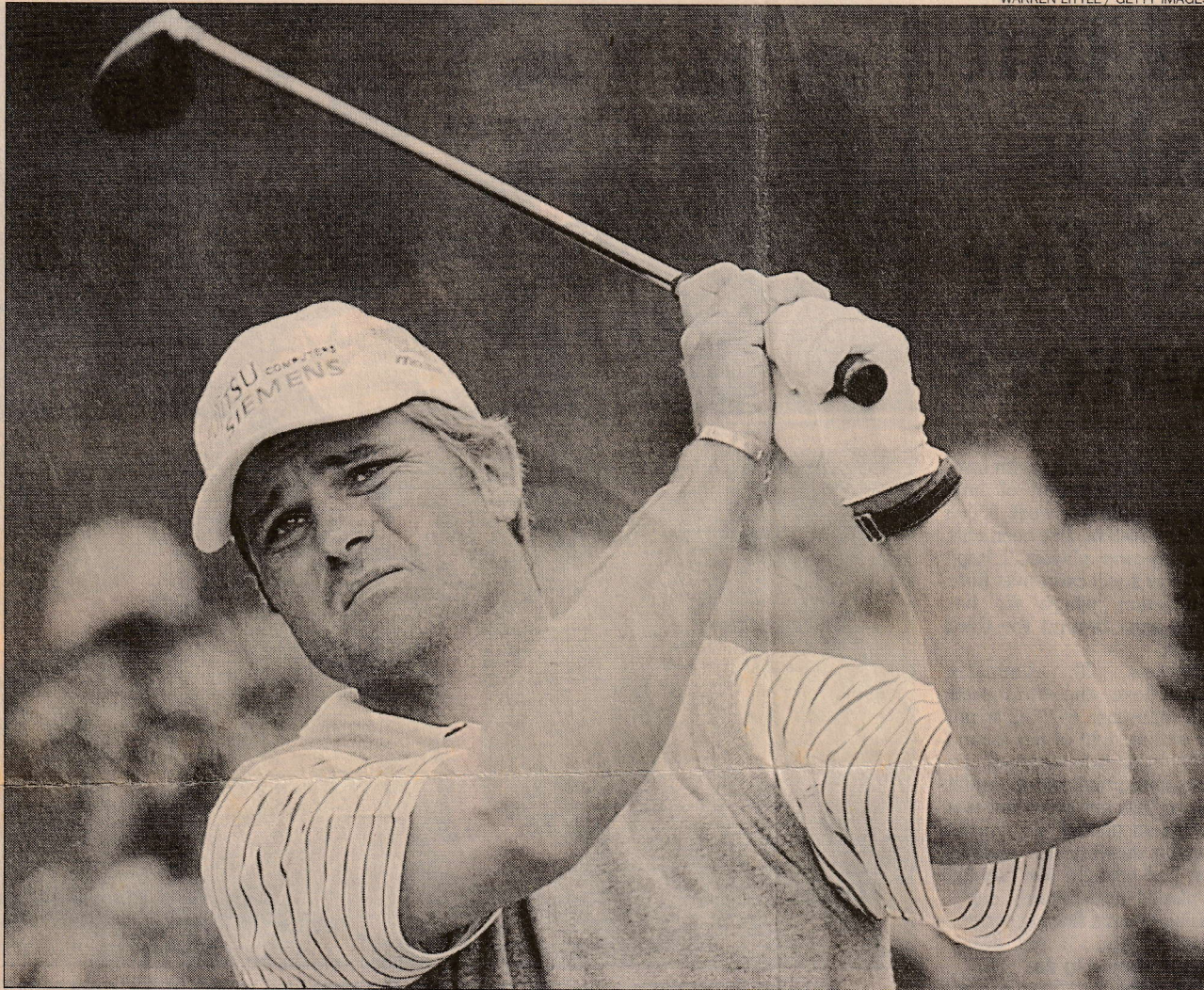


Golf

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Duffy gives rivals a lesson to claim share of lead

From Patricia Davies
in Arras

CLAIRE DUFFY, who earns her living teaching at a driving range at Newbury racecourse, found herself sharing the lead in the women's French Open at Le Golf d'Arras after a second round of 65, seven under par, yesterday.

Out last — all the English competitors had late tee times so that they could suffer agonies against Brazil — the 36-year-old player had six birdies, an eagle and a solitary bogey to join Lynnette Brooky, of New Zealand, Raquel Carriedo, of Spain, and Karine Icher, of France, on 138, six under par.

It was only Duffy's second tournament of the season, having missed the cut in Italy and forgetting to enter the Spanish Open, despite booking a flight, a hotel and a car, but she was unfazed by her score. "I have shot nine under par before," she said, "when I won the South African Players' Championship in 2000."

Always a stuffy competitor, Duffy has never won in Europe — "I'd always have a bleep round," she explained — and with career earnings of £124,862 from 14 years of toil, she turned to teaching to make a living.

"It's less stressful," she said, "and I wouldn't reconsider even if I won here, because it would just be a flash in the pan. I'm realistic."

She is also relaxed, having forgone a practice round here in favour of a game in the Saint-Germain district of Paris on Wednesday. "That's unheard of," Duffy confessed. "I've got rid of my guilt complex."

Arras is not a long course but it demands position, position and position. The place is awash with ditches, lakes and canals, the fairways are narrow and the greens tricky.

Brooky, sporting a natty black beret, took a forthright All Black approach to a devious 12-foot par putt at the 16th. "I didn't know the break," she said, "so I just hit it and it went in."

Front-runner: Struver carries a one-shot lead into today's third round of the Great North Open after recording a 65 yesterday

Beal proves the ace in the pack

By Mel Webb

WHEN Ray Charles, the great American blues singer, was asked on one occasion if there was a downside to being blind, he said that, off hand, he could think of only one and that was that he did not see too well. Charles's sense of fun was, and is, one of his main stocks-in-trade, and yesterday another visually impaired man showed that he, too, could find humour where many others probably could not.

Andy Beal lost his left eye to cancer last December but is determined to continue his professional golf career and yesterday the Salisbury man, 36, had a moment to savour when he won a £15,000 car for having a hole in one in the second round of the Great North Open at Slaley Hall, near Newcastle.

Beal's six-iron tee-shot on the 179-yard 14th hole earned

him the bonus and he was told after his master-stroke that the ball bounced once on the green then dropped into the hole. "I didn't see it," he said with a smile. "The hole's uphill and a bit blind."

Beal goes for a mandatory visual field test next week to ensure that his sight is good enough for driving. Asked how many aces he had had in his

career, his sense of humour bubbled to the surface again. "I've had one on the Challenge Tour and a few in friendlies," he said. "But this is my first with one eye!"

Beal had another reason to celebrate in that his level-par 72 for a 36-hole total of 146, two over, was enough to take him through his first cut of the season. However, he is not like-

ly to win, being, as he is, ten strokes behind Sven Struver, the leader.

The German, 34, had a fine 65 to end the day on 136, eight under par, which gave him a one-stroke advantage over Diego Borrego, the first-round leader, who had a 71, with Roger Wessels, of South Africa, third. Struver is playing in the tournament only because Stephanie told him to. She gave birth to Johan, their first son, ten weeks ago and the baby, who has been suffering from colic, has given his proud father only about three hours sleep a night lately.

"My wife told me to go away and get some sleep," Struver said. More than 11 hours of shut-eye on Tuesday night clearly set him up nicely for his assault on the tournament — his score yesterday was only one off the course record, and that after failing to birdie any of the par-fives.

Leading scores

Great Britain and Ireland unless stated

136: S Struver (Ger) 71, 65. **137:** D Borrego (Sp) 66, 71. **138:** R Wessels (SA) 69, 69. **139:** A Oldcorn 69, 70; B Dredge 68, 71; P Casey 70, 69; J Bevan 72, 67. **140:** B Rumlford (Aus) 70, 70; E Boulton (NZ) 71, 69. **141:** N Vanhootelegem (Bel) 68, 73; G Murphy 72, 69; G Baruffaldi (It) 71, 70; B Barham 74, 67; A Raitt 68, 73; R Muntz (Swe) 72, 71; H Otto (SA) 70, 73. **144:** G Emerson 71, 73; I Goroneskoul (Fr) 72, 72; P Dwyer 71, 73; M Mackenzie 72, 72; A Mednick (Swe) 71, 73; Peter Lawrie 71, 73; M Davis 73, 71; P Fowler (Aus) 70, 74. **145:** F Andersson (Swe) 73, 72; D Smyth

69, 76; G Brand Jr 70, 75; J Hugo (SA) 72, 73; I Garbutt 73, 72; G Rojas (Arg) 73, 72; J Lomas 75, 70; G Clark 74, 71; P Baker 72, 73; G Storm 73, 72; A Coltart 73, 72; R Green (Aus) 70, 75; M Persson (Swe) 70, 75; M Cayeux (Zim) 72, 73. **146:** S Luna (Sp) 73, 73; S Webster 73, 73; K Ferrie 72, 74; A Beal 74, 72; S Dyson 71, 75; S Scallan (NZ) 73, 73; R Chapman 72, 74; S Gallacher 74, 72. **147:** S Bebb 77, 70; J Arruti (Sp) 73, 74; N O'Hern (Aus) 73, 74; Y Nilsson (Swe) 74, 73; G Havret (Fr) 69, 78; D Fichardt (SA) 75, 72; M Maritz (SA) 73, 74; J Skold (Swe) 76, 71; D Drysdale 74, 73; M Blackey 72, 75; J Rask (Swe) 73, 74; N Cheetham 73, 74; A Binaghi (It) 74, 73; M McNulty (Zim) 75, 72; B Lane 71, 76; R Jacquelin (Fr) 75, 72; P Broadhurst 72, 75.