

GOLF: Welsh Women's Open

Belgian star is unhappy to hit time barrier

THE sands of time ran out for Belgium's Lana Freund in the Welsh Women's Open at St Pierre yesterday as she became the first player on the Amex European Tour to be penalised for slow play.

The 25-year-old was handed a one-stroke penalty by rules official Allan Hibbert after taking 93.9 seconds to play her third shot to the 15th hole. Under new guidelines to speed up play, the limit is 80 seconds.

That turned her three-over-par 76 into a 77, and she was less than pleased with the decision.

"I think that everyone on the course has taken more than 80 seconds over a shot and if they are going to use this ruling then there should be a referee with every group," she said.

Director of tour operations David Rollo said that a warning had been given to another player, and several others were on the borderline.

The wind that caused havoc in the opening round again took its toll, and there were six players tied for the lead on 148, two over par.

They included the overnight front-runners, Caroline Hall, Lora Fairclough and Stephanie Dallongeville, who all returned disappointing 76s.

The most significant moves came from Scotland's Julie Forbes and New Zealander Lynnette Brooky, who shot best-of-the-day 71s to join the log-jam at the top.

Forbes could have been clear of the pack but for a bogey five at the par three 18th, where she found all sorts of trouble in the bunker.

Brooky – youngest of nine children, six of them single-figure golfers – is a product of the Titahi Bay club in Wellington where Michael Campbell learned his trade.

A run of two birdies and an eagle in successive holes from the 14th was the key for 28-year-old Brooky, whose sporting talents first surfaced on the rugby field when she played full back for the local boys club.

For Welsh hope Helen Wadsworth there was a second 77 for 154, but with no-one pulling away she could still force her way into contention.

The shot of the day came from another Belgian, Valerie Van Ryckeghem, who holed in one at the 146-yard 18th with a four iron.

Leading scores (GB unless stated): 148 S Dallongeville (France) 72 76, L Hackney 73 75, L Brooky (New Zealand) 77 71, C Hall 72 76, L Fairclough 72 76, J Forbes 77 71; 149 P Meunier (France) 76 73, J Morley 74 75, C Duff 76 73, T Loveys 76 73; 150

Brooky swinging off to France in sparkling form

By LYNN McCONNELL
Sports staff

Lynnette Brooky gave golf coach Alex Mercer a present he'd been waiting 10 years to see when coming under his scrutiny in Australia last week.

The Wellingtonian, who flies out with the New Zealand team for the Espirito Santo golf tournament in France tomorrow, keeps in regular touch with the highly regarded Australian, who has been an adviser for many of New Zealand's internationals over the years, and she visited him last week.

"He told me he had waited 10 years to see the swing I presented in front of him," Brooky said.

It was an indication of the form she is in before heading to the prestigious world championship tournament.

Brooky feels she is playing so close to her peak potential that, at a recent tournament in Auckland in which she found herself three under early in the round, she had to put the brakes on.

"I got a bit scared that I was playing the best round of my life three weeks too soon.

"I still played well but wanted to keep it for France," she said.

Her form is reflected by the other members of the team.

"I'm sure we can do well



Brooky – close to her peak

with the potential the girls are showing. Susan Farron played off the championship tees in Wanganui and went 2 under in howling winds, and Kerrin Starr has been playing very consistently.

"We can peak, and we will peak in France. The potential is there," she said.

The spirit of togetherness that has developed in the team was typified yesterday when Brooky said she was off to Palmerston North for dinner last night with Farron.

"I'm feeling really hypo about it and I just want to see how bad on her nerves it is for her and to see whose fingernails are worn down most.

"I am feeling nervous but it is good to be that way now before we get there," she said.

Brooky said that since the last Espirito Santo tournament in 1992, her whole game had been directed towards this year.

"I've really tried to keep my performances up. I want to do better than the eighth place I

took last time," she said.

Since visiting the championship course in July with the New Zealand team, Brooky has been working hard on her visualisation.

"I've been putting the images in front of me. I've tried to play the course every day and concentrating on putting the ball in the hole," he said.

Adding to the sense of unity in the team is the uniform that has been developed for the players.

"Gwen Hill has done an amazing job with our gear. We have a playing uniform that looks really sharp and a good dress uniform," Brooky said.

Turning professional was something that has always been on Brooky's mind but she's also aware of the extra steps that involves.

"You need the sponsorship and support but at the moment I still want to play in the national championships after the Espirito, in October-November," she said.

● The United States won all five morning four-ball matches today to lead the International team, which includes New Zealander Frank Nobilo, 5-0 in the inaugural President's Cup matchplay competition in Gainesville, Virginia.