

Maten, Wright Snag State Junior Crowns

By RALPH MOORE
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A berth on the Colorado team that will play in the Junior America's Cup competition, Aug. 12-14, at the Wai Lai Country Club in Honolulu was at stake and Luke Maten was ready to play right- or left-handed to nail it down.

Friday the 6-foot-2, 175-pounder from the Inverness Country Club fired a 38-36-74 to go with earlier rounds of 70-70 at the Foothills Golf Club to win the Colorado state junior stroke-play championship with a 54-hole total of 216.

With the victory went the final selection to the team which arrives in Hawaii Aug. 9 for the America's Cup action.

Earlier Friday, Lisa Wright, who will be a senior at Cortez High School next fall, completed her two-day rally to win the Colorado junior girls championship with a final round 40-37-77 at Foothills for a 241 and a 4-stroke margin over Kristie Kalacny of Grand Junction.

The two juniors took different routes to their trophies.

Maten, who is ambidexterous and hits everything right-handed except when he putts, took the high road, carrying a 6-shot lead into the final round.

WRIGHT, AN excellent skier and basketball player, posted an opening-round 86 and barely made it into the championship flight. But the hard-hitting blond came back Thursday with a 78 that projected her into contention and she won going away Friday.

Maten writes and throws right-handed. He plays hockey (defenseman) and bats left-handed. "I can play golf either way," he said Friday.

He convinced the junior field at Foothills with his even-par 54-hole performance. Dan Berta of Canon City, Winston Howe III of Colorado Springs and Dave Holobaugh of Littleton made swipes at Maten, but the nearest anyone got Friday was Berta, who whittled Maten's margin to 3 going into the 15th hole.

Berta picked up a shot on the front nine and then played even par through the next five holes as Maten took off on a bogey binge at the 10th, 13th and 15th holes.

But, just as he and his father (Fred) figured in a long discussion Thursday night, the birdies were also there and he pulled out to the final margin with a two-putt birdie at the 508-yard 16th and he knocked home a 15-footer for a deuce at the par-3 17th.

GOING INTO Friday's round with the big lead was the most pressure Maten had, as it turned out. He admitted

he would have felt pretty stupid blowing that 6-shot margin.

"My dad and I set up the game plan Thursday night," Maten said. "I knew I wouldn't walk away with it, I've played with Berta before. I knew I had to shoot around 76 to stay around the lead, but I knew they wouldn't give up. So my dad and I agreed that whatever I did, I wouldn't lose my temper and I wouldn't blow it on one bad hole. That was it."

Maten's godfather is Myran Craig, executive director of the Colorado Section of the PGA. It was Craig who advised Luke to play right-handed. "'All the courses are designed for right-handed players,' is what he told me," Maten said.

Wright, who will remain in Denver for next week's junior match-play tournament at the Rolling Hills Country Club, started playing golf at the age of 5 and then got into both skiing and basketball. "But golf is the challenge," she said.

THIS WAS HER first appearance in the girls' stroke-play tournament but she has played in five of the girls' match-play championships.

"I was terribly discouraged when I opened with 86," she said. "At the time, I just hoped to make the championship flight."

The 86 was the result of poor putting (one 4-putt green and five 3-putt greens) and bad approach shots. Her shots to the pins improved Thursday and so did her putting. Friday, she put it all together and fired the back nine at Foothills 2-under women's par.

She double-bogeyed the first hole Friday to fall 3 shots behind Kalacny and three-putted the third before making her move.

"My problem is I get too nervous, too uptight the first day," she said. "All I wanted to do was play catchup and maybe cut 3 or 4 shots off the lead each day. I didn't think I'd do it all in one day."

FINAL RESULTS

CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT — Boys: Luke Maten, 216; Dan Berta, 224; Winston Howe III, 225. Girls: Lisa Wright, 241; Kristie Kalacny, 245; Sarah Zwemke, 248.

FIRST FLIGHT — Boys: Bill Fowler, 224; Ron Speaker, 226; Zane Zwemke, 226; Matt Zeman, 226. Girls: Melanie Warmath, 297; Sue Allen, 299; Margaret Smith, 312.

SECOND FLIGHT — David Park, 231; Mack Brown, 231 (Park won playoff, first extra hole).

THIRD FLIGHT — Mike Musgrave, 227; Mike Northern, 231.

FOURTH FLIGHT — Ronnie Maxfield, 238; Dan Occhionero, 241.

FIFTH FLIGHT — Tom Bradfield, 238; Bob Patterveld, 241.



LUKE MATEN

Switch-hitter on links.



LISA WRIGHT

Catches up in a hurry.