

MEDALIST ANACONA WINS OPENING MATCH IN ROUND OF 32

LONG GROVE, Ill. (July 18, 2019) – Medalist Ana Belen Anacona, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, coasted to victory Thursday in her opening match to move into Friday's Round of 16 match play in the 119th Women's Western Amateur at Royal Melbourne Country Club.

Anaconda, 18, defeated Marissa Kirkwood of New Castle, Pennsylvania, a senior at Kent State, on the 14th hole, posting a 5 and 4 victory.

Anaconda said she benefited from having her close friend, Valentina Rossi, of Rosario, Argentina, caddie for her in the afternoon match. Rossi, 18, missed the 36-hole cut for match play by a stroke earlier Thursday.

"She helps me a lot," said Anacona, who never trailed in her match. "She knows me really well because we play in tournaments together."

An incoming freshman at the University of Arkansas, Anacona won the third hole to take an early lead, then holed a pair of 18-foot birdie putts – on Nos. 9 and 12 – to build a 5-up lead with just six holes to play. Each of the putts prompted a high-five from Rossi. The pair hope to keep their positive thoughts flowing Friday.

"I just try to be positive," Anacona said. "Of course you have moments that you can't, but I just keep trying."

In the first match to end in the lower bracket, Tristyn Nowlin of Richmond, Kentucky, defeated Julia Potter-Bobb of Indianapolis, Indiana, 7 and 6.

Nowlin was the finalist and runner-up at last year's Women's Western Amateur. Potter-Bobb, 31, has played in Women's Western events since 2002. Nowlin said the afternoon's gusty winds didn't affect her play.

"I have a lot of confidence in windy conditions," said Nowlin, a senior at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. "My caddie and I did a good job talking through my shots."

Nowlin had nothing but good things to say about Potter-Bobb after the two played together all week.

"Julia played good. She was hitting her driver really well," said Nowlin, 20. "She's a great player with an awesome attitude. We had a great time this week."

Nowlin is looking forward to the rest of match play, taking it one hole at a time.

"I love match play," she said. "I get momentum when I see my putts drop. I get fearless and in the zone."

Three matches still in progress when play ended Thursday are set to resume at 6:30 a.m. Friday.

Winners of the opening 16 matches will square off Friday morning for a chance to advance to Friday afternoon's quarterfinals.

Friday's first match between Anaconda and Caroline Wrigley of Wexford, Pennsylvania, is set to start at 7 a.m.

Contestants from 30 states and 12 countries are vying for the W. A. Alexander Cup, which was first presented in 1901 in honor of his wife Maude Alexander, the first president of the Women's Western Golf Association.

The list of past champions spans more than a century, from legendary stars Patty Berg (1938, 1946, 1947), Nancy Lopez (1976), Beth Daniel (1978) and Cristie Kerr (1994) to modern stars such as Brittany Lang (2003), Stacy Lewis (2006) and Ariya Jutanugarn (2012).

[Match Play Results and Pairings](#)