

Kris Tamulis Wins Michigan Women's Open



Photo courtesy of Crystal Mountain Resort

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CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN RESORT, MI (7/20/06) — LPGA professional Kris Tamulis shot a final round 70 to win the \$40,000 Michigan Women's Open presented by Century 21 Wednesday. Tamulis, 25, who summers in Onkama, finished two strokes ahead of LeAnna Wicks, a 26-year-old professional from Brighton, MI, who closed

with a 71. Tamulis completed the tournament, staged on Crystal Mountain Resort's Mountain Ridge Course, with rounds of 72-75-70—217 (1-over-par). She began Wednesday's final round two strokes off of the lead.

"I wasn't ever out of it. As the day wore on, I think maybe it was

getting to some of the other girls. The pressure builds. I just kept doing what I do. I kept hitting the greens - letting other people make mistakes," said Tamulis. "Everyone else was starting to hit it in not so fantastic places. I was just going to keep going on because I cannot control what they're doing, but I had legitimate

birdie chances throughout most of the back nine.”

Tamulis, who collected \$5,500 for the victory, has won \$54,640 playing on the LPGA Tour this season. She arrived back in northern Michigan at 1 a.m. Sunday night after competing in the LPGA’s Jamie Farr Classic in Toledo over the weekend.

“I guess the pressure of people knowing I play on the LPGA means people expected me to play well here, so it’s nice to play here and win, said Tamulis, who made three birdies and two bogeys. “I’m proud of the way I kept going at the end and giving myself chances to increase my lead.”

The 25 year-old practices regularly at Crystal Mountain since she summers with her parents at Andy’s Point in Onekama.

“She was here for two weeks at the end of June and came out to play from time to time,” said Crystal Mountain’s director of golf Brad Dean.

“At LPGA tournaments they announce my name and where I am from and I’ve always said Michigan. My parents and sisters still live here and I am proud to be from Michigan,” said Tamulis, who attended Florida State University and maintains a residence in Naples. “I still say ‘pop’ instead of ‘soda.’”

Tamulis will compete next August 3 in the British Women’s Open at Royal Lytham and St. Anne’s in Lancashire, England.

“I’m going to cool it for the next couple of days and not worry about it too much. I hit good shots today which make me feel better. I have some things to work on before I go to England, but I’m not going to worry about it for the next couple of days,” she said.

Wicks, who collected \$4,000 as runner-up, finished T-6 in the Michigan Women’s Open in 2003 – her best previous finish. She withdrew from last year’s competition during the third round due to a pulled back muscle.

“This year is obviously much better. I did a lot of training to strengthen my back,” said Wicks, a University of Michigan graduate who has been competing on the LPGA’s developmental Futures Tour. She began the final round three shots off of the lead, made four birdie and three bogeys in the final round.

“I’ve been playing well. Everyone was going to do what they were going to do so I just focused on my own game.”

It was a bogey on the 172-yard, par-3 17th hole that sunk Wicks.

“I hit my tee shot pin-high left about 40-feet from the hole and three-putted it. My first putt rolled about 12 feet past the hole. The greens were faster than they have been. The wind dried them out. Putting was the key here this week.”

She then rebounded with a birdie on the 485-yard, par-5 home hole.

Wicks planned to take a few weeks off before heading east to compete in more Future’s Tour events. “The money I won here helps a lot. I’ll use it to pay most of the \$5,000 entry fee for LPGA qualifying school in September,” said Wicks, who has attempted to qualify in the past.

Wicks and Tamulis were the only players in the field to better par in the final round.

Carolyn Barnett-Howe, a 44 year-old head professional Appleton, Wisconsin, and that’s state’s reigning Women’s Open champion, finished the tournament at 7-over-par in third place. Australian Suzie Fisher, who attended Tulsa University, would have been tied for third place, but was disqualified for signing an incorrect scorecard.

Sara Brown, of Tucson, AZ, finished the event as low-amateur with a three-round total of 9-over-par. Brown, who was runner-up in 2005 as well, plays college golf at Michigan State University.

Aimee Neff, an amateur from Carmel, Indiana, aced the 146-yard, par-3 12th hole with a 5-iron shot. She finished the championship at 13-over-par.

Professional and amateur golfers from 11 different states are competed in the \$40,000 Michigan Women’s Open presented by Century 21 on Crystal Mountain Resort’s Mountain Ridge course. First prize was \$5,500. Play concluded Wednesday after three rounds. **MG**