

Allison's first hole-in-one helps her beat Eichhorn

By Kate Smith

Debbie Brucker of Baltusrol was on the second fairway when she heard the ruckus.

"At the top of my backswing, I heard all this noise, this excitement," Brucker said. "So, I finished my shot and said, 'What was that?'"

The shot heard around the Morris County Golf Club in Convent Station yesterday was a hole-in-one by Mahwah's Katie Allison at the 118-yard third hole in the quarterfinals of the Women's Metropolitan Golf Association's 97th Match-Play Championship.

The 8-iron shot propelled Allison to a 6-and-5 victory over Spring

Lake's Mary Eichhorn, the 1999 state Amateur champion.

"The first two rounds of the tournament, I put the ball short and into the rough," Allison said. "I just wanted to get it on the green. It took one hop and leveled out. I couldn't believe it. I screamed. That really got me on a roll."

It was the first ace of Allison's career.

"I've never played with someone when they hit a hole-in-one," said Eichhorn, who years ago had an ace at the Somerset Hills Country Club. "It was really fun."

Allison, who plays out of the Tuxedo Club in New York, is a former Mahwah High School golfer who just

completed her sophomore year at Winthrop College in South Carolina. She is a member of the golf team at Winthrop.

"She played really solid golf," Eichhorn said. "I could have given her a better match, but I'm sure I don't have the ability to beat her the way she was playing."

Eichhorn had advanced to the quarterfinals with a 3-and-2 victory over top-seeded Sherry Herman of Shore Oaks in the first match-play round yesterday morning. Herman, who beat Allison in the 1999 final, is a four-time state Amateur champion.

Allison, who will play in the state Amateur for the first time this summer, will face Lee Ann Vogel of New

York's Southward Ho in the semifinals today at 8 a.m. Vogel advanced with a 3-and-2 victory over Brucker. In the other semifinal, Madeleine Hershberger of Twin Brooks will confront Judy Cuttone of Roxitcus.

Hershberger beat Ann Probert of Somerset Hills, 1 up, and Cuttone beat Barbara Hulke of Roxitcus, 2 up, to make the semifinals.

Allison's ace was not the only spectacular shot of the day. In the morning round, Brucker holed a blind bunker shot at the 18th for a 1-up victory over Gail Flanagan of New York's Westchester.

"I didn't see any reaction whether it was a good shot or not," Brucker said. "Then my caddie said it was in the hole."