

Young gains Match-Play semis

Donna Young of Springdale stretched her ailing back during a rain delay and then went on to defeat Ann Probert of Somerset Hills, the qualifying medalist, 2 and 1, yesterday in the quarterfinals of Women's Metropolitan Golf Association Match-Play Championship at the Montclair Golf Club in West Orange.

Young's survival made her the only New Jerseyan remaining in the tournament. The quarterfinals were contested through a constant drizzle.

Young will play Debbie Doniger of Connecticut's Fairview in one of today's semifinals. Doniger defeated Helen Aitken of the host club, 6 and 5, in her quarterfinal match. In the other quarterfinal matches, both involving New Yorkers, Karen Durkin of Westchester outlasted Jean Crawford of Apawamis, 2 and 1, and Reggie Hawes of Westchester defeated Lee Ann Vogel of Southward Ho, 3 and 2.

The winners of today's matches will meet in the final scheduled for 36 holes tomorrow. The 1990 champion, Karen Noble, a member of the 1990 U.S. Curtis Cup team, has turned professional.

Young and Probert, winner of the tournament in 1985 and four times a winner of the WMGA Stroke-Play Championship, exchanged 12 holes during their match.

"The whole match was back and

forth all day," said Young, the runner-up to Noble in last year's New Jersey Women's Amateur. "There weren't a lot of holes halved out there."

Each player won three holes on the front nine. They made the turn all even. After each hit her tee shot on the 10th, play was suspended due to a heavy thundershower. The rain delay seemed to help Young.

"I have a bad back and it got real stiff as the weather got worse," said Young. "As my back became tighter, I just wanted to get off the golf course. But when they called us in for the rain delay, I went into the locker room and did some stretching and that really helped."

When play resumed, the two continued their give-and-take match, each winning two holes to go to the 15th tee even. Young won the 15th with a par and, after halving the 16th in par, closed out the match with a par for a victory on the 17th.

"Sometimes it's just survival of the fittest in weather like that and you just try to make par," said Young, who successfully defended the Garden State Women's Golf Association Stroke-Play Championship last week. "This is a very significant victory for me because I have the utmost respect for Ann as a player and a person. Day in and day out, she is probably the best player in the area."

"I just knew I was going to get her

best so I had better have my best ready."

The rain didn't seem to bother Doniger in her victory over Aitken. The two were even at the end of three holes. Then Doniger parred the next seven to take a 5-up lead through the 10th. She closed out the match on the 13th.

"I felt that if I hit the green and two-putted in this weather, that would be good enough for wins," said Doniger, who has just finished her junior year at North Carolina where her best finish this past spring was a third at the Lady Paladins Invitational in South Carolina. "The rain doesn't bother me that much. We played in the rain all fall and most of the spring. I think it makes you concentrate a little harder because the conditions are so adverse."

Durkin rallied after the rain delay. She was 3 down to Crawford at the end of eight holes and then won the ninth before play was suspended. When play resumed, she won the 10th and 11th to pull even. The two then exchanged the 12th and 13th.

"The key hole, in terms of momentum, was the 14th," said Durkin, who sank a 25-foot birdie putt to take her first lead in the match. "That gave me a lot of confidence. I started thinking about closing out the match."

The two halved the 15th in bogey, but Durkin won the 16th with a par to go 2 up and the match ended when they halved 17.