



Staff Photo by Karen T. Borchers

Janet Coles has not been happy with her play in South Florida

Coles Aims To Fashion Name With Her Game

By Dave George

Post Staff Writer

Janet Coles would like you to get to know her. But she wants it to be for the right reasons.

Coles has been one of the LPGA's steadiest performers since joining the women's professional golf tour in 1977. By finishing in the top 35 on the tour money list each of the last four years, she has given the folks back home in Carmel, Cal., something to chat about while mellowing out over a cup of Irish mocha mint. But last January, the talk wasn't all business.

Coles was unwittingly dragged into a whirling controversy last year as one of the models in an LPGA magazine photo layout of players in evening wear. Tour veteran Jane Blalock criticized the LPGA for the way the layout was handled, labelling one shot of Jan Stephenson in a nightgown as "trash." The debate continued for weeks in the media with nobody winning, especially not Coles and the other players who appeared in much tamer poses.

For a long time it seemed that no one cared about birdies and bogeys any more. No one, that is, except the players involved.

"I think the press was bored," said Coles, who was at the Wellington Club yesterday for the Donna Horton White pro-am, which benefitted the women's golf programs at Palm Beach Junior College and Florida Atlantic University. "Chris Evert wasn't doing anything and Nancy Lopez-Melton wasn't winning. They blew it all out of proportion. It got turned into Janie vs. Jan. If anything, it was Janie vs. the LPGA publicity department.

"I think I was a little upset because they didn't tell me what they were going to do with it. I wouldn't have done it if I had known it was going to be some kind of publicity-controversy thing. If it's a flattering thing that makes us and the tour look good, that's something different."

Part of the frustration may have come from the fact that the ruckus temporarily overshadowed the playing abilities of Coles and the others included in the LPGA fashion layout. For instance, Stephenson had her best year as a professional in 1981, finishing fifth on the money list behind tour heavyweights Beth Daniel, JoAnne Carner, Pat Bradley and Donna Caponi.

Turn to COLES, D2

Coles ————— From D1 —————

one notch ahead of Lopez. And Coles finished 29th, earning \$47,799 in 30 tournaments.

Coles is one of the LPGA's medium stars, always cashing a check but rarely getting her name in headlines. Her only tour victory is the 1978 Lady Tara Classic and she did not play well last year in the LPGA's major events — missing the cut in the U.S. Open and finishing tied for 65th in the LPGA Championship. Coles knows she is one of the tour's top players and her opponents know it too. But nobody else seems to have gotten the message.

"It's funny. A lot of players get known nationally all of a sudden," said Coles, a 28-year-old exercise nut who works diligently at being her best by running 3 to 5 miles daily. "It happened to Debbie Austin. It happened to Sally Little. And I think it could happen to me. I would like to shoot some low scores and find out."

Coles seemed on her way to reaching that goal at the 1981 Whirlpool Classic of Deer Creek in Deerfield Beach, pulling into second place behind Sandra Palmer after three rounds. A 74 on the final day left her tied for third at even-par 288, four shots off Palmer's winning total. But next week she gets a chance to redeem

herself as the 1982 LPGA season kicks off again at Deer Creek.

"Actually I've never played well in South Florida until last year," Coles said. "My first four years on tour I had a terrible time here. The greens are different, the courses are different, everything's different from California. But I've been down here the last couple of weeks (at The Hamlet in Delray Beach) getting ready.

"I don't think I got better last year. I wasn't getting the best of instruction. All the instructors I went to had good things to say but some were not as good for me as they might be others. Now I'm doing a lot on my own."

That could be Coles' best bet. She was a kinesiology major at UCLA and her thesis detailed the differences between the male and female golf swing. A total of 33 LPGA pros went to work yesterday at Wellington, trying to put their latest theories into practice with the start of the LPGA tournament schedule just eight days away. A tournament record 132 amateurs pitched in.

The team of Kathy Mant, Bob Bradley, Jeff Wade, Jim McGarry and Sandra Krauss won the team title with a 58 in the scramble event. Mant is the team pro, the others are amateurs.