

MISS CROCKER CAPS UNUSUAL RECORD

by

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WHEN THE FINAL annals of women's golf are written, a prominent place must be reserved for Miss Fay Crocker, on both playing style and competitive record.

Her victory in the USGA Women's Open Championship last month was not surprising to those who know her game. But not many North Americans are familiar with it.

For many years Miss Crocker was the dominant personality in South American women's golf. Twenty times she won the Championship of her native Uruguay. She was Argentine Champion fourteen times.

Her first appearance in a USGA event was back in the 1939 Women's Amateur at the Wee Burn Club, Noroton, Conn. In the third round she lost on the 20th hole to Miss Elizabeth Hicks.

It was 1950 before Miss Crocker again played in the Women's Amateur. At East Lake, in Atlanta, that year, she won her first three matches handily, no margin being less than 7 and 5.

In the fourth round she and Miss Mae Murray had a classic match. They went 27 holes—nine extra—before Miss Murray won. Never more than a hole separated them. For the regulation 18 holes Miss Crocker was around in 72, Miss Murray in 73, against par of 75. Darkness overtook them after 24 holes. When they resumed the next morning, a par 5 by Miss Murray on the 27th decided it. Nine extra holes is an overtime record for a USGA Women's Championship.

Miss Crocker lost no stature in defeat. Her game was remarkably strong, particularly her long irons. One was tempted

Promising Young Amateur



Wichita Eagle Photo

Miss Jacqueline Yates, of Honolulu, tied Miss Polly Riley, of Fort Worth, for low amateur with 309 in the USGA Women's Open Championship. She is 19 years old.

to wonder how she failed to win everything she played in.

Iron Control Decisive

With this background, and now in her second season as a professional, Miss Crocker scored an impressive victory in the USGA's third Women's Open last month at the Wichita Country Club, in Kansas. Her control of the long irons was decisive over a very testing course, in winds that ranged from 40 miles per hour the first day down to about 20 on the last day.

It was an unusual victory in that Miss

A Champion Turns In Her Card



Wichita Eagle Photo

Miss Fay Crocker, of Montevideo, Uruguay, (right), finishes with a 74 for a 72-hole total of 299 in the USGA Women's Open Championship. Receiving her card at the table are (left to right): Mrs. E. F. Ristine and Mrs. Henri Prunaret, members of the USGA Women's Committee.

Crocker led after each of the four rounds. But it was not an easy victory.

After 36 holes Miss Crocker had an eight-stroke lead with 74-72—146, two over par. All but one stroke of her advantage evaporated in the third round when she took 79 for 225, while Miss Mary Lena Faulk challenged with a 72 for 226. Miss Louise Suggs also shot into

contention with 72 for 228 and was three strokes off the pace with one round to play.

Miss Crocker rallied her game and closed with a sterling 74 for a 72-hole total of 299. That was better than both of her nearest challengers could do, Miss Faulk taking 77 and Miss Suggs 75, to tie for second place at 303.

Victory was worth \$2,000 to Miss Crocker. Prizes totaling \$7,500 were awarded to the twelve lowest professional scorers.

Miss Crocker, who was born in Montevideo in 1914, was presented an honorary membership by the Wichita Country Club. This is the home club of Miss Crocker's good friend, Miss Marilyn Smith, and the two are Tournament Co-Chairmen of the Ladies' Professional Golf Association. Miss Crocker presently resides in Wichita with Miss Smith's grandmother.

Amateurs in the Fore

Amateurs won three of the first eight places. Miss Polly Riley, of Fort Worth, and Miss Jacqueline Yates, of Honolulu, tied for low amateur with 309. Miss Pat Lesser was next with 311. Miss Riley made a good surge on the last day with 74-77.

Miss Yates started with 76 and was second to Miss Crocker's 74 in the first 18 holes. She followed with 79-76-78 and was always among the leaders.

"Jocko" Yates is a charming young lady of 19 with quite a record for her short career. She won the National Intercollegiate Championship this year (she'll be a sophomore next fall at Redlands College, in California). In the 1954 USGA Women's Amateur, she reached the fifth round.

Miss Yates is the youngest of fourteen children. Her 70-year-old father, Julian Yates, often attends Championships with her. "She used to pull a caddie cart for me and for others," Mr. Yates reports. "When she had earned \$80 she bought her first set of golf clubs. She was 12 years old then."

There were 46 starters at Wichita, of whom 26 were amateurs, including a large number of 'teen-agers. Mrs. George Zaharias was unable to defend the Championship because of an operation for a spinal disk.

The Wichita Country Club was a most gracious host, under the Chairmanship of Frederick L. Dold, with Robert K. Howse as Co-Chairman.

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