

Wojnas, Waters to duel for title

By JOHN RUYZAM

Two of the Plainfield Country Club's finest women golfers were thrown into battle against one another yesterday with a state championship on the line.

Allison Wojnas, who last year defeated Lisa Rogers in the title match for the Plainfield women's club crown, kept her title defense alive in the New Jersey State Women's Golf Committee Amateur Championship by capturing the 17th and 18th holes at the Rock Spring Club in West Orange for a 1-up victory over her familiar adversary in the semifinals.

Today, Wojnas, 22, and 1988 Garden State Women's Stroke-Play titlist Maura Waters of Raritan Valley, will duel for the championship in the scheduled 36-hole final. The 27-year-old Waters, advanced with a 3-and-2 triumph over Kristen Weise of Princeton Meadows.

Wojnas, a University of Notre Dame graduate who has taken summer employment with the Plainfield green-keeping crew, grabbed a 3-up lead on the front nine, but gave it all back by losing the 10th, 13th, 14th and 16th.



Photo by John Oller

Allison Wojnas of Plainfield watches shot during New Jersey Women's Amateur yesterday at Rock Spring Club in West Orange

However, she emerged victorious after the 20-year-old Rogers, twice a Metropolitan Girls' champion, three-putted the 17th from 35 feet and the 18th from 20 feet for bogeys. Wojnas parred both.

Waters, a Rutgers alumna and former assistant golf coach at the university, is trying to finish something she started four years ago. In 1988, she lost to Karen Noble in the state Amateur final, as well as finishing second to the current LPGA Tour pro in the Women's Metropolitan Match-Play Championship.

Waters played on the women's Futures Tour as an amateur in 1988 and as a pro in 1989, a grind that washed away her zeal for the game.

"I was burned out after the tour in '89 and went to work for my father, who's a meat distributor," recalls Waters. "It took me an hour to drive to work and the job was very time consuming, so I didn't get a chance to play golf that much."

Waters returned to the fairways last year, accepting a position as a sales representative for New Jersey and northeast Pennsylvania with the Head golf equipment company and rebuilding her swing with noted teaching pro Robbie Schaal at the Raritan Golf Center.

"It takes about a year for a swing change and the mechanics to settle in," explained Waters. "Right now, my swing is solid and I'm at the top of my game. It doesn't get any better than this."

Yesterday, Waters moved to a 3-up

lead over Weise, a former New York State Women's Amateur runner-up, by capturing the fifth, sixth, eighth and ninth holes, the latter with a 13-foot birdie putt. The lead dwindled to 1 up after Waters bogeyed the 10th and 11th, but birdies at the 12th from 12 feet and the 15th from six feet sent her on her way to the final.

"The turning point was the 12th," said Waters. "She was starting to come back."

Also today, 18-hole finals will determine the champions in the other three flights. Marcia Podvey of Green Brook will meet Nancy Gitkin of Preakness Hills in Flight A, Barbara Donnelly of Rockland will play Mary Eichhorn of Spring Lake in Flight B and Claire O'Brien of Ridgewood will take on Ann Lanyi of Roxiticus in Flight C.

SEMIFINAL ROUND CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT

Allison Wojnas, Plainfield, def. Lisa Rogers, Plainfield, 1 up.

Maura Waters, Raritan Valley, def. Kristen Weise, Princeton Meadows, 3 and 2.

FLIGHT A

Marcia Podvey, Green Brook, def. Michelle Mella, Rutgers, 4 and 3.

Nancy Gitkin, Preakness Hills, def. Sue Shankland, Bamm Hollow, 4 and 3.

FLIGHT B

Barbara Donnelly, Rockland, def. Gail Dunn, Essex Fells, 6 and 5.

Mary Eichhorn, Spring Lake, def. Cathy Marquis, Flanders Valley, 2 and 1.

FLIGHT C

Claire O'Brien, Ridgewood, def. Kumiko Fujii, Rutgers, 19 holes.

Ann Lanyi, Roxiticus, def. Pat Tancredi, Rockaway River, 1 up.