

Debutantes set up winning golf chance

By Kevin Savage

REPRESENTING New Zealand for the first time, Lyn Brooky and Susan Farron won their matches to help their country share with Australia the honours on the first day of the 30th Tasman Cup women's golf competition yesterday.

New Zealand's non-playing captain Sheila Glendining acknowledged "the very, very close" nature of the seniors matches at Mount Maunganui.

The scoreboard confirmed the closeness: Australia won the foursomes 1½-1½ in the morning while New Zealand won the singles in the afternoon 2½-1½ which, turned into points, totalled 6-6 at the end of the day.

It was a different story in the juniors. They shared the morning foursomes 1-1 but Australia scored a clean-sweep 4-0 win in the afternoon.

"I've seen some superb golf today," said Glendining. "Winning the holes depended on the chipping and putting.

"I think our team played extremely well — and now we will start level tomorrow.

"I think it was great that Lyn (Brooky) and Susan (Farrow) had a win on their first outing.

"Jane Shearwood was the Australian champion in 1990 and was the only one of this team in the Commonwealth team in June — and Lyn, our national champion, beat her.

"And, (as for Annette Stott's loss to Ericka Maxwell), well Ericka has a long past and she's extremely good," said Glendining.

At the end of the afternoon, the last pair to finish were New Zealand's No 1 Lisa Aldridge and Australia's No 2 Tracie Hale.

Aldridge could have given New Zealand the first day lead in the competition but, of all things, putted short from five feet on the 18th green, having played a splendid second into the 18th green.

But for a tee shot, at the previous 17th hole, finishing under the only large shrub in the vicinity, Aldridge might not have been under the pressure of this final putt.

Both players played steadily throughout, Hale leading by one hole for all but one of the first 10.

Aldridge took the lead for the first time with a great fairway second at the 13th, leading to this hole being conceded, and she all but chipped in at the 14th to show that she was on top.

But her lead remained at 1-up — until the disastrous tee shot at the 17th.

Thus Aldridge halved with Hale, when a win had appeared more likely.

Ahead of them, all the other matches had finished.

First, Maxwell beat Stott 3 and 2. Stott made an incredibly good start to the match and looked as if she might finish as the star of the day.

The trouble was that she had, in Maxwell, a really hard matchplay competitor.

Because of her brilliant fairway second into the green, Stott led 2-up after four and held that lead up the seventh.

But it could have been 4-up had not Maxwell twice, at the first and

at the seventh, sunk putts of at least 36 feet (nine metres or so). How can one beat that?

Maxwell's resistance had its effect. Stott suddenly broke down, losing four holes in succession, looking quite the opposite of earlier.

So the 2-up became 2-down after 11 and, after three-putting the 14th and playing an awry iron-shot at the 16th, it was all over at the 16th.

Next to finish was Brooky's match — at the 17th, but she was enough on top over Shearwood that it might have stopped earlier.

The turning-around of this match came at the ninth, 10th, 11th, and 12th holes, all four being won by Brooky, carrying her from 1-down to 3-up.

She played a variety of winners here: from a fine tee shot, to a good chip, to a recovery from out of the trees; and netted three birdies here.

There was a hiccup at the 16th, where the match could have ended but, no matter, Brooky's tee shot at the 17th was so superior that she won 3 and 1.

Still playing, just in front at the 18th, was Farron against Anne-Marie Knight.

Now Farron had had a strange round, insofar as she had missed no less than at least five putts of less than a metre.

Yet, going into the 18th she was still all-square.

Then the moment of irony. When so much hinged on her result Farron sank a winning putt at the 18th hole of, so it was

estimated, no less than 40 feet or 13 metres.

During the morning's foursomes, Brooky sank an eight-foot putt at the 17th to halve the hole and then played a splendid fairway second at the 18th, partner Aldridge obliging with a six-foot putt to turn a loss into a halve at the last moment.

The most disappointing aspect of the day, from a New Zealand point of view, was that in the other foursomes, Kerryn Starr and Stott dropped from a 4-up advantage after 10 holes to a 1-down deficit only seven holes later, losing 1-down.

As a generalisation, the notable aspect of the day's play was the high standard from both teams of the shots to the greens (whether long or short irons). By contrast the putting was often tentative.

The weather, too, was a contrast, with the morning's gusty breezes being replaced by afternoon showers — but no wind.

Scores (Australian names first):

SENIORS

Foursomes: E Maxwell and J Shearwood beat K Starr and A Stott, 1 up; T Hale and A Knight, and L Aldridge and L Brooky, all square.

Singles: T Hale and L Aldridge, all square; E Maxwell beat A Stott, 3 and 2; J Shearwood lost to L Brooky, 3 and 1; A Knight lost to S Farron, 1 down.

Points: Australia 6, New Zealand 6.

JUNIORS

Foursomes: L Lambert and K Webb beat T Holbrook and K Knight, 5 and 4; J Bell and C Neilson lost to J Croskery and E Keeling, 3 and 1.

Singles: K Webb b T Holbrook 5 and 4; D Linnerston b E Keeling, 1 up; L Lambert b J Croskery 5 and 4; C Neilson b M Morton 2 and 1.

Points: Australia 10, New Zealand 2.