

Hole-in-one contest to give everyone a chance

Golf/Ed Vyeda

There is something mystical about the hole-in-one. Maybe it has something to do with the odds against a golfer making one. Maybe it has to do with it being the perfect shot even the most imperfect golfers can accomplish. Maybe it has to do with the fact that anyone who makes a hole-in-one has a story to tell the rest of his or her golf life. Or longer.

A Golf Digest report has said the odds of the average golfer making a hole-in-one during a round (on a course with four par-3s) are 8,404 to 1. On one particular hole, the odds are 33,616 to 1.

Still, those figures shouldn't scare anyone away from participating in the annual Greater Aptos Kiwanis Club Hole-In-One Contest, scheduled June 10-11-12 at the Aptos Par-3. "We are closing the course and devoting it entirely to the event," says Howard Menge of the Aptos Par-3. Already 1,000 tickets have been sold, the incentive being the grand prize of a new car. There will also be daily prizes and hourly prizes for shots that are closest to the hole.

The format for the contest, Menge explains, is that a special 160-yard hole will be set up, with the tee and pin placements to be changed periodically. Tickets are \$1 each; those purchased in advance will be worth three balls each, while those purchased on the days of the event will be worth two balls. Contestants are not limited to the number of balls they hit.

"We are making this a community type event," said Menge. He said golfers who come out to try their luck will probably wind up hanging around awhile watching other contestants. The reason being: If you can't make a hole-in-one, the next best thing is seeing one.

Hole-in-one competition is to be held Friday from noon to 5 p.m., and on Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Some of the other prizes will include golf equipment, dinner certificates from local restaurants and other merchandise.

The format is somewhat like that of a hole-in-one competition held annually in Pacific Grove. The proceeds from the tournament are to go to youth organizations in the Aptos area. For information, call the Aptos Par-3 pro shop, 688-5000.

As for the grand prize, the overall winner can take his choice of an Oldsmobile Cutlass, a Fiat or a Renault. Menge said that if there is more than one ace made during the competition, the

players involved will have to return for a special playoff — with the car keys at stake.

• Over the last couple of weeks, the Santa Cruz golf community has lost two of its most dedicated supporters, in Floyd Sluiter and Marion McCandless.

Sluiter, whose battle with cancer ended last week, quietly went about his business as a high school coach and would hardly be noticeable — until something went wrong. Sluiter could always be counted on to keep a level head, get to the heart of a problem and correct it. Sluiter enjoyed playing as much as any golfer does, but to his credit, his concern always was for his team first. Both a basketball and golf coach, last year Sluiter's Harbor High golf team won the Santa Cruz area's first-ever Central Coast Section team championship. It was something he wanted to win as much as, if not more than, his players.

Mrs. McCandless, ironically, was killed in an auto accident only about a mile from the Pajaro Valley Golf Course, where she is recognized as an all-time women's club champion. She was an accomplished player and took special interest not only in daughter Patty Snyder's pro career, but those of other young women playing the mini-tour in California. Mrs. McCandless was a regular booster of the mini-tour and participant in pro-ams — and at last fall's Coors Classic at Aptos Seaside, played in the tournament with her daughter.

• Janet Coles may have finally broken the ice. The veteran LPGA touring pro has been fighting the one-round jinx most of her professional life, in that she shows all the signs of becoming a consistent winner, only to have one bad round a week drop her back into the middle of the field.

Coles' highest finish the past four years has been tied for third place, until Sunday's impressive victory at the Lady Michelob in Georgia. Coles, whose only other win came in sudden death in 1978, pulled away from the field on the final day, something she'd surely like to keep repeating.

Still, the 28-year-old Coles, a versatile athlete who runs daily to keep in shape, appears on her way to her most successful season the LPGA tour. Her winning paycheck of \$22,500 boosted her 1983 winnings to \$65,132 in 11 tournaments. Last year Coles wound up with her highest career total, \$71,379, in 21 events. And, considering her current stroke average is 72.61, her lowest ever,



AP Laserphoto

Janet Coles reacts as a putt misses its mark in the Lady Michelob.

she appears ready to reach some of her higher goals, like winning one of the women's major events.

One of the people Coles has credited for teaching her the game was Olin Dutra, who at age 82 also died last week. Dutra, the 1934 U.S. Open champion, is a California golf Hall of Fame member, who taught Coles while he was at Pajaro Valley from 1976-79, as he did some of his last work in golf.

• Only three teams from the area survived the 36-hole cut last weekend at the 17th annual

Northern California Golf Association Two Man Better Ball Championships at Spyglass Hill. Leading the way for local players was the team of John Vineyard and Thomas Rahe, both of Spring Hills Golf Course, with a 54-hole total of 230 (75-76-79). Mitch Wada of Pajaro Valley, playing with Tom Cole of Skywest in Hayward, also finished at 230 (78-73-79).

Dave Valenzuela of DeLaveaga and Willie Mecadon of Valley Gardens paired up for a total of 236, but had the low 18-hole score among the local entries, a first-round 74.