

**Women's Western Golf Association  
118<sup>th</sup> National Amateur Championship  
Mistwood Golf Club  
Romeoville, Illinois**

**June 25-30, 2018**

**Play Underway in WWGA's 118<sup>th</sup> National Championship**

Under dark skies, play began in the 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 Qualifying Rounds in Women's Western Golf Association's 118<sup>th</sup> National Amateur Championship at Mistwood Golf Club in Romeoville, Illinois. The first 6 to 8 groups had to deal with intermittent rain showers, but for the later groups the sun shone and proved to be a very pleasant day to be on the golf course. Feedback from the players was that the course was in great shape, was challenging but fair, and that it was very important to keep their golf ball in the fairway. Jessica Yuen, a Junior at the University of Missouri from neighboring Bolingbrook commented that "you get in trouble if you don't hit it straight here". The course is playing 6,131 yards with a par 72.

A late afternoon rain storm deterred the last 8 groups from finishing their rounds. Play was stopped for about an hour but those last groups were able to finish before dark.

The low score of the day was turned in by Emilee Hoffman of Folsom, California with her 65. Asked if it was her career round, she commented that she had two rounds of 64, one in a Big "I" Tournament in California and the other in a college tournament hosted by Oklahoma University. She will be a Junior at the University of Texas where she has been a member of both the All Big 12 Team and All Academic Big 12 Team for the past two years. Hoffman also caddied for her Father in the 2009 USGA Mid-Amateur Championship and he in turn caddied for her in the 2016 USGA Women's Amateur Championship.

Three players shot 69. Doey Choi is one of the four Australians playing in this event. At the age of 13, she became the youngest person in history to have won the New South Wales Women's Amateur Championship. Also shooting 69 was Linda Wang, who hails from Plainview, New York and attends St. John's University where she is majoring in Sports Management and minoring in Business. The third 69 was shot by Abegail Arevalo, a Pilipino who will be a Senior at San Jose State University where she was named to the First Team All-Mountain West Conference in 2018.

Shooting scores 70 were Maggie Ashmore, Kingston, Georgia; Brianna Bolden, Mokena, Illinois; and Adeena Shears, Elizabeth, West Virginia,. Bolden will be a Senior at Lincoln Way Central High School. Ashmore plays for Augusta (GA) University and Shears plays for The Ohio State University.

A number of players turned in scores of 71. Included in this group was Gabriella Ruffels, of Melbourne, Australia. Both her father Ray and her mother Anna Maria Fernandez (Ruffels) played Professional Tennis and introduced Gabriella to the sport while she was young. She won the Australian National Tennis 12 and Under Championship and competed internationally until she was 14 ½. She decided to quit tennis and take up golf and had the goal of having a handicap of 5. She excelled quickly at the game and graduated from high school in October, 2017, fully expecting to start her college career at the University of Southern California in September, 2018.

After two of her starting players turned professional after the Fall season, the then USC Coach Andrea Gaston contacted Gabriella and asked her to start in January. Ruffels played the Spring season and was a member of the USC Team who lost in the Semi Finals to Alabama at the NCAA Women's Golf Championship in May. Her brother Ryan is also an aspiring golfer who plays on the Latino-American tour.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> qualifying round will be played on Wednesday. The Low 32 players will compete for the title of Champion in single elimination Match Play starting on Thursday. The last two will play in the 36-hole match Final on Saturday. The public is invited to attend these matches at no charge.