

Women's Golf

Brooky in fighting mood

By Emma-Jane Simpson
on the Gold Coast

LYNNETTE BROOKY took charge with a second-round 65 for a four-shot halfway lead, but the relatively inexperienced New Zealander has two of the world's best as her nearest challengers at the halfway stage of the ANZ Australian Masters at the Royal Pines Resort on Queensland's Gold Coast.

Kelly Robbins, the American Solheim Cup player and a nine-time LPGA winner, shot a 67 to move into second place on 135, while world No 1 Karrie Webb, aiming to win the title for a fourth year in a row, had a 70 for third place another two shots back.

Brooky, 33, scored her only win in the 1998 Austrian Open, but victory tomorrow would go some way to making up for the disappointment she felt at the cancellation of the first women's tournament in New

Zealand. It had been due to take place last week but the promoter disappeared without trace, with some of the money from advanced ticket sales among his booty.

"I'd done a lot of the organisation work, but then he just disappeared before Christmas," said Brooky, who has recently turned to boxing as a tension release. "And I know who I'd really like to punch," she added with feeling.

Robbins is seeking her first win since 1999, but Webb probably remains the biggest danger. A second-round, two-under-par 70 was a trifle disappointing for the home state 26-year-old, but she is still more than capable of making up six shots over the final 36 holes.

Diane Barnard, the first-round leader on 67, continued to lead the British threat, though after a 73, she slipped to seven behind on six under.

Details below

Women's Golf

Duffy shares lead

By Claire Middleton
in Arras

CLAIRE DUFFY struck a blow for part-timers everywhere with a seven-under-par 65 that took her into a share of the lead at the halfway stage of the French Open.

Now a teaching professional at the Newbury Race Course range, she moved to six under par in only her second tournament of the season – and despite eschewing a practice round here in favour of a tourist's round at St Germain, in Paris.

Annika Sorenstam would not approve of her practice ethic, but Duffy no longer wants to grind out an existence on the Evian Tour. "I can't afford it any more; I can't make a

living finishing 60th on the order of merit," she said yesterday.

She played the Italian Open, missing the cut, and should have been in Spain the following week.

"I had booked my flight, my hotel and my car hire, but I forgot to enter the tournament," she said. "I took that as a signal that I should go part-time."

Her effort yesterday was the best of the day and it left her with three folk for company on the same mark.

Karine Ichter, of France, had an up-and-down 68, Raquel Carriedo, the European No 1, played steadily for an identical reward, while New Zealand's Lynette Brooky might have been in front on her own but for a six on the last, which brought her a 69.

Sport

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7/3/01

Brooky boosted by top players' praise

SYDNEY. – Lynnette Brooky has shrugged off the disappointment of last week and is using the praise of her golfing peers to have her mentally ready for the Australian Women's Open in Victoria starting tomorrow.

The Wellingtonian opened up a four-shot lead on the field after two rounds of the Australian Ladies Masters in Queensland last week, only for a dramatic collapse that saw her fade to 10th place, 14 shots behind Australian winner and world No 1 Karrie Webb. Thirteen under for the first 36 holes turned into 10 over for the second.

Brooky believed playing in the final pairing alongside the outstanding Webb and the cheering galleries over the last two rounds counted against her.

"It must have; why else did I go downhill?" she said.

"When it was time to put my foot

GOLF

down and get some scores in it my entertainment system wasn't working, I just couldn't pull it off.

"It was my first tournament of the year so I'm just hoping a few more rounds will get me back in the groove."

Brooky preferred to remain positive and focus on how she had played for the first two rounds.

Her confidence was helped considerably last week by leading Swedish player Sofia Groenberg and Australian Mardi Lunn, who both commented that Brooky's play on the first two days was out of the top drawer.

"Sofia told some other girls it was the best golf she had ever seen ... Mardi Lunn turned around and said it was unbelievable. These girls have played for many years so for them to

say that has really boosted my spirits and I hope it can come again this week."

She said her course management needed some work, with shot selection letting her down as her game disintegrated last week.

Brooky was pleased with her form in the pro-am at the Yarra Yarra course yesterday.

She was sixth last year and predicted fast fairways and slow greens would again be the mix for low scoring. Webb will start a short-priced favourite to defend her title.

The two Australian events open the 2001 European Women's Tour and Brooky will continue with tournaments in Taipei and South Africa this month.

After that she will return to New Zealand for a month's break before another six months of intensive play in Europe. – NZPA