

Thursday, August 25, 1983 O&E



C.J. Risak

Champ falters, but regains touch in time

THE GAUNTLET — or maybe it was a golf glove — had been dropped. It lay there, blocking Ann Lauer's path to victory.

And she never even saw it. Worse yet, she never even considered that it could be there.

"I had no idea what her score was," said Lauer, who held off GERALYN REPASKY's challenge to win the Observer & Eccentric Women's Golf Classic yesterday at Livonia's Whispering Willows Golf Course.

Lauer thought herself to be the underdog. She was keeping an eye on Kathryn Heriford, the Farmington Hills woman who won the title two years ago, never figuring what Repasky might do.

"I BEAT (Heriford) by five strokes on the front nine," Lauer said. "I was playing smart, but I kept telling myself to keep going."

"I didn't even think about (Repasky) until we looked at our scorecards after we finished."

Maybe it was best Lauer never knew. She bucked the odds throughout the 18-hole tournament — and won.

Besides violating the first rule of tournament golf — know your enemy — Lauer, a 19-year-old

June graduate of Birmingham Groves and a greenskeeper at Birmingham Country Club:

• never played the course beforehand — yesterday's round was her first-ever at Whispering Willows

• drove her ball into the woods on No. 2;

• lost a ball when her drive rolled into the water at No. 9;

• hit her third shot into the bunker at No. 16, then, after blasting out, three-putted;

• hit another bunker at the par-three, 136-yard No. 17 and bogeyed, letting her lead slip to one stroke.

NONE OF WHICH really mattered. Because when it counted, Lauer was on target.

The final hole proved it. Repasky figured she trailed by two strokes at the time. Actually, the margin was just one.

Repasky went off the tee first, hitting a solid drive 185 yards into the middle of the fairway.

Heriford went off next, slicing her drive slightly right and short of Repasky's effort.

Up stepped Lauer. The collar could have tightened; after all, her lead had been cut two strokes in two holes.

It didn't. Her drive rolled 10 yards past Repasky's, and she followed that with a six-iron that landed 10 feet from the cup.

Despite the mounting pressure, Lauer controlled the collar.

"I DIDN'T want to seem rude, but I didn't even talk to those guys," Lauer said of her playing partners, Repasky and Heriford. "I said to myself, 'You're in your own world.' I just played my own game."

Her "own game" included a clutch 10-foot putt at 15 that "went in the side door," by her description. The ball rolled to the edge of the cup, hovered for a moment, then fell in.

"I just looked up and said, 'Someone's watching over me.'"

PERHAPS. But whoever was watching certainly didn't help Repasky much.

The Livonia Ladywood star, who will start her freshman year at Bowling Green State tomorrow on a partial golf scholarship, fell back by two strokes after nine holes, then turned it on over the back nine to card a 39.

Still, golf ball-shaped demons are bound to haunt Repasky's dreams.

A wayward four-foot putt at No. 16 that would have tied the score was Repasky's only gaffe over the last few holes. It was a miss that nightmares are made of.

"That," Repasky agreed, "and her putt at 15." Repasky's effort should have consoled her, but frustration burned its way into her memory. Her second-place finish was not a new experience for her — it was the third time in as many years she took home the runners-up trophy.

"It's like kissing your sister," she said. Next summer's plans include a mini-tour through Florida, but the always-game Repasky vowed to return for the O&E tourney.

"I'll always come back," she swore. "I have to win this thing."

LAUER, TOO, said she would return next year to defend her title. She departed for Mt. Pleasant and Central Michigan today, starting her freshman year at a school that has no varsity girls' golf team. The youngest of five children and the only girl, Lauer has more than proved her athletic ability.

"She's got four older brothers and she can beat them all," said an obviously proud mother, Phyllis Lauer. "They all say to me, 'Ann, come out in the back yard with me and show me what I'm doing wrong.'"

Forget what's wrong. Just tell us what you're doing that's so right.

Lauer wins battle for O&E golf crown

By C.J. Risak
Staff writer

The young lions were hungrier yesterday, scratching and clawing their way through the final holes of this year's version of the Observer & Eccentric Women's Golf Classic at Livonia's Whispering Willows Golf Course.

A pair of 19-year-olds, Ann Lauer and GERALYN REPASKY, battled down the stretch for an elusive title that at times seemed within both their grasps. In the end, the lead Lauer built during the first nine holes was enough to frustrate Repasky by a single stroke.

A June graduate from Birmingham Groves and a two-time golfing All-Stater, Lauer finished with an 81. Repasky, who graduated from Livonia Ladywood in June, scored an 82.

LAUER CARDED a 41 on the front nine to Repasky's 43 and eventually hit her lead to three strokes with three holes to play. But Repasky kept challenging, pulling to within one after Lauer hit sand on 16 and 17, with No. 18 still to play.

Lauer withstood Repasky's charge, however, hitting a perfect drive on 18, then lifting a 6-iron to within 10 feet of the cup. She two-putted from there for a par and the victory, as Repasky's 25-foot birdie effort from the front of the green came up short.



Geralyn Repasky's addition summed up her O&E fortunes: a third straight second-place finish.

"I don't know . . . I'm just not too strong on my trap shots right now," the champion said of her problems on 16 and 17. "I was saying to myself, 'Just keep on going.'"

Lauer followed her own advice expertly on 18. "I hit my drive low, and it just ran," she said of her tee shot on the last hole. That proved to be a pivotal shot, setting up her 6-iron and, eventually, her par.

ALL OF WHICH added to Repasky's frustration in O&E tourney play. She has now finished second for three straight years. Yesterday, the turning point for the Livonia native came at 16, when she missed a chance to make up two strokes.

Lauer bunkered her third shot on 16 and, after blasting out of the trap, three-putted for a double-bogey. Repasky, meanwhile, chipped from the edge of the green to within four feet of the cup and a par.

"I read it to break left to right," Repasky recalled afterwards. "But I turned my putter just before I hit it."

The miss was costly. Lauer was in the bunker again on the par-3 17th and carded a four. Repasky parred the hole, but her charge ended one stroke short.

Finishing third in the championship flight was Mary Gilbertson of Livonia with an 84. Elizabeth Heintz of Birmingham had an 89, with past champion Kathryn Heriford of Farmington Hills and Julie Sproul of Livonia each scoring 90. Gilbertson was awarded low net honors with a 70.

IN FIRST FLIGHT, Betty Delano of Plymouth, a senior at Eastern Michigan University, captured low gross with an 86. Cindy Tomasino of Birmingham was second (88), with Fran Foley of Livonia third (93). Low net winner was Carol Larsen of Livonia with a 64, followed by Joyce Mitchell of Bloomfield Hills (69).

Second flight low gross victor was Ava Sandecko of Livonia with a 94. Barb Williams of Canton was second (98), and Anna Levin of Southfield was third (100). Diane Luoto of Livonia carded a 63 to take the low net title, with Deborah Telchman of Canton runner-up (65).

Forty-eight women entered the 18-hole tourney.



Staff photos by ART EMANUELLE

Ann Lauer was in and out of trouble throughout the tournament, but by day's

end it was her round that was best, making her the reigning O&E women's champ.

Local hockey star on the road to NHL

By Chris McCosky
Staff writer

HOCKEY STARS will not be listed among Farmington's natural resources. You can look it up.

But, that could change. Mike Vellucci may see to that.

Vellucci, 17, would be entering his senior year at Farmington High School this fall, except he'll be living in Bellville, Ontario. There he will attend high school and play semi-pro hockey for the Bellville Bulls in the Ontario Major Junior A League.

The Bulls are owned in part by hockey legend Wayne (The Great) Gretzky, who played in the league during his brief stay in junior hockey.

VELLUCCI was a key member of last year's Compware Midget Major team that won the national championship. Compware (the team that spawned Pat LaFontaine two years ago) compiled an amazing 63-4-2 record en route to the national crown.

After the season, Vellucci had to make a serious choice. He had to decide between a shot at the NHL and college. He was drafted by two of the three Major Junior A leagues: Ontario and Quebec. The third league is the Western League.

To play Major Junior A, players have to sign a contract, which makes them ineligible to play college hockey. That's the bad news.

The good news is 93 percent of NHL players came out of Canada's Major Junior A leagues.

"It was a tough decision," Vellucci said. "Pro hockey is what I want. College scholarships aren't really there anymore, you know. The economy's not been so hot."

"I looked at both sides and I figured that 90-some percent that come out of juniors play pro. I figured I'd give it a shot. I'm glad I did what I did," he said.

IF IT SHOULD happen that Vellucci falls short of his pro goal, the Bulls have agreed to grant him a four-year scholarship to a Canadian college.

Vellucci, however, plans on making it to the pros. His coach at Compware, Mark Craig, feels Vellucci has a good shot at the NHL.

"Mike has as much potential as any kid in Detroit. But, his potential is latent. I don't think a lot of coaches could

see it right away. He will develop well. It might get discouraging for him up there. He may not get to play a lot at first. But, if he stays with it, I think he'll make it," Craig said.

"He is a very smart player," Craig went on. "He's got a great temperament. He's definitely a winner. He fights for everything he gets."

Vellucci, according to Craig, was an important part of the Compware machine last year. Yet, though successful, Vellucci has never found the game exactly easy.

HE BEGAN PLAYING organized hockey at age nine. He began in Mites leagues and worked his way up through Squirts, PeeWee, Bantam and Midgets. He has played on traveling teams since age 14.

At age 16, he was among 88 youngsters that won the national championship for some 18 positions on the Compware team. He was one of last players to make the cut.

Vellucci, who had always played forward, was asked by coach Craig to swing between forward and defense.

"The way he adapted to defense was unbelievable," said Craig. "He picked it up real fast. To only play defense one year and get drafted into juniors ought to tell you something about how well he played."

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Mike Vellucci

Reduce tomorrow's taxes today.

It's not too late to significantly reduce your tax bill for 1982, but time is running out. Unfortunately, the end of the year, when most people begin to focus on their tax situation, is generally the worst time to select a tax-advantaged investment. The inventory of economically sound programs is severely depleted, so choices are restricted.

Anticipating the year-end rush, we have available a limited number of investments for 1983, with varying degrees of deductibility. Kidder, Peabody's approach to tax shelters emphasizes economic soundness plus significant tax advantage. We identify opportunities and create investments with the potential for superior returns. Strict economic and tax standards are applied.

Don't be tempted by outside rumors and promises of "year end specials." Due to the 1983 tax law change, you can be penalized for investing in a fraudulently promoted program. Often, those "too good to be true" end-of-the-year deals are probably just that.

We urge you to contact a Kidder, Peabody representative for a closer examination of the tax-advantaged investments we currently offer. You can feel confident these investments provide careful structuring, stringent control, and real economic merit. Call or write today!



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