

Sports

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Livonia's Steggles steals O&E crown

By C.J. Riak
staff writer

As golf tournaments go, this one had more twists and turns than a ride on a roller coaster. About as many ups and downs, too.

The 1986 edition of the Observer & Eccentric-Whispering Willows Men's Golf tournament finally did crown a winner. But it took 19 holes of golf on Sunday before Mike Steggles of Livonia could claim his triumph.

Steggles out-duelled Doug Cumming of Farmington Hills on the first playoff hole, the 475-yard first hole at Whispering Willows. Steggles drilled his second shot 240 yards with a four-wood, just off the green 20 feet from the cup. His chip from the rough was perfect, stopping 18 inches from the cup.

STEGGLES TAPPED in for a birdie, giving him the victory over Cumming, who lined his second shot — a two-iron — into the trap left of the green. His chip left him 18 feet from the cup, and his putt for birdie trickled just wide.

"I knew I had to make it," Cumming said of his failed putt. "I just



Mike Steggles of Livonia prevailed in this year's tournament.

Columnist C.J. Riak takes a closer look at the frustrating moments of this year's O&E Men's Golf Tournament on Page 2D. Complete tournament statistics also are inside.

puited it. I thought it would break a little."

It didn't, and Steggles had his first O&E win. "I just wanted to get it near the green," said the 1970 graduate of Livonia Stevenson of his second shot. "It was a yard off the fringe. It wasn't a bad lie, it was a good lie actually. That was my first birdie there (in the tournament)."

Steggles' best previous finish in the O&E tournament was second in 1970. "Since then I haven't done diddly," he said.

HE DID ENOUGH Saturday and Sunday. Steggles fired a 71 in the first round, trailing leader Bill Curtis of Farmington Hills by four strokes. But Curtis played himself out of contention with a triple-bogey seven on his final hole of the tournament, finishing with a 77 that included a 41 over the back nine.

Steggles seemingly had the tournament in hand after dropping to one-under after birdying No. 16 Sunday. But he struggled to the finish, bogeying the par-three 17th and the par-four 18th.

That created an opening for Cumming, who finished the shotgun-started tourney on the toughest hole of the course — No. 2, a 403-yard par-four. Cumming drove his tee shot perfectly to the bend of the dogleg. But his second shot, an eight iron, carried over the green.

A chip rolled 11 feet past the cup, but Cumming sank the clutch par putt to match Steggles at 143.

OTHERS HAD a shot at the tourney lead, which attracted 202 golfers. Bob Urbats of Livonia carded a

69 Saturday, but a 42 over the front nine Sunday killed his chances. He finished at 148. Gary Cauzillo of Redford shot a first-round 70 and was even-par after 13 holes Sunday. But he bogeyed the next two and pars at 16, 17 and 18 weren't enough. He tied Curtis for third at 144.

It was a sweet victory for Steggles, and a well-deserved one. He's played Whispering Willows since the course opened, getting in his first rounds as a member of the Stevenson golf team.

"This is the first time I've won anything," he said. "And to beat this guy (Cumming), one of the best amateur golfers in the state, really makes it special."

Steggles seemed out of the running after carding three bogeys on his first six holes Sunday to balloon to three-over for the tournament. But he bounced back, birdying the 155-yard par-three seventh.

Steggles followed that with an eagle two at the par-four, 374-yard eighth. He used a nine iron to sink his 120-yard shot.

"I've never had a hole-in-one before, and this is the closest I've ever come," he said. "It was great. I told myself, 'You're back in it now, let's get going.'"

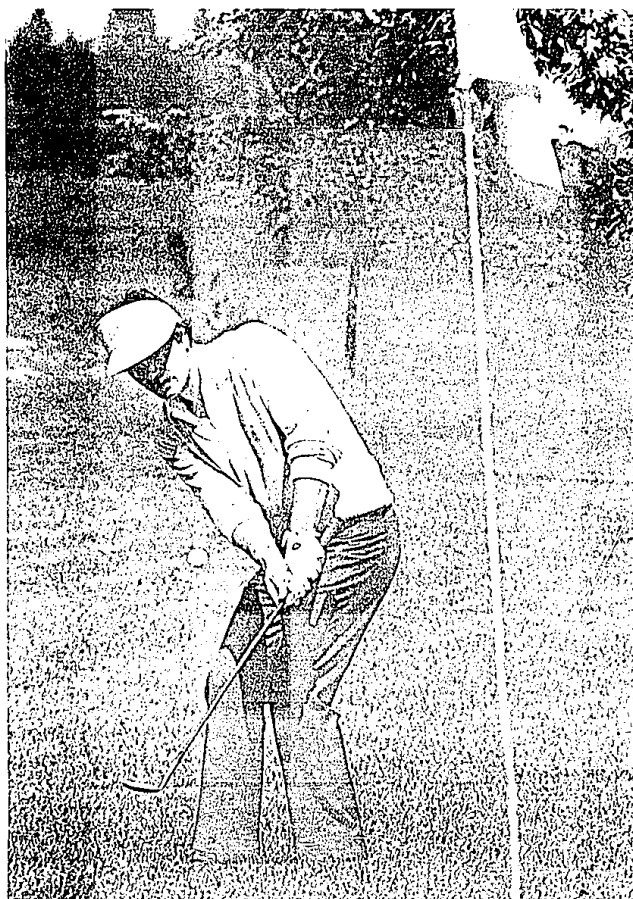
The eagle was a thrill for Steggles, and it proved to be only the first of the day.

STEGGLES AND Cumming split the first (\$150) and second (\$100) place gift certificates. Colin Campbell of Farmington Hills claimed low net honors.

In first flight, Ed Donahue of Southfield won top prize with a 75/74—149, four strokes better than Livonia resident Rick Wheeler's 153. The low net prize went to Steve Zielinski of Livonia.

Second-flight champion was John Smith of Canton with an 81/87—168, a single shot ahead of Paul Krumel of Livonia. Rich Hill of Farmington Hills won the low net prize.

The third-flight championship was undecided. Jim Dryer and Mark Donakowski, both of Redford, each finished at 183. A playoff was scheduled for last night. Valley Forge of Bloomfield Hills took home the low net prize.



Doug Cumming of Farmington Hills chips onto the green nicely during the annual Observer & Eccentric Men's Golf Tournament

Sunday at Whispering Willows. Cumming met with disaster on the 18th hole, losing the lead and the title.

Of classics and relative football

More on the Mercy Hoops Classic

THE TITLE "Classic" was no exaggeration; never is when we're talking about the annual Mercy Hoops Classic.

Mercy and Sarnia St. Patrick's gave a full-house crowd quite a treat Saturday night. As we reported in Monday's editions, Mercy won the championship game 50-48 when Yvette Nielson sank a pair of free throws with no time showing on the clock.

The game was fraught with high drama from tipoff to Nielson's free throws.

St. Patrick's is a colorful team. The Canadians, Ontario's Provincial champs last season, play in excess of 50 games per year. They played five games last week, all against Michigan opponents.

St. Pat's plays the game with a breakneck pace and darts, baits opponents into playing at their tempo. And they play the game fundamentally well. They shoot well, pass well, run and catch well and defend well.

It's obvious the team draws its character from its coach. Bob Delaney rules his team with an effective blend of venom and humor. He carries on a running conversation with his players throughout the game. "Shoot the ball, Claudine. Will you please just shoot the ball?" Maureen, Maureen MAUREEN Heister, will you get your sister over here? Finally Maureen Spero acknowledged the call. "Who did you think I was talking to?" Oh, nice pass. Why don't you just throw it down the darn hall."

He has a cutting wit. Yet he keeps everything in perspective. For example, instead of staying in Farmington Hills Thursday through Saturday — which other out-of-state teams have done in the



Chris McCosky

past — Delaney drove his team back and forth both days. "They have to go to school on Friday," he said.

COMING INTO Saturday's championship game, he knew the focus of the large crowd would be on home-team Mercy. He wanted to divert some of that toward his team. His attention-getting method was unorthodox, but effective.

His team warmed up and went through pregame introductions wearing their typical green sweat pants. But before the tipoff, they stripped off the sweatpants and took the floor wearing baggy, colorfully plaid boxer shorts.

The crowd was highly amused; the Mercy bench was not. At one point in the game, a St. Pat's player fell in the open court. Mercy coach Larry Baker, louder than he perhaps intended, said, "She must have tripped on her head."

In fact, there was an intriguing cat-and-mouse game going on between the two benches. Delaney scored a Mercy Thursday night and saw a team that pressed and trapped and ran throughout the game. He spent extra time with his team Saturday afternoon working on press breakers.

Mercy deployed its press on just four occasions. In the second quarter, Mercy pressed for three St. Pat's possessions. Maria Dietz made two steals (and scored two baskets) and Nielson made a steal on the third. With 1:18 left in the game Mercy trailed by a point. The press was activated again. Marg-

ret DeMattia made the steal this time. She wound up getting fouled and scoring the tying point.

"We felt the key was to get control of the tempo," said Baker of his non-pressing strategy. "We learned a lesson watching them play Waterford Kettering (on Thursday). This is a team that loves to run. If we would have pressed and ran, we would be playing right into their hands."

IT'S AMAZING how different players react to pressure situations. Specifically, DeMattia and Nielson. Both players responded positively under the pressure, but both approached the situation from opposite directions.

DeMattia looked as if she wanted to be left alone to collect her thoughts. Her eyes were glued to the floor. It was hard to tell if she was nervous or simply concentrating. To be sure, she was taking the matter seriously.

Nielson couldn't wait to get to the free throw line. She couldn't wait to hear it. It was as if making the free throws was a foregone conclusion. If she was nervous, it didn't show. The minute the foul was called, Nielson knew the game was won.

Happily for the Marlins, both seniors came through. And happy for me, I was on hand to see a truly entertaining basketball game.

Some football notes . . .

I suppose a few people saw me exchanging high-fives with my buddy Chris Krollicki after a Farmington Harrison touchdown Saturday in the 29-5 win against Farmington.

I don't want anyone thinking I'm partial to the Hawks. I'm not. But that particular touchdown was scored by Dave Krollicki, Chris' brother. Sure, Chris and I got excited when he scored. Sure, Dave's

name and picture got in the paper. You see, the Krollickis are relatives on my wife's side of the family. You didn't want me to deprive 12-year-old Chris a familial high-five, or Dave his due recognition, did you? I have to face these people at Christmas time.

There may be sole high-fiving going on along the Plymouth Canton sidelines this year, too. Another Krollicki, Jeff, is a starter for the Chiefs.

AND SPEAKING of the Chiefs, these rascals are 2-0. Go figure.

The temptation is to give new coach Bob Kheonle the key to the township and erect a statue in his honor.

Without taking anything away from him — certainly his positive attitude and fresh outlook have helped significantly — let's remember that the players on this year's Canton varsity are the same players that dominated the Western Lakes junior varsity circuit two years ago. Kheonle didn't exactly inherit a fallow field — regardless of Canton's varsity tradition.

Many Canton football players, past and present, have experienced winning football on junior varsity and other younger levels. For whatever reason, that winning edge never carried over to the varsity. This year, that seems to have changed.

Credit Kheonle for that if you like. But give the players equal praise. It's my opinion that some of these guys (guys like Tony Boucher, Steve Genyk, Roger Trice, Brian Gothard and Todd Wood) just said: "That's it. We're not losing anymore."

It would be fun to see them maintain that determination throughout the season. It would spice up the typically dull Western Lakes Western Division.

Raiders chilled; Mercy cruises

By Bill Parker
staff writer

A tough defensive performance by North Farmington's girls basketball team kept Livonia Churchill off balance for most of the game Tuesday but in the end the Chargers prevailed.

Missed opportunities by the Raiders, along with a couple of key fast-break baskets and some clutch free throw shooting down the stretch enabled Churchill to earn a 34-27 Western Lakes Activities Association victory.

"We played tough defensively," said North Farmington coach Greg Capling. "Our kids really hustled but we had a hard time putting the ball in the net. We had the shots. They were there, little puppies, they just wouldn't go in."

Churchill coach Tom Lang had similar feelings after the game. "We're elated about the win but I don't think either team played that well," he said. "For this time of the year I don't think the play should have been this sloppy. We didn't shoot the ball well from the outside and we couldn't get it inside very well. They're not a bad ball club. They've lost to some tough teams."

CHURCHILL STORMED to an early 10-4 lead midway through the first quarter. North's Jenny Basford, however, hit two jump shots — one to close the first quarter and one to open the second — as the Raiders evened the game at 10 apiece.

Turnovers and missed shots by both teams kept the game close throughout the second period. By the end of the first half Churchill held a narrow 14-12 lead.

Liz Monroe put the Chargers ahead by four, 16-12, at the start of the second half only to have North's Rory Talamini even the game with two field goals from deep in the corner.

Tracy Greenwald and Julie

girls basketball

Scruggs combined for eight Churchill points in the final three minutes of the third quarter — two fastbreak layups and two perimeter jumpers — as the Chargers surged ahead 24-19.

Greenwald meshed in five more points for the Chargers in the fourth quarter and Churchill hit 8-of-9 from the charity stripe as they cruised to a seven-point victory.

"THE DIFFERENCE in the game was No. 44 (Greenwald)," said Capling. "She was cold in the first half but she made some shots in the fourth quarter that made the difference."

Greenwald led all scorers in the game with 13 points. Scruggs added eight for the winners. North Farmington had a balanced scoring attack led by Suzi Butcher with eight. Basford and Jean Anzlov scored seven each. As a team the Raiders shot a dismal 11 of 58 from the floor.

Churchill improved to 2-1 in the WLAA while North Farmington fell to 0-1.

MERCY 65, ADAMS 28: The score was 16-0 in favor of host Farmington Hills Mercy before Rochester Adams knew what hit them Tuesday night.

Yvette Nielson led the scoring parade for Mercy with 25 points. Maria Dietz added 12. Every Mercy player scored.

Patti Randolph scored eight for Adams (1-2).

Mercy is 4-0 on the season.

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