

# Waters wins

## N.J. Amateur

By JOHN RUYZAM

Although it had its drawbacks, the experience of competing on the women's pro Futures Tour for two winters in Florida proved to be invaluable for Maura Waters.

It was that experience, the 27-year-old Waters asserted, that gave her the kind of edge that enabled her to win her first New Jersey State Women's Golf Committee Amateur Championship yesterday at the Rock Spring Club in West Orange.

The Raritan Valley golfer, who had been a state Amateur runner-up to current LPGA Tour pro Karen Noble in 1988, the same year she won the Garden State Women's Stroke-Play crown, prevailed yesterday with a 5-and-4 victory over defending champion Allison Wojnas of Plainfield in the scheduled 36-hole match-play final.

Also at Rock Spring, Nancy Gitkin of Preakness Hills defeated Marcia Podvey of Green Brook, 3 and 2, for the Flight A title; Mary Eichhorn of Spring Lake beat Barbara Donnelly of Rockland, 5 and 3, in Flight B, and Claire O'Brien of Ridgewood defeated Ann Lanyi of Roxiticus, 4 and 3, in Flight C.

Aside from the two major individual crowns, Waters, a Branchburg resident, has also won the 1991 Women's Metropolitan Better-Ball Championship with Eichhorn as her partner.



Photo by John Oller

Allison Wojnas of Plainfield follows through on drive during final round of New Jersey Women's Amateur yesterday



Waters played the Futures Tour as an amateur in 1988 and as a pro in '89. She left the tour the next year, went to work for her father in the meat distributing business and didn't return to competitive golf until last year, after regaining her amateur status.

"I didn't care for the traveling and living in and out of hotel rooms," recalled Waters, who is now a sales representative for a golf equipment manufacturer. "I became sick of that life. I wanted to make a living playing golf, but not that way.

"But the experience helped me tremendously and I think it's the reason I won today. The big thing I learned was not to become upset and get psyched out because of a bad shot. I learned to relax on the tour."

In yesterday's championship match, the 22-year-old Wojnas lost an early 2-up lead when Waters won the 10th hole with a birdie, the 11th with a par and the 12th with a birdie. Wojnas, however, drew even with a birdie on the 13th.

The first 18 ended in a tie, but Waters took charge after the break, winning the 19th hole, where her opponent three-putted from 30 feet, and the 20th and 22d with pars. Another three-putt bogey cost Wojnas on the latter.

Waters went to 4 up on the 24th hole with a par. The golfers then halved the next three holes before Wojnas took the 28th with a save out of the bunker.

Both were bunkered at the 29th, Waters on the right and Wojnas on the left of the green, but Wojnas used two shots to extricate her ball and lost the hole. Waters all but secured her triumph at the 402-yard, par-five 30th with a six-foot eagle putt for a 5-up lead. Waters bogeyed the 31st, but closed out on the next hole with a winning par.

Wojnas, who works with the greens crew at Plainfield, mowing fairways from 5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m., said her putting let her down. She putted 29 times over the last 14 holes of the match.

"The match was decided on the greens," said the blond, blue-eyed Wojnas, who played No. 1 for the University of Notre Dame women's squad before graduating in May. "If I could have used my driver all the way around the course, I would have been okay. Missing three-foot putts doesn't help your confidence. Right now, I'm not a good putter."

"This was my week," smiled Waters. "I feel great about my game and about winning. This tournament was open to everyone in the state and I won it."

#### FINALS

#### CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT

Maura Waters, Raritan Valley, def. Allison Wojnas, Plainfield, 5 and 4.

#### FLIGHT A

Nancy Gitkin, Preakness Hills, def. Marcia Podvey, Green Brook, 3 and 2.

#### FLIGHT B

Mary Eichhorn, Spring Lake, def. Barbara Donnelly, Rockland, 5 and 3.

#### FLIGHT C

Claire O'Brien, Ridgewood, def. Ann Lanyi, Roxilicus, 4 and 3.