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Tournament Medalist Emilee Hoffman Captures Women's Western 118th Amateur Title

Romeoville, Ill., June 30, 2018 ... The 118th Women's Western Golf Association's National Amateur Championship is in the history books. The tournament was held at Mistwood Golf Club, Romeoville, Ill. Finalists Emilee Hoffman, Folsom, Calif. and Tristyn Nowlin, Richmond, Ky., survived the week playing eight rounds of competitive golf (nine rounds if they played a practice round). Today they met in the final 36-hole match. They were rivals today but actually good friends first meeting when they were junior golfers playing in AJGA tournaments.

After the morning round Hoffman was 7 up which included three birdies in a row on 11, 12 and 13. During the afternoon, the conditions were brutally hot with the temperature climbing into the high 90s and heat index over 105. Hoffman continued her charge and was 8 up by the 23rd hole. Nowlin won the 27th hole while Hoffman made two birdies in a row on the 28th and 29th (or 10 and 11.) After winning the 28th Hoffman went 7 up. Time was running out for Nowlin with only 8 holes left. It was Hoffman who triumphed after winning the 28th hole with a margin 8 & 7 in the 36-hole final.

Hoffman's father, Jeff, has taught Emilee most of what she knows, and high school and college coaches have helped her with the short game. Hoffman said, "My best club this week was my driver. My putting has been a problem this year, but I have worked hard to improve and it paid off this week. I had hoped to play well (this is the first time playing in a WWGA event) and advance in this tournament and it worked – I was victorious!" She said, "I loved this tournament, it was very well run, and I met some really great people."

Nowlin said, "It has been a fun week. Today I played a better player. Emilee has a great mental game. Thanks to everyone with the WWGA for a great tournament."

Capturing Medalist honors and going on to win the tournament, Hoffman joins some current LPGA super stars who accomplished the same when they won this championship: Brittany Lang (2003), Stacy Lewis (2006) and Ariya Jutanugarn (2012).

Hoffman attends the University of Texas, her honors and awards include 2017 World University Games Team Golf Medalist (USA); All-Big 12 Conference (2018); Academic All-Big 12 (2017 First Team, 2018 First Team); Academic All-Big 12 Rookie Team and Big-12 Academic Honor Roll (Spring and Fall 2017.) In her sophomore (2017-18) year, she competed in all 13 tournaments and 38 rounds for the Longhorns; recorded 5 rounds at par or better.

Nowlin attends the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her sophomore year (2017-18) includes: All-Big Ten Second Team; Big Ten Preseason Honoree; posted the second-best single season stroke average in the program's history (72.59); tied for second place overall at the Mountain View Collegiate, marking a career best finish; tied the ninth best individual round in school history (68, 4-under) at Briar's Creek Invitational and competed in 11 out of the 12 tournaments of the season. In 2015, Nowlin was a Miss Kentucky Golf honoree.

Hoffman will have her name inscribed on the W. A. Alexander Cup along with such illustrious names as Patty Berg, Louise Suggs, Joanne Carner, Nancy Lopez, Grace Park, Cristie Kerr, Stacy Lewis, Brittany Lang, Ariya Jutanugarn to mention just a few.

Finalist Nowlin will have her name inscribed on the Babe Didrikson Zaharias Memorial trophy which was donated by members of the Nashville Golf & Athletic Club when this tournament was held there in 1987. The trophy is one of Babe's golf clubs, it is attractively framed and hangs in the entry of the clubhouse.

Throughout the tournament, players, caddies and spectators were praising Mistwood, the layout and condition of the golf course. Some of the comments included how well maintained the course is; practice range is great and all the players' said, "Everything about the course and club is awesome!"

Twenty-two years ago, Raymond Hearn Golf Course Designs, an internationally acclaimed golf course architecture and land planning company based in Holland, Mich., was founded in 1996 the same year Hearn was hired by a group of investors to construct and design Mistwood Golf Club. Hearn received the prestigious Evans Scholarship from the Western Golf Association and attended Michigan State receiving two B.A. Degrees, one in Turfgrass Science and Landscape Architecture; he graduated with honors in both degrees.

The land where Mistwood Golf Club is now located was originally a gravel quarry and became a private fishing club. Hearn's idea was to combine parts of links, heartland and health land courses into one. He had a vision of the final project but at that time funds were unavailable to fulfill all his ideas; however, the course still opened in 1998 and immediately got attention. Hole #8 was included in the "Top Public Par 5's Top Ten" in just three short years (1999). Golf Digest gave it 4-1/2 stars out of a possible 5 and it was ranked in the "Top Ten Public Courses in Illinois."

In 2003, Jim McWethy, who was one of the original investors, became sole owner. He wanted to develop a new standard of excellence, excitement and entertainment for Chicagoland golf. McWethy started thinking about renovating the course and reached out to Hearn. After several years of conversations, McWethy provided the funding so Hearn's original ideas and new concepts of renovation to make the course more challenging to all levels of players could begin, transformation began in 2012. The course reopened in 2013 and was named "Best Public Renovation in the United States" in 2014. After the two-year, multi-million-dollar renovation, Mistwood continues to be one of the most talked about Chicago golf courses. Other accolades include: Golf Range Magazine's "Top 50 Public Ranges" and "Top 100 Club Fitters in the U.S."

McWethy said, "It was wonderful that Ray Hearn returned to complete the renovation." McWethy oversaw the construction of the state of the art Performance Center, Pro Shop and a new clubhouse. "It (Mistwood) is still a work in progress," stated McWethy.

"It was a wonderful experience hosting the WWGA's 118th tournament and meeting players from across the U.S. and a number of countries; we look forward to their return sometime in the future," said McWethy.

The next WWGA event is the 92nd WWGA National Junior Championship begins July 16-20 at Cincinnati Country, Cincinnati, Ohio. For more information on the Junior tournament, contact Susan Buchanan, Tournament Chairman: beep691@yahoo.com

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For More Information – www.WWGA.org for photos, results and match play tree

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