

LYNNETTE BROOKY



The Gamble Paid Off

Wellington golfer Lynnette Brooky arrived home from Spain recently thrilled to have qualified for Europe's professional tour and raring to get into her work.

Brooky, 27, finished second equal at the qualifying school in March and is guaranteed a start in all American Express Tour events apart from August's British Open for which she will have to pre-qualify unless she has earned enough money by then to be in the top 80 on the order of merit.

Going to the qualifying school was a \$7000 gamble - fares, entry fees and living expenses - for Brooky but it has paid off and she will spend the next month working with Wellington Golf Club professional Jack Oliver and planning her schedule.

She will return to Europe and base herself in London early in May and will kick off her campaign in Portugal at the Costa Azul Open.

Brooky plans to play most of the 19 tournaments on the circuit.

Brooky said the qualifying school, in which 113 players participated, was stressful and there were plenty of tears from those who failed to make the top 40 and a place on the tour.

The top five finishers are guaranteed tournament starts without pre-qualifying. Being in such a position means Brooky will be able to make her plans with confidence.

"I want to play as much as I can so I will be exempt from having to go back to qualifying next year," Brooky said.

"I have to be in the top 80 at the end of the tour to keep my card so the work starts now.

"I've come home ready to work my butt off with Jack Oliver so I'll be as ready as I can be when I go back.

"I'm more determined now than at any time since I started playing golf and I want to be one of the top girls on the tour.

"For the moment though the first aim is not to have to qualify again."

The school was held on the Hyatt La Manga Club Resort course in Cartagena. Brooky said it was a young course with hand-mowed bumpy greens and fairways of long grass.

Going into the final round Brooky was nine shots off eventual winner

Stephanie Dallongeville but gradually ate into her lead and but for a double bogey on the 15th, where she found a bunker and three-putted, would have tied for first place.

One of her first jobs when she gets back to Europe will be to hire a caddy. At \$300 per tournament, plus a percentage of winnings, it is something she would like to do without but knows she can't.

"If I'm going to make it I have to have a good caddy you can rely on," she said.

"I found that out in Spain. The guy I had knew what he was doing and that made it so much easier. If you are given the wrong yardage it can be disastrous."

