

Dominguez overcomes a 10 to win city girls title

Gabriella Dominguez survived a 10 on the par-4 fifth hole and a final-round 9-over-par 80 on Wednesday (July 8) at Woodhaven Country Club to win the Fort Worth City Girls Junior Golf Championship.

Fortunately for the 18-year-old from Chilton, her challengers couldn't take advantage of the unexpected turn of events on the sweltering hot day and Dominguez held together just enough on the back nine to win by three shots with her 54-hole 219 total.

April McCoy, 16, of Carrollton drew even with Dominguez after the front nine after posting a 37 to Gabriella's 44. She took a shot lead with a birdie on the 11th, but fell behind again when she double-bogeyed the par-5 13th. Gabriella virtually clinched the lead with a birdie on the 16th while April bogeyed.

April held on to take second place after carding a 76 and a 222 total. She finished two ahead of Grace Choi, 14, of Dallas, who was playing in a threesome in front of the leaders. Choi briefly contended for the lead after Gabriella's disaster, allowing her to pull with four shots. After carding a 37 on the front, she found herself only one back. But she said her putting betrayed her and "I couldn't get anything going" on the back nine. "I couldn't make any putts," she said. A double-bogey on the par-3 11th virtually took her out of the hunt.

Carly Raigans, a Flower Mound Marcus player who was second starting the day at five shots back, had even more troubles than the others and finished with an 84 and tied Taylor Renfro, 17, for fourth at 228. Renfro, of Keller, tied McCoy for the day's low round of 76.

The championship flight played from the white tees (6,079 yards).



Marty Leonard, one of the FWJGA's top supporters and whose father, Marvin Leonard, was instrumental in starting the free boys tournament, presents the championship trophy to Gabriella Dominguez. On the right are runner-up April McCoy and Grace Choi, who finished third.

After seeing Dominguez post scores of 68, 71, McCoy said she was "super surprised" to see the Texas Tech-bound player stumble to the 10. McCoy, who had started the day seven shots behind but had lost two shots after Gabriella birdied the second and fourth holes. But April birdied when Gabriella was taking her 10, and she parred the ninth to draw even when Gabriella bogeyed. April birdied 11 to take a shot lead until losing it when she double-bogeyed the 13th. McCoy said she just "couldn't make it happen" down the stretch as she saw her chances fizzle with the double-bogey.

Gabriella said she hit a tree on the 5th and the ball bounded back. Then she tried to hit under the tree but saw her shot stray to the right and it went "south from there (after two balls found the hazard). I haven't made a 10 in awhile." After previously inspecting the course, she had figured the 343-yard hole would be a problem because of the narrow fairways and trees, but not that big a problem. It took her until the back nine to finally recover mentally, she said. "I was really frustrated. I just had to make sure I didn't do anything like that again."

And the heat was taking the toll on just about everyone, though Gabriella said she really hadn't noticed it as much until after posting the 10. April had tried shading herself with an umbrella as the temperature was quickly on its way to a 100. "But on the back nine, I was burning up," she said.

Gabriella indicated that not finishing well seemed to take some of the luster off winning. "It was OK," she said of the victory, "but I didn't finish very good. I could have done better."

Gabriella, who won the past four Class A state championships, said she plans to work hard on her iron play, which particularly disappointed her the three days, before playing in a U.S. Open qualifier and then the Texas State Women's Amateur.