

Brooky's the name on everyone's lips after win

By RUSSELL GRAY

EVERYONE was claiming Lynette Brooky as their own after she defied the weather and odds to win the New Zealand women's amateur golf title at Paraparaumu Beach yesterday.

Few people outside the Brooky family and fiancée Ray Lazarus, who flew from Auckland for the final, gave the 22-year-old much chance of beating Canadian Terrill Samuel, but once Brooky had sealed the title at the 37th hole in a cliff-hanging final it was open slather.

Aucklanders claimed Brooky as theirs, with some justification, as she has been playing out of The Grange club and was at No 3 when Auckland won the Stylemaster interprovincial tournament at Palmerston North earlier this year.

Paraparaumu also staked their claim, as Brooky had been a member of their club till the end of last year, when she moved north.

Everyone agreed, though, that the main thing was a New Zealander had won the championship for the first time since Debbie Smith won on the same course in 1984.

It was a magnificent achievement by the unassuming Brooky, who showed tremendous character in the latter stages of a contest dogged by high winds, driving rain and, at times, intense cold.

Samuel, who won the strokeplay title last Sunday, was one up after two holes of the final, but once Brooky won the third hole the Canadian didn't regain the lead till she won the par-three 16th the second time round, 31 holes later.

Falling behind at such a crucial stage would have crushed most players, but Brooky dug deep into her reserves at the 35th (17th) where she produced a lovely chip from the left of the green to set up a par, and benefited from a tentative Samuel putt to draw level.

The 36th was halved, but on the first extra hole there was only one winner and that was Brooky.

A well-placed tee shot and an even better five-wood on to the green of the par-five hole set her up for a birdie and the title.

In retrospect, the final was



Photo DAVE HANSFORD

LYNETTE BROOKY'S fiancé Ray Lazarus races on to the green to congratulate her after she won the New Zealand women's golf title at Paraparaumu yesterday. At left is Brooky's brother Martin, who caddied for her throughout the tournament.

decided during the morning round when gale force winds and driving rain made life unpleasant.

Playing golf in such conditions was anything but enjoyable, but Brooky handled it better than her opponent, and after the first 18 holes was three up.

Samuel, who had declared her dislike of cold weather six days earlier, couldn't handle the conditions and was full of praise for Brooky who, at least on the surface, did.

"I let it get to me," Samuel said.

"Lyn handled it much better than I did and I was impressed by her attitude.

"It was the worst conditions I've ever played in and I did think we should have stopped playing at one point.

"I don't want that to sound like sour grapes though.

"Lyn played better than I did and won it fair and square. It was my own fault that I didn't handle it."

In the morning round, Samuel four-putted a waterlogged 11th green and conceded she could have played it better by claiming relief.

"I was out of touch with myself at that time," Samuel said.

The back nine in the morning round was a disaster for Samuel, who three-putted three times, as well as the four putt.

Brooky said she knew Samuel was unhappy in the conditions, but also sensed she could snap out of it at any time and claw her way back into the match.

She was proved right in the afternoon round as Samuel gradually chipped away at the Kiwi's lead till she eventually overhauled her with two regulation holes left to play.

The last three holes to the title were played in a trance, according to Brooky, with her subconscious taking over and telling her what to do.

No one can deny Brooky deserved her title. On the way to it she beat New Zealand squad members Lisa Aldridge and Kerryn Starr, promising junior Susan Farron and Samuel, who had shown her talents by taking the strokeplay.

Asked what winning the championship meant to her, Brooky held her head in her hands and thought deeply before replying.

"I moved to Auckland, got in the rep team, helped win the Stylemaster and met Ray," she said.

"I sat back one day and thought, 'Perhaps I could win the 1990 New Zealand title'."

Yesterday, Lynette Brooky's dream came true.