

Brooky fires in third round to take lead

■ GOLF

NEW ZEALAND golfer Lynnette Brooky broke her own course record with a seven-under-par third round of 65 to regain the lead at the Ladies European Tour's Spanish Open in Castellon yesterday.

It gave Brooky a three-shot cushion over Frenchwoman Gwladys Nocera.

Brooky shot seven birdies, five of them on the front nine, to break the course record of 66 she set in the opening round and move to an 11-under total of 205.

Nocera carded a 73 for an eight-under total of 208, one shot clear of Switzerland's Nora Anghehrn who shot a third round 66.

Brooky is shooting for her fourth Tour win after winning the 1998 Austrian Open as well as back to back French Open titles in 2002 and 2003.

That would secure her place in the prestigious Evian Masters tournament in July. — NZPA

Burgess investigation handed on to SFO

By CHRIS MIRAMS

Police have handed the investigation into Wellington sports promoter Frank Burgess on to the Serious Fraud Office.

Detective Senior Sergeant Hugh McRae confirmed his examination of Burgess' dealings had been concluded and passed on to the SFO on Thursday.

"The [dollar] amount uncovered was significant and firmly into their court," McRae said, referring to the SFO.

SFO spokesman Gus Andree-Wiltens refused to confirm or deny if a file on Burgess had been sent to it, consistent with SFO policy.

The length of any investigation varied depending on its complexity, he said.

Burgess was the promoter of the New Zealand Women's Golf Classic that was to have been held in Lower Hutt next month.

It had attracted the interest of many of the world's top players but appeared to run into financial problems

and official sanction was withdrawn.

The Evening Post revealed earlier this month that Burgess had \$36,500 of debts with a travel company and also that he'd been involved when rent for a company he worked part-time for was not paid to its landlord.

Burgess' lawyer, Bruce Davidson, said he was aware the case had been handed to the SFO and he would be contacting it early next week.

"Mr Burgess' position is he wants to assist. He doesn't want to prolong the investigation," Davidson said.

"I am aware of the broad nature of the complaints. Certainly my understanding of the information made available to police spans four to five years."

The main sponsor for the golf tournament, Cloud 9, has received a letter from Burgess this month.

Its spokesman, Jeremy Speight, wouldn't reveal details of the letter but said it was the company's sole contact with Burgess since late last year. He said Cloud 9 had not been contacted by police and had no comment on the case being handed to the SFO.

Heath inspired by hard graft

By Norman Dabell in Hilversum

JAMES HEATH will draw upon mentor Nick Faldo's work ethic at the KLM Open this week, the Englishman aiming to post four good rounds rather than just three.

Heath, 22, announced last week he was turning professional having only played for seven months in those ranks. A Surrey player with an excellent amateur record, he posted a sparkling first-round 63 in the Welsh Open at Celtic Manor, before a 75 on the final day dropped him out of contention.

"Last week gave me a bit of confidence," said Heath, whose place in Hilversum was again requested by manager Faldo. "I had a bad finish last week and it's just about staying patient.

I've learned a lot from Nick, especially how to work hard, and I always believe if I work hard then things will happen."

Today he takes on the tournament's defending champion, David Lynn, and one of the Celtic Manor runners-up, Jose Manuel Lara.

Another English youngster here, 24-year-old Oliver Wilson, got even closer than Heath to winning last week, only falling off the leaderboard at the ninth on the final day. He, too, hopes to complete the job this time.

■ Lynette Brooky, a New Zealander based in Buckinghamshire, starts as one of the favourites for the women's French Open in Arras today.

Brooky, who makes her home in Chalfont St Peter and practises at a municipal course in Slough, is seeking a

hat-trick of victories over the short, tight course after triumphing in 2002 and 2003.

Her last three events have all brought top 10 finishes, and she said yesterday that she felt "ripe for a win".

The British challenge is led by Eleanor Pilgrim, of Wales, who is the best-placed Briton in the Ladies European Tour's order of merit after Laura Davies.

■ Ernie Els returns today to the site of his 1997 US Open victory for the Booz Allen Classic at the Congressional Country Club in Potomac, Maryland, still seeking his first PGA Tour win this year.

The Booz Allen has been moved to the Congressional from the TPC at Avenel — being evaluated for renovations — and has attracted eight of the world's top 10 players, including No 1 Vijay Singh.

LYNNETTE BROOKY

DATE OF BIRTH: 25/1/68

BIRTH PLACE: WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

With three titles in 10 years, Brooky is one of the most consistent players on the LET, never finishing lower than 50th on the Order of Merit. Last season she finished in the top 10 three times and in the top 20 on five occasions. Her solid form has continued this season, with three top-10 finishes.

