

Presto Wins Met Final on the Last Putt

Huntington—Amanda Presto surveyed the crowd that had swelled around the Huntington Crescent Club's 18th green yesterday, and the crowd returned her anxious gaze. Only a five-foot putt remained between her and the Women's Metropolitan Golf Association match-play title, and Presto was eager to retain the lead she had taken from Barbara Jones during the second 18 holes of the 36-hole final.

After the first 18, Presto, who three-putted several greens, was 2-down to Jones. After hitting bucket of balls

after lunch, Presto halved the first hole, lost the second, won the third, and lost the fourth to go 3-down. After halving the fifth, she won the sixth, seventh and eighth holes to even the match. She pulled ahead with a birdie 2 on the 14th. Jones trimmed the deficit to one on the 17th, and Presto needed the putt on 18 to avoid a playoff. She gripped her hands around the putter, anchored her feet and sent the ball into the cup for a par-4 that halved the hole and won the match.

"The golf course owed me that putt

on the 18th," said Presto, 20, who lives in Greenwich and plays out of Lakeover. "I was doing pretty well on the first nine holes in the back 18. But then I three-putted on the 15th and the 17th, and when my second stroke didn't hit the green [on the 18th], I was getting a little nervous."

Each player described the match as one of the most exciting she has played. Jones cited the improvement in Presto's putting as the turnaround factor. "Amanda's putting caused her some trouble on the front 18," said

the 23-year-old from Ho-Ho-Kus, N. J., who plays out of Ridgewood CC. "But she outplayed me on the back. On the 18th hole, she sank the putt, and I came up short on a six-footer when I needed a birdie to tie."

The top 32 qualifiers played in the WMGA championship round, with the bottom 16 competing for the Sanford Cup, won by Mimi Ross of Gardiners Bay CC. Ross defeated Jinx Falkenburg McCrary of The Creek Club on the 20th hole, after play was forced into sudden death. —Esther Fein