee shot left of the tiny green and McGovern hit his to the right of it. Previously, McGovern had to get up-and-down for par on the 18th to force the playoff.

McGovern and Dachisen parred the second playoff hole, the par-4 first. Dachisen just missed an uphill 10-footer for birdie. McGovern had to get up-and-down for par, chipping from a left front bunker and converting an 8-footer.

"I'm happy as hell with the way I played," Dachisen said. "I haven't played well in a good two years now, so I'm happy that I held up under the gun, and I did a lot of good things."