

Brooky leads French Open

WELLINGTON golfer Lynnette Brooky is on the brink of her second win in Europe.

She had a three-shot lead after a third round four-under-par 68 at the French Open at Arras yesterday.

Her three-round 10-under 206 put her three clear of Marine Monnet and Karine Icher, of France, Iben Tinning, of Denmark, and Paula Marti, of Spain.

Brooky, 34, carded rounds of 69, 69, 68 in the 270,000 euros (NZ\$537,634) Evian Tour event in northern France. Her only European success since turning pro in 1994 came in 1998 when she won the Austrian Open.

She is on top of her game after three top-five finishes this season and began yesterday in run-away form, posting a hat-trick of birdies from the second hole to grab the outright lead. Her only lapse was a bogey on the 505-metre par-five 18th.

She played her round with local favourite Icher, who understandably commanded most of the crowd support.

"I made three birdies in a row and got about four claps, then the crowd came round and I got them cheering on the back nine," Brooky said.

"I hope to keep on top of my game. If I can shoot another low round in the 60s I hope that will be enough to see me through."

New Zealand's Gina Scott was in a share of 17th place on 215 after a 69 yesterday. — NZPA

Brooky in the hunt in Portugal

■ GOLF

WELLINGTON golfer Lynnette Brooky is on the verge of her best result on the Ladies European Tour this year heading into the final round of the Portugal Open.

Brooky, a four-time winner on tour, completed the second and penultimate round at Algarve in a share of sixth place on three-under-par 141.

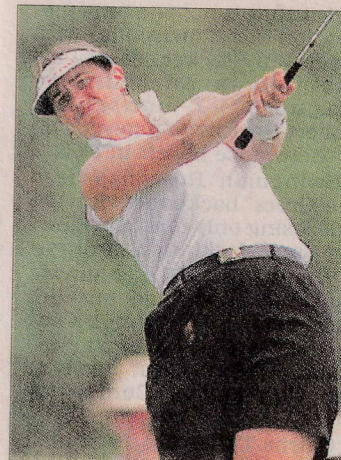
She shot rounds of 71 and 70 to trail a group of four players who share the lead on 137.

France's Jade Schaeffer and Sophie Giquel hold the lead alongside Louise Stahle, of Sweden, and Australian Joanne Mills, three shots ahead of Sweden's Johanna Westerberg.

Meanwhile, Michael Campbell's return to the European golf tour has turned sour.

The former US Open champion plummeted to a share of last place in the French Open in Versailles.

Campbell carded a six over par 77 for a nine-over-par 222 tally to trail Denmark's Soren Hansen by 16 shots. — NZPA



LYNNETTE Brooky ... leads Kelly Robbins.

Fired-up Kiwi has big lead

Bernie Pramberg
on the Gold Coast

FEISTY New Zealander Lynnette Brooky praised veteran Sydney coach Alex Mercer and blasted a Kiwi sports promoter after firing a 65 to take a four-stroke lead into today's third round of the ANZ Ladies Masters.

Brooky is at 13 under and leads American Kelly Robbins who finished strongly to birdie three of the last five holes for a second-round 67.

Hot favourite Karrie Webb is six strokes off the lead in third place and concedes she needs a "very good weekend" to catch Brooky. She described her 70 as "a little up and down" with more missed greens and loose swings than in her opening 67.

"But I'm not in too bad a position," the Queenslander said.

Brooky, 33, a passionate advocate and worker for a major women's tournament in New Zealand, was enraged when a \$500,000 event planned for Wellington last month failed to eventuate. A police fraud squad investigation into circumstances surrounding the failed event has been instigated.

"I was so upset I was going around punching holes in the wall," Brooky said. "I told my trainer at the gym I was so angry I couldn't work out properly. So he started to teach me boxing three times a week."

"He told me if I ever came across this guy I'd know what to do. What happened to that tournament in New Zealand was a tragedy because we had so much support for the event. I just hope that justice is done."

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By GREG FORD

Lynnette Brooky is preparing for life after golf.

The London-based Wellington golfer has no plans yet to retire, but while giving lessons at the Hutt Valley Golf Centre yesterday she said coaching was where her future lay.

"It's good to dedicate some time to coaching and have a bit of a break from golf," she said.

"Coaching is definitely where I want to end up."

Brooky, who finished 29th on this year's women's European tour order of merit, has been working at the centre since her arrival home a month ago.

This year didn't finish quite as Brooky had planned.

The 33-year-old pro missed out on gaining a United States ladies' tour card in a qualifying tournament in Florida last month.

GOLF

Cracking the US tour has been a long-term goal of Brooky's since she entered the professional ranks seven years ago.

"I am not upset thinking that I'm a failure, because I'm not," she said. "I love the lifestyle in Europe and the interesting countries I get to visit, but going to the United States is where I eventually want to end up [before retirement]."

Brooky's manager and caddie Gail Allport said that, while failing to secure a card was disappointing, sponsor invitations may still open the door for Brooky in America next year.

"If we can make a few more contacts we may end up playing there yet. She is known over there after making the cut in the US Open, so we're hopeful," Allport said.

Brooky plans to head back to

London in April after playing in Australian Open and several other pro-ams there in January

"We're in the seventh year of a 10-year plan, with the goal to be playing in the United States by the

will keep playing as long as she keeps performing on the course.

"Shooting those low scores will