

# Francis rules in junior final

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Randy Francis of Greeley, who last year skipped the Colorado Junior Match Play Tournament to take high-school finals, went to the head of the class in the 1994 championship yesterday.

The 18-year-old Greeley West graduate, who'll play for the University of Wyoming next fall, defeated Joe Osmon of Alamosa 2 and 1 to capture the title at Willis Case Golf Course.

Both finalists advanced with relative ease in the morning semifinals, Osmon dispatching qualifying medalist Ben Fiala 5 and 4 while Francis turned back Geoff Keffer of Lakewood 3 and 1. But the 18-hole title match was to be different.

"Joe and I were talking, and we just concentrated so hard," said Francis. "I think this is the hardest grinding I've ever done on a course. I felt like I was out there for seven hours."

"It was hot and I was tired, but we both played pretty well."

After Francis went 1 up on the par-3 second hole and Osmon got

even when his opponent had to concede No. 3 after playing the wrong ball, the match stayed even until No. 6, where the 17-year-old Alamosa High School junior couldn't two-putt for par from about 40 feet away to put Francis 1 up.

It was a lead the Highland Hills golfer wouldn't surrender the rest of the afternoon, and he increased it to 2 up on the par-4 eighth hole, where his 90-yard sand-wedge approach spun back into the cup for an eagle.

"I was just trying to throw it on the back somewhere," he said. "I knew Joe was on the front edge, and I wanted to have a putt at birdie. And it just hit back there and spun back in."

"I couldn't believe it. I think that was pretty much a turning point, because Joe went 2 down and I was fired up a little bit."

If that didn't turn things around, the key probably was at the 13th and 14th holes.

Osmon had closed to 1 down with a gimme birdie at No. 11 and had two straight chances to catch his opponent. But he three-putted for bogey from about 20 feet while Francis was saving par from further away at No. 13, then squan-



The Denver Post / Kent Meireis

**OOOOH!** Randy Francis agonizes over a missed putt at the 13th hole yesterday at Willis Case Golf Course.

dered a 4-foot birdie try at No. 14 to put himself deeper in a hole.

"Those two putts just totally killed me," Osmon said. "The three-putt hurt the most, I think, because after I missed that one, I had a little doubt in my mind on 14."

"On 14 I thought I would make it to go only 1 down, and 1 down with four to play, I can probably swing that. But 2 down with four to play makes it tougher, and he was play-

ing really solid."

Osmon battled to hang on until the par-3 17th, and appeared ready to take the match at least the full 18 holes. He hit his tee shot just past the green while Francis put one on the cart path far to the right, behind a bunker and with little green to work with.

But Osmon left his 6-iron chip in the fringe, then failed to save par as Francis' matching bogey was enough to close him out.



Randy Francis

## CGA Junior Match Play

Thursday's results of the Colorado Golf Association's Junior Match Play Championship at Willis Case Golf Course:

### CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT SEMIFINALS

Randy Francis, Greeley, def. Geoff Keffer, Lakewood, 3 and 1; Joe Osmon, Alamosa, def. Ben Fiala, Durango, 5 and 4.

### CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

Francis def. Osmon 2 and 1.

### OTHER FLIGHT WINNERS

CHAMPIONSHIP CONSOLATION — Kurt Walsh def. Ryan Roy 3 and 1. BOBBY JONES FLIGHT — Joe Pilling def. Bjohn Sedbrook 5 and 4. BYRON NELSON FLIGHT — Brock Lewark def. Tim Walker 1-up on 19. BEN HOGAN FLIGHT — Matt McCartney def. Scott Thorn 2 and 1. ARNOLD PALMER FLIGHT — Dirk Jutten def. Kyle Scoby 2 and 1. JACK NICKLAUS FLIGHT — Leif Olson def. Ben McConhey 3 and 2.