

Ivan Takes Junior Golf Title

By RALPH MOORE

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Steve Ivan, a perfectionist who has learned to curb his temper, defeated Jon Snell, a budding psychologist, 4 and 3 Thursday to win the Colorado Golf Association's state junior match play title at the Ranch Country Club.

Both Ivan, who will be a senior at Pueblo South High School next fall, and Snell, who at 16 returns to Cherry Creek High School as a junior, had to survive extra-hole semifinal matches in order to gain the finals.

Snell went 20 holes against Dave Holobaugh of the Pinehurst Country club and won on the second playoff hole when Holobaugh went out of bounds.

IVAN, WHO WOULD like to pattern himself after Jack Nicklaus, was one down to Mark Armistead of the Ranch and nearby Broomfield, but pulled even with a par on the closing hole and won the 19th (first hole) when the Regis High School standout failed to get down in two from a sand bunker.

Julius Boros would have been proud of the final pairing. Both Ivan, 17, and Snell hit the ball quickly and with authority in a competitive, but swiftly played, finale.

Snell watched as Ivan, who scored a four-under-par 31 to come from three-down to Brian Woody Tuesday, went two-up on the front nine Thursday with a two-under-par 34.

DESPITE HIS tender age, Shell believes in the power of the mind ("it can be your best friend or worst enemy"). He

started bogey, birdie, double-bogey before he birdied the par four fourth with a 12-foot putt for his only win in the title match.

"Then the turning point came at the eighth," he said of the 190-yard par three 8th where the pin placement was locked in tight behind a protective sand bunker.

"I hit the wrong club trying to draw it back into that pin placement, and my draw carries more," he said of the four iron with which he missed the green. The bogey there put him two behind Ivan, who played the entire tournament steady as a rock.

"I wasn't giving up," Snell pointed out, "but realistically, I knew Ivan wasn't going to back up. I knew then I had to make a couple of birdies."

THE BIRDS ELUDED him, and Ivan stayed two-under through the 15 holes it took him to win.

Nothing new for Ivan, the son of Ronald Ivan, retired dean of student activities at the University of Southern Colorado. Ivan has two older brothers who play varsity golf for USC, Prim and Ron Jr.

"He's the third boy of four," proud Ron Sr. said. "I have six children."

Also noteworthy is the fact that George Andrews of Pueblo Centennial was ousted by Ivan 2 and 1 in the first round, but George stayed on and caddied for Ivan the rest of the way. George, Ivan said, was particularly helpful in reading the greens.

THE PUEBLO contingent wasn't surprised as Ivan's sub par performance. He

Championship Card

PAR OUT	445	453	444-36
Ivan Out	435	452	434-34
Snell Out	537	353	444-37
PAR IN	445	353	434-35-36-71
Ivan In	545	352	(wins 4 and 3)
Snell In	645	373	

was No. 1 man on the Pueblo South team which won the state championship by 20 shots.

And he announced his intentions early by winning the qualifying medal with a one-under-par 70 on Tuesday.

"I think it has been my experience that helped me here," he said of his match with Snell. "If I hit it bad I can tell what I'm doing wrong. But I didn't hit a bad shot and I putted well, thanks to George. I've also learned to control my temper."

Ivan has been playing golf since he was 7 "but didn't take it up seriously until I was in the fifth grade," he said of his longevity in the game.

NOW HE WANTS a college scholarship grant in aid, preferably at Arizona, and he would like to pursue a pro career.

"I kind of admire Jack Nicklaus," he said. "I'd like to be up there with him some place."

While Snell felt the 8th hole was the turning point, he actually lost it at the 10th where he missed the green and went three down, and against at the 14th where he pounded a tee shot into the right hazard and took seven on this relatively easy par five hole. Ivan closed it all out on the par three 15th where Snell's necessary birdie putt from the fringe curled off line 10 inches from the cup.

Snell didn't enjoy losing, but he did enjoy the action. "The power of the mind is amazing, I discovered. If you are optimistic and have poise, you can make the shot you want. I learned a lot here."

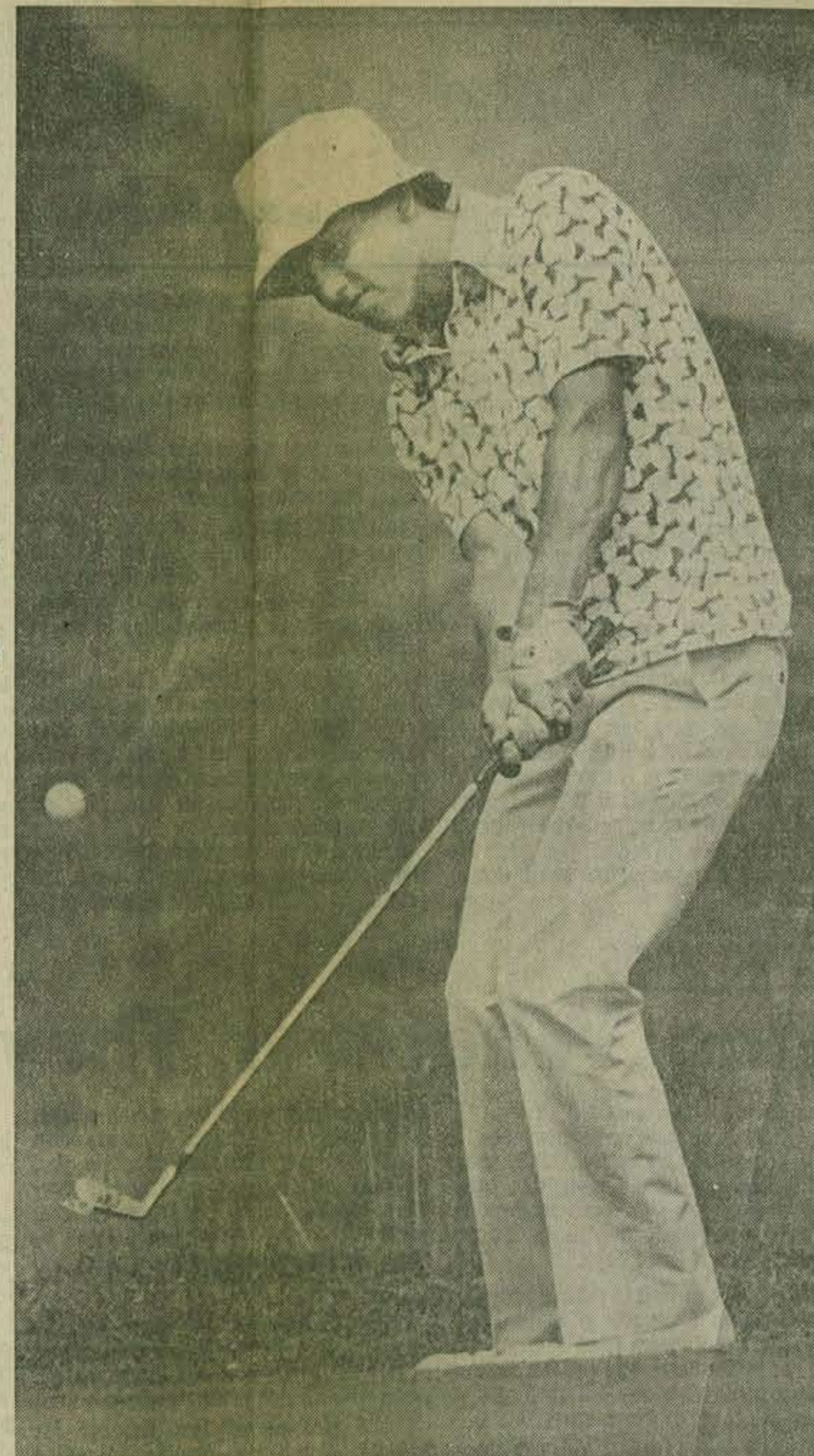
HE IS WHAT he calls a "wimp of a kid" and has tried to strengthen his 5-11, 130-pound frame by "pumping weights." It hasn't helped much, because, Snell says, "I'm still hitting fives (irons) from where everyone else is hitting sevens."

"I don't know," Ivan, who is 5-11 and 50 pounds heavier, said graciously, "you put shots right in there next to mine."

The difference, then, was Ivan's putter and his navigator, George.

FINAL RESULTS

CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT—Steve Ivan def. Jon Snell, 4 & 3; FIRST FLIGHT—Matt Zeman def. Scott Trotter, 2 up; SECOND FLIGHT—Westen Hahn def. Steve Clift, 1 up, 19th; THIRD FLIGHT—Jeff Peterson def. Scott Gibson, 7 & 5; FOURTH FLIGHT—Eric Alpenfels def. Joe Markano, 2 & 1; FIFTH FLIGHT—Eric Alpenfels def. Joe Markano, 2 & 1; FIFTH FLIGHT—Darryl Johnson def. Gary Ply, 1 up; SIXTH FLIGHT—Mike Maydew def. Don Mayo, 3 & 2; SEVENTH FLIGHT—Troy Pittock def. Brett Christensen, 3 & 2; EIGHTH FLIGHT—Jon Paukovich def. Doug Polina 3 & 2.



Denver Post Photo by Ernie Leyba

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG CHAMPION
Steve Ivan of Pueblo is a study of concentration on this shot.