

## Jaqueline Strickland wins girls title

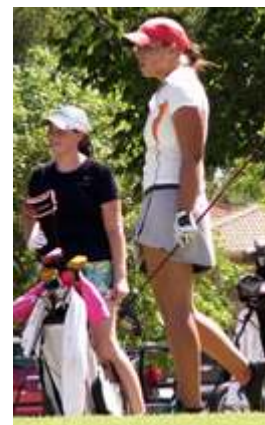


Jaqueline Strickland and Angela Stanford

Jaqueline Strickland believed she had a one-shot lead over Erica Lautensack when she lined up her 18-foot par putt on the final hole at Woodhaven Country Club. When the ball dropped in the cup, she didn't realize until later that the putt actually broke a tie and gave her a one-shot victory because Erica posted a bogey on the par-4 18th.

The putt finished a 6-over-par 77 on another hot, humid day and gave the Weatherford 18-year-old the FWJGA's Girls City Junior Golf Championship title. She carded scores of 80-78-77--235 to beat Erica, a 15-year-old from Arlington, who also finished with a 77. Jaqueline pulled into the lead after the second round at Ridglea Country Club with the 78 and Erica had moved into second, matching Jaqueline's 78.

First-round leader and defending champion April McCoy, 18, of Carrollton, two shots back entering the third round, never recovered from an early out-of-bounds shot and struggled to a 9-over 45 on the front nine en route to an 82. Finishing third was Marisa Marquez, a 12-year-old from Amarillo. She was tied with April after two rounds, and posted a closing 80 over the 6,079-yard course. The Championship and First flights played from the White Tees on each golf course.



Jaqueline Strickland

"I thought I had her by one," Jaqueline said at the awards ceremony at Diamond Oaks Country Club, where four-time winner of the tournament and now a top player on the LPGA Tour, Angela Stanford presented trophies to the girls who won awards. Even though they were in the same threesome, Jaqueline said she hadn't realized that Erica had parred the par-4 16th while she was carding a double-bogey, which pulled them into a tie. Jaqueline says she focuses on playing the course and not her opponents.

After her tee shot on the 312-yard 16, Jaqueline had to hit her second shot left-handed from the trees. Her ball stopped on a twig, causing her third shot to barely travel 20 yards. When she pitched to the green and two-putted, she carded her second double-bogey of the day.. Her other was on the par-5 fifth hole, which cut what had been a three-shot lead to two. She went three ahead again with a par on the par-4 ninth, but lost a stroke to Erica on the par-4 12th when she bogied. That set up the finish

"It's pretty cool," Jaqueline said after nailing down the victory. She hadn't felt extremely confident entering the round because her ball striking hadn't been that solid in the first two rounds. But "I hit the ball a lot better today," she said. She also made more putts, all important, especially the final one.

The victory was quite an accomplishment considering that Jaqueline has been playing golf for only about four years. After deciding that soccer, volleyball and basketball weren't her sports, she became interested in golf when she and a friend began practicing and playing for fun. Here dad, Cline, said she had just a mixed bag of clubs for a while. After she decided she liked the sport, she began taking lessons from Mike Tschetter at Leonard Golf Links. Cline said when Jaqueline was a freshman, she would shoot in the 120s, 125s. "She's come a long way," he said.

Erica has been playing golf since she was eight and was confident heading into the last round. "I really wanted to win....I knew the course well,"

Erica said she aimed her tee shot on 18 too far to the left to avoid the out of bounds to the right and had to punch out her second shot from some trees. Her third shot was left of the green, but she got up-and-down for a bogey. But her chances ended when Jaqueline sank her 18-footer.

Marisa said she would return next year and vowed to do better. She said her driver was going left and right and her iron shots were off. at Woodhaven. "I had a lot of up and downs," she said. "But I'll do better next time. I'll definitely be back."

Though April had a disastrous front nine, she was pleased with her ability to rally on the back nine with a 37. "I didn't know what was going on today. I was already 9-over on the front nine. But I played good on the back.:" It didn't help on the front that she carded a triple-bogey 7 on the second hole after hitting out of bounds.

"My dad always says make (a tournament) a learning experience," so that's what's she will do as she turns her attention to playing for TCU, where Angela Stanford also attended and notched an enviable collegiate career. "I'm so excited," she said. "I've got to get better. I want to see if my game can hold up (against the tough competition)."

Besides Angela Stanford being at the ceremonies, long-time girls director Benita Christensen also attended. Current director is Nancy Pennell, who had several volunteers to help conduct the tournament that has remained free since its inception in 1974. Also attending was Wendell Conditt, who has been conducting the boys tournament for more than 50 years and who also helped with the girls tournament.

Jaqueline's victory also earned her an exemption to an AJGA tournament.

The First Flight winner was Alexandra Schies. 15. of Mansfield. Alexandra. captain and MVP at Oakridge this past

season, was the 2011 Southwest Preparatory Conference champion. She had a three-day 266 total and won by three shots over Krysta Skelley, 16, of Mansfield. Second Flight winner was Rachel Dahl, 15, of Mansfield with a 267. Winning the Third Flight was Chelsea Henshaw, 15, of Arlington; Fourth Flight winner was Claire Bernstein, 15, of Carrollton; Fifth Flight winner was Rylee Pedigo, 15, who won a scorecard playoff against Mallory Levey; and taking the Sixth Flight was Amy Cox, 15, of Colleyville. Girls in the fourth through sixth flights played 18 holes the first day and then nine holes each day for the last two days.

In the 9-Hole Division, winning the Championship was Elizabeth Boll, 13, of Aledo. Elizabeth, who was sixth in the 9-Hole Championship Flight last year, won by one shot over Jessica Simants, 12, of Azle. Jessica won the 9-hole Third Flight last year. Winning the First Flight was Rachel Prewitt, 15 of Midlothian. Angelique Francis, 10, of Murphy was the Second Flight winner, and Lilli Ingram, 11, of Fort Worth won the Third Flight. The second and third flights played from forward tees.