

Scott to launch rich classic

By JAMIE TROUGHTON
Golf writer

Top Kiwi women's golfer Gina Scott will be in Wellington next week to help launch the richest tournament to hit these shores.

The \$650,000 Women's Classic will be held at Hutt Golf Club from February 21-23, and a press conference next Thursday is expected to announce the naming-right sponsors and other key backers.

Scott, who won the 54-hole Chart Hills Classic two weeks ago on the European Tour, has confirmed she'll play, and she is likely to be joined by the rest of New Zealand's top women professionals.

Lynnette Brooky will act as the tournament's hostess, and Susan Farron, Kerryn Starr and Marnie McGuire are all likely starters.

McGuire retired earlier this year citing a lack of motivation after 15 years of continual golf, but she rediscovered her enjoyment and is playing with Brooky in the Ladies World Cup of Golf in Ireland this weekend.

Scott beat former world No 1 Laura Davies in the Chart Hills Classic with a final-round 65, to leap up the

GOLF

European Order of Merit and hold her tour card for the next three years.

Back home in the Waikato this week, Scott said the win felt pretty natural.

"It hasn't been as huge as I thought it would be," she said. "That's a good thing. It's nice to just take it in your stride and just carry on."

"The first win's always nice, and in my rookie year too - you've got to be happy with that."

Life as a touring women's professional isn't nearly as glamorous as her male counterparts - Scott will be forced to work part-time as a bank clerk in the off-season to fund her travel.

"Unfortunately that's the case - I'm going to go back to work. I do really need to go back because I haven't got any sponsorship secured at this stage."



Brooky

"The papers say I won \$72,000 this year, and I can tell you I certainly didn't come home with \$72,000. There are a lot of expenses that people don't see. I really only come out of my win with \$9000."

Scott hopes February's Women's Classic can trigger a wave of interest in the women's game.

"Grant Waite played awesome the other day, and he deserved the coverage that he got, but he got second [in losing to Tiger Woods]."

"Marnie's won in Japan, I've won in Europe, Brooky's won in Europe - but you just can't get your face on TV. If we can get this tournament going, and the public are really interested, and it's a big success, then maybe that might give the TV something to think about."

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Shandon will be hoping for its first Duncan Cup interclub golf title since 1986 when it takes on Manor Park at Miramar tomorrow.

Manor Park has held a virtual mortgage on the title over the last decade, but Shandon won the round-robin clash 9-6 earlier this season, and has a string of promising juniors coming through.

Brooky makes rich field

NEW ZEALAND golfer Lynnette Brooky hung on to finish third in the Caja Duero Open in Spain yesterday.

A subsequent pay cheque of 15,500 euros (NZ\$31,000) lifted Brooky to ninth on the European Evian Tour's order of merit and gave her a lifeline to compete in the rich Evian Masters in France this month.

Brooky is the first reserve for the US\$2.1 million (NZ\$4.46 million) Evian Masters starting on June 12 and she squeezed into the field after Sweden's Annika Soren-

stam won an LPGA event in the United States.

Sorenstam's 11-stroke victory in the Keebler Classic and the fact Caja Duero Open winner Karine Icher is already exempt for the lucrative tournament, saw Brooky confirmed for the event, in which she will join compatriot Marnie McGuire.

Brooky had to be content with an even-par 72 yesterday which saw her post an eight-under 280 aggregate. That was three shots behind Frenchwomen Icher.

It was Brooky's second successive top-three finish after she had an identical result last week in Portugal.

On the men's scene, Bob Estes fired a one-under-par 70 to win the Kemper Open by one shot over Rich Beem in Potomac, Maryland, and Justin Rose, of England, clinched his fourth title of the year when his second consecutive seven-under 65 earned him the British Masters championship at Woburn by a stroke. — NZPA