

## *Golden resident moves in front by 3 in girls championship*



Kelsey Kirkpatrick, 16-year-old from Golden, TX., has a busy golf schedule and she's hoping to jumpstart a string of four American Junior Golf Association tournaments with a victory in the Fort Worth Girls City Junior Golf Championship. After two rounds of the 54-hole tournament, she seems well on her way as she shot a 3-over-par 74 at Meadowbrook Golf Course on Wednesday to jump into a four-shot lead.

However, Kirkpatrick has some unhappy memories of two years ago when she was leading the T-O Junior in Wichita Falls by five shots heading into the final round. She doesn't remember what she shot, but conceded that she "choked" on the final round and finished third.

She hopes that painful learning experience and some mental adjustments in the past weeks will help her as the girls enter the final round Thursday at Shady Oaks Country Club.

Defending champion Prisela Campbell, shown at Rockwood, hasn't been able to rally this year and is 12 shots behind heading into the final round.

Kirkpatrick holds a four-shot lead over Chelsea Mocio and Maury Shock. Mocio, 15, who had shared the first-round lead with Kirkpatrick after a 69 at Rockwood Golf Course, slipped back with a 78. Shock, an 18-year-old from Stephenville, stayed in contention with a 73 on the sunny, windy day. Carla Cooper, who also was at 147, informed tournament officials that she won't be able to play in the final round because of college orientation that she has to attend.

Defending champion Prisela Campbell seemingly shot herself out of contention after a 78 put her nine shots back and tied for seventh.

Although the affable Kirkpatrick seems to have an unflappable attitude, she said she has had to work on the mental aspects of golf that have plagued her in the past. Kirkpatrick believes she has turned the corner because negative thoughts never emerged during the second round. However, she almost was tested on the par-5 first hole when she hit a solid drive that bounded on a cart path. After "we looked and looked and looked," it appeared she was going to have to declare a lost ball and go back to the tee.

"I was saying this isn't fair. So, I'm still looking around and all of a sudden I see the ball and I said, "Yes!"

The ball was in the rough and some mowed grass was covering the ball, she said. She went on to par the hole and nailed a birdie on the par-4 second from about 25 feet from the fringe.

She salvaged a bogey on the fifth hole after hitting her drive into the right water hazard. "That was stupid," she said of the drive. However, she drained a 40-foot putt to avoid more damage.

"Then No. 9. A three-putt. Stupid bogey. I shouldn't have done that," she said. She got that back with a birdie on

the 12th hole, but bogeyed the short par-4 14th when she missed the green from inside a 100 yards. She also closed with a bogey on the 18th when she came up short on her second shot. ``That made me so mad." But it didn't destroy her attitude.

Kirkpatrick has played Shady Oaks once during a Texas Legends tournament and after tying for the lead, she lost a four-hole playoff.

On Thursday, she said she'll be playing it safe, and if she needs to, will hit an iron off the tee on some of the tighter holes. ``I want to keep it in play. Make pars; let the birdies come. As long as I don't get nervous and start thinking about things the wrong way, I'll be all right."

If nothing else, maybe she'll watch a good movie or read a book as she tries relaxing for the finale. Kirkpatrick says she loves movies, from the `30s to now." And usually she'll read a book, then see the movie if it's made into one.

Her other interest is fishing with her dad, a former B.A.S.S professional. She might not be fishing Thursday, but she still might hook a big one.

In other divisions: Alexandra Batista leads the 9-under; Adriana Morillo is in front in the 10-11, and Mercedes Rios leads the 12-14.