JUNIOR CHAMP
Jay Osmon wins
CGA Junior Match
Play tournament.

This Osmon brother
brings down house

By Todd Plipers
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ENGLEWOOD — The next time the Greatest Hits of the Osmon Brothers is put together, the collection might be of golf shots rather than popular songs.

And the subject will be the swinging Osmon brothers of Alamosa, not the singing Osmond brothers of Provo, Utah.

Jay Osmon — the younger by one minute of a set of golfing twins from the San Luis Valley — offered a glimpse into the future yesterday, defeating Ryan Vlack of Parker and 1 at Englewood Golf Course to win the Colorado Golf Association Junior Match Play Championship.

Osmon, who turned 15 in January and just completed his freshman year at Alamosa High School, became the youngest player ever to win the state crown. He did it by outlasting the 18-year-old Vlack, a Ponderosa High graduate who ousted brother Joe Osmon 5 and 4 in the round of 16.

Jay Osmon qualified for the championship bracket as a 14-year-old just out of eighth grade last year, but lost 2 and 1 in the opening round and was defeated again in his first consolation-round match.

There would be no such disappointments this year.

Yesterday afternoon’s victory ended a banner tournament that began with the new champion tying the course record with a 65 to win medalist honors among the 157 entrants in the tournament, and continued through five matches leading to the title.

“I played well,” said Jay Osmon, who had to battle from 2 down with five holes to play to defeat Vlack. “I didn’t put that well but I knocked it close enough.

He fell behind three times on the front side, once on the third hole when he had a 3-foot birdie putt to take the lead for the first time and three-putted for bogey, instead.

By THE NUMBERS: Results of CGA Junior Match Play championships.

“I was a little nervous. I was getting too mad at myself,” he said. “I told myself, ‘on the back side to calm down and just play’.

A near loss in the opening round earlier in the week helped get him back on track. “The first match I played, I was 3 down after 10, and I thought I could come back because I came back then if I played steady, just kept hitting it straight.”

Down 1 at the turn, Osmon got a break on the par-3 16th hole when Vlack three-putted for bogey to halve the hole, missing about a three-foot that would have put him another notch up. Another birdie opportunity eluded the runnerup, who finally got to 2 up with a par at No. 12 when an errant drive led to an Osmon bogey.

But Vlack, who didn’t even take up golf seriously until the ninth grade and was playing in his first state junior championship, saw opportunities slipping away.

“I should have had him,” he said. “I missed a birdie putt at 10, missed one at 11 and missed another one at 13.”

An Osmon par got him back to within 1, and he evened the match with a birdie set up by a 345-yard drive at the par-5 15th hole.

“I hadn’t lost 15 all week,” said Osmon, who chipped in for eagle there in his morning semifinal victory. “I felt good going into that one.”

A par 4 at the 16th hole gave Osmon his first lead of the final match, and he quickly followed up for the kill on the par-3 17th when Vlack conceded a par after losing his tee shot in the woods.

“I let him off,” said Vlack, who will attend Colorado State in the fall, “but not on a golf scholarship. I let the young guy win, I guess.”

C.G.A. JUNIOR
MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP

Finals Results


Consolation Championship — R.J. Breck, Cherry Creek G.C., def. Brad Barnes, Colorado C.C., 2 and 1.

First round — Ryan Vlack, The Pinery C.C., def. Scott Hendrix, Colorado C.C., 2 and 1.


Third round — R.J. Breck, Cherry Creek G.C., def. Brad Barnes, Colorado C.C., 2 and 1.

Finals — R.J. Breck, Cherry Creek G.C., def. Brad Barnes, Colorado C.C., 2 and 1.