

Monday, July 25, 1983 O&E

Go fore it! Jackson a prep All-American

Matt Jackson had just finished his morning round of golf at the Oakland Hills south course in Bloomfield Hills. While posing for a few pictures, former Detroit Tigers Al Kaline and Jim Price rode by in a golf cart.

"Hey Matt, do you want to play some golf this afternoon?" shouted Price, a back-up catcher to Bill Freehan in the late '60s and early '70s.

"No thanks," Jackson politely answered. "I have to go somewhere."

Everyone wants to play with an All-American golfer.

Jackson recently made history by becoming the first prep golfer from Michigan to gain All-American status.

The 1983 West Bloomfield High School graduate gained that distinction by finishing fourth at the National High School Athletic Coaches' Association All-American Prep Tournament last month.

Each state is invited to send one male and female representative to participate. The top 10 finishers at that national tournament — which started in 1977 — automatically are accorded All-American status.

This year's 54-hole tournament was held at the par 72 course on the campus of New Mexico University in Albuquerque.

JACKSON, 18 years old, shot rounds of 74, 75 and 72 for a 221 three-day total. Team Kyle Coody, son of longtime touring professional Charles Coody, won with a score of 216. He was

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— Matt Jackson
All-American

followed by Californian Rick Mark (219), Ohio native Kelly Maxwell (220) and Jackson.

"I didn't figure to come in that good," said Jackson, who qualified for the national tournament by winning a Michigan Golf Coaches Association 36-hole tournament held at Forest Acres on the Michigan State University campus.

"I thought I could finish among the top 10, but fourth place really surprised me. All three days of the tournament I really held together. I was really well prepared."

"I started playing well right from the first hole. I didn't have any bad holes, and I was always able to keep the ball in play," he said. "It was a big confidence booster."

Jackson's coach at West Bloomfield — Art Link — was ecstatic with the performance of his All-American golfer.

"It was a great thrill for me just to

have a golfer (from West Bloomfield) in this tournament. Let alone do so well," said Link, the National Tournament Director.

"The course was very difficult. It was desert outside the fairway, so it was a prime factor to keep the ball on the fairway. His putting and chipping were outstanding."

"I'd say he hit 80 percent of his balls on the greens and the fairways," he said.

A three-time member of the Observer & Eccentric All-Area Golf Team, Jackson had a 39.1 dual-meet average last fall during his senior year at West Bloomfield. He was the Lakers' team captain the past two years.

JACKSON will play college golf. He originally planned to attend either Arizona, San Jose State or Arizona State.

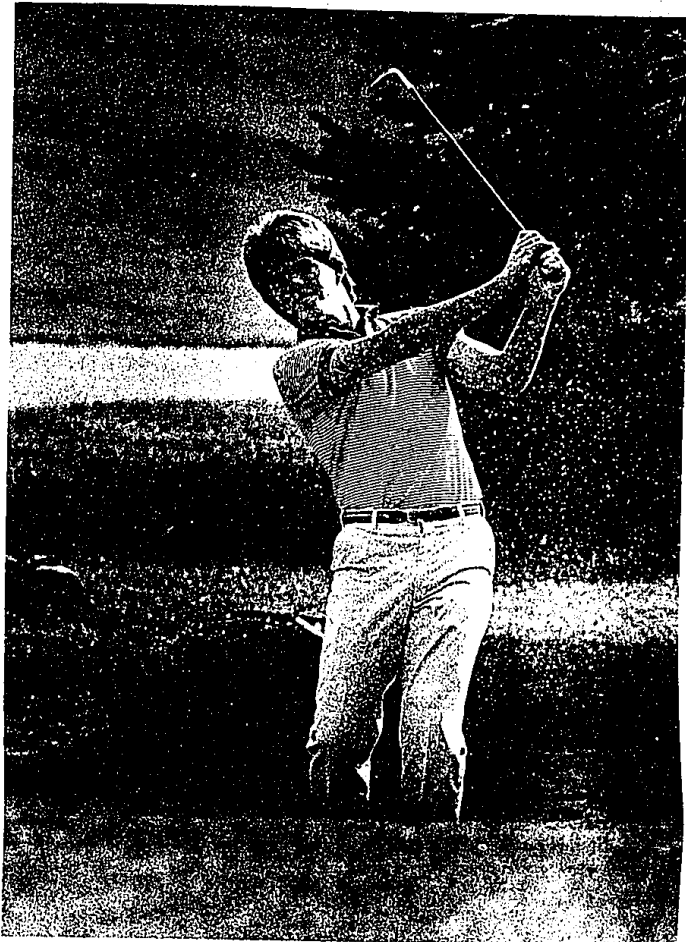
But while at the All-American tournament, he was swayed to attend New Mexico University.

"Their coach told me I had a good chance to make the team," said Jackson. "He wrote a two-page letter saying that he wanted me for their golf team."

And what happens after college? Will Jackson pursue a professional career?

"It depends on how I do in college. If I do well, then I'd like to stay with it," said Jackson, who got a taste of pro golf when he competed as an amateur in the Michigan Open (He failed to

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Matt Jackson is headed to New Mexico University after gaining status as a high school All-American. GARY CASKEY/staff photographer

Humble Mallon is state's womens amateur champ



DICK KELLY

Meg Mallon won the prestigious state women's golfing crown.

By Tom Henderson
staff writer

"I kind of had a letdown this week," said Meg Mallon. Mallon can be excused for her letdown. After all, once you're on top of the world, there's no way to go but down.

Mallon, a Birmingham resident who graduated in 1981 from Farmington Our Lady of Mercy, reached the top of the golf world July 15 in Grand Blanc when she won the Women's Michigan Golf Association title as the state's best woman amateur.

Such was the importance of the event that USA Today, the new daily that claims to be the nation's newspaper, prominently displayed the item in its national roundup.

"I've been stressed," Mallon said. "I was on top of my game then... I was unusually relaxed that day. My concentration was so good, it didn't seem as if anything could break it."

The result was a 2-and-1 win over Lisa Specker in the championship final. Last year, Mallon was eliminated in the semifinals by Joan Garety, the eventual champion.

Mallon went from Grand Blanc to North Carolina, where she competed last week in the Transnational Women's Amateur against the best amateurs in the nation. Alas, "I just didn't play well," Mallon admitted. "I won my first match and lost my second. Golf is a humbling game."

MALLON, 20, is about to enter her junior year at Ohio State, where she is majoring in business. Ohio State has more than a business school; it has one of the nation's finest golf programs with such noted alumni as J.C. Snodgrass, Jack Nicklaus and Tom Weiskopf.

Though Mallon made the varsity golf team as a freshman walk-on, she spent the first two years without scholarship assistance. That changed following last year, when she finished fourth in the Big Ten tournament and was the third-best player on a team ranked second in the nation much of the year. She averaged 77.2 strokes a round in competition.

As a reward, she has been put on half-scholarship.

The Buckeyes entered the national championships ranked No. 2, "but we played horribly," Mallon admitted. She had two excellent rounds in the nationals, with a one-under-par 73 and a 77, but her other two rounds were 84 and 86.

"My strength is just that: my strength, how strong I am," Mallon said. "People are always mentioning how far I hit the ball."

Of average height and build with clean, freckled-face looks, she nonetheless manages to pack a wallop that is

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Annual bash ready Festival features sports

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

"I'm confident that we'll beat 'em," said West Bloomfield firefighter and softball team captain John Steinbach.

The firemen from Farmington Hills were more diplomatic. "I think we're going to do all right. I'm just not sure how all right we'll do," said Farmington Hills firefighter and softball team captain Kevin Bersche.

The two fire departments will square off in a first-ever benefit softball game at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at Farmington High School.

The game, proceeds from which go to the Ann Arbor Burn Center, will kick off a week of sports fun at the 19th Annual Farmington Founders' Festival.

Sports-related activities during the Founders' Festival include the Farmington Founders' Festival's Closed City Tennis Tournament, the YMCA Fox Trot 5K and 10K marathons, the Founders' Festival Softball Tournament and special guest appearances by members of the Detroit Tigers, Detroit Express and the USFL champion Michigan Panthers.

MORE THAN 650 runners from as far away as Florida ran through the streets of Farmington's Kendallwood subdivision in last year's YMCA Fox Trot marathon. According to the YM's physical director, Dave Pothoff, this year's race will be just as successful.

"The runners like to run here because it's a real fast course. The streets are all asphalt and straight. There are no hills to contend with. And the people in the subdivision are really helpful. They come out and spray water on everyone with their hoses. That's real refreshing on a hot day," he said.

Pothoff said as of last Friday, 215 runners have registered for the race, which will be run Saturday. Those interested in taking part in the Fox Trot can register as late as the day of the race.

The Fox Trot comprises both a 5K

run beginning at 8 a.m. and a 10K run starting at 8:30 a.m. Runners for the 5K should check in by 7:15 a.m.; 10K runners by 7:45 a.m.

The races begin and end in the YMCA parking lot, located at 28100 Farmington Road, just north of 12 Mile. Registration fee is \$8.

THERE ARE 10 age divisions for both men and women. They are: 14 and under, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-59, and 60 and over.

Trophies will be awarded to the top finisher in each division. Plaques will be given for best times in each division. All runners will get a T-shirt, and all finishers will receive a commemorative ribbon.

Tim Fox, Michigan's Runner of the Year in 1982, won last year's 10K with a time of 36:48, eight seconds over the

course record set in 1981 by Dave Hinz. Melanie Decker set a 10K course record for women last year with a time of 37:34.

New records were established in last year's 5K in both male and female divisions. Andy Krafsur, with a time of 15:18, won the men's overall, and Kathy Groner, 16:47, won the women's.

As of Friday, 28 teams had registered for the festival's 15th Annual Softball Tourney, which will take place beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday and run through Sunday. Games will be played at Drake Park, Drake Road south of Grand River, Farmington High School, 32000 Shilwassee, and Knights of Columbus Field, Middlebelt Road south of Nine Mile.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Racers jockey for position at the start of the annual Farmington Founders' Festival run.