

Brooky qualifies for \$3m US Open

By GARY MORLEY
Golf writer

A little inside knowledge has helped Wellington golfer Lynnette Brooky into the richest tournament on the United States women's tour next month.

Brooky shot a one-over par 73 on Monday to qualify for the \$NZ3.06 million US Women's Open at Blackwolf Run in Wisconsin on July 2-5.

She was one of 24 players to qualify from a field of 156 players at Ann Arbor, Michigan - a course she'd never played at.

"She only had one practice round," Brooky's manager Gail Allport said. "But she played with a couple of locals. They gave her tips on the course and she gave them tips on golf."

A record 925 players entered for the 80 spots available.

Brooky was equal-14th at Ann Arbor.

She was today headed back to Europe to prepare for a different challenge.

She is one of 20 players invited to play in the first professional women's tournament held in Poland - at Wolin, near the Baltic Sea, on June 22-25.

The players will be paid appearance fees as well as a prize purse.

Brooky started her European campaign with a win at the Go-teborg Open in Sweden and placed equal-44th at the Evian Masters in France last week.

The next event on the European LPGA circuit is the Austrian Open at Frohnleiten on July 16-18.

Golf dream over for Brooky and Allport

by Nicholas Boyack

The dream is over for golfer Lynnette Brooky and her manager Gail Allport.

News that the Women's Golf Classic has been cancelled has come as a shock for the duo who had worked hard to attract top European players.

The announcement was made on 23 December when it became clear that promoter Frank Burgess was unable to come up with the money to run the event.

The classic would have been the richest golf tournament held in New Zealand.

Originally the idea of Ms Brooky, the tournament was to be played at the Hutt Golf Club in February.

Although rumours had been rife for at least three months that the tournament was in trouble, Ms Allport last week told the *Hutt News* that she was not aware of the rumours and had been kept in the dark by Mr Burgess.

She has not had any recent contact with Mr Burgess and is not interested in talking to

him. Although she had heard all sorts of rumours since Christmas regarding Mr Burgess, she does not know any details of his financial problems.

Having put so much effort into attracting players she says that Ms Brooky is "devastated" by the cancellation.

"It really broke her heart because it is something we have worked hard for and wanted for so long."

They have had little recent contact with players in Europe but she says they understand that the problem has nothing to do with her or Ms Brooky.

Major blow

Although it is a major blow to women's golf in New Zealand, Ms Allport says she wants to concentrate on the positive.

The Hutt club had shown it was up to hosting such an event. The volunteers and committee have done a tremendous job, as has course superintendent John Spraggs, she says.

"The members should be very, very proud of their course."

Club president Brian

Gillespie is also focusing on the positives.

The course has undergone a lot of work, which has dramatically improved it.

The club has not lost any money, as all the improvements have been funded by the promoter, he says.

Club members are "sad" and "disappointed" and he says he feels for all the people who have worked so hard.

Realistically, he says, it is hard to see the European administrators agreeing to an event in New Zealand in the near future.

They will inevitably be cautious and he says what has happened will reflect badly on New Zealand.

The *Hutt News* has been unable to contact Mr Burgess. In other developments, police have confirmed they are investigating Mr Burgess with regard to money he has received from charitable trusts.

At this stage it is unclear if police or the Serious Fraud Squad will deal with the complaint. Holden New Zealand are also attempting to recover a car they gave Mr Burgess as part of their sponsorship deal.

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