

Jobe wins second straight match-play

By **CLAY LATIMER**

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COLORADO SPRINGS — When he lost the first two holes of his 36-hole State Match Play Championship final against Bill Fowler Sunday, Littleton's Brandt Jobe was quick to tell himself he had no reason to panic.

He was right.

Playing aggressively from that point, Jobe proceeded to make 10 birdies and an eagle en route to a 12 and 11 victory at the Broadmoor Golf Club's south course.

Jobe thus became the first since Mark Crabtree in 1976 to win back-to-back Colorado match-play championships. He also extended his unbeaten streak to 19 matches.

"I knew once I started making birdies I could win," said the 19-year-old, who plays golf for UCLA. "But I didn't think it would turn out to be this easy."

"Maybe my game is suited to match play," he added. "In stroke play I always think ahead to where I can get my next birdie. In match play, I take each shot step by step, and that helps."

JOBE DIDN'T pick up a club for several weeks following this spring's collegiate season. By the time he returned to Colorado from Los Angeles, he says his game was nearly in disarray.

But from the start of the state match-play tournament, Jobe never seriously faltered. He was at his best against Bill Loeffler in an early round, although Fowler could argue that Jobe hardly struggled in the finale.

"He's a great player, a very aggressive player," Fowler said.

Fowler was at his best when he captured the first two holes. He would never win another hole, though.

Still, the pair was even after the first nine holes.

"I wasn't worried about that," said Jobe. "I'm better on the back nine here."

That became evident when Jobe eagled No. 10, a 500-yard par-5. Jobe two-putted from 15-feet on that hole after hitting a 170-yard eight-iron for his second shot.

Jobe birdied the next hole, a 436-yard par-4, by sinking an 18-foot putt.

"Right there," said Fowler, "the match definitely reversed."

"Once I got two down," continued Fowler, a 22-year-old from Lakewood, "I started pressuring myself. I'm not a good come-from-behind player. I never was, I never will be. I'm a cautious player. I like to play conservatively and wait for the other guy to make mistakes. Well, that doesn't work when you're behind."

JOBE WON Nos. 12, 14, 17 and 18, thanks to his power game and fine putting. Fowler began struggling with his putter, and that ensured the match would continue in Jobe's favor.

"I think I got a little frustrated," said Fowler, who was 6-down entering the final 18 holes. "I just wasn't putting; they weren't falling. But maybe it was my nerves. I've never played in the finals of this calibre of a tournament. The TV, the newspapers, maybe it kind of put pressure on me."

Jobe's domination continued during the second round. On No. 6, a 493-yard par-5, Jobe put his second shot just short of the green and then got down in two for yet another birdie. Fowler, meanwhile, strayed near a rock on his drive. It took him two shots just to return to the fairway. He finished with a bogey-6. In the end, that hole typified the match for both players.

"His game is making pars," said Jobe. "I don't think gambling is his game, like it is mine. Well, he had to adapt to my style of game, and that made a difference."



DAVID L. CORNWELL/Rocky Moun.

Against all odds: Brandt Jobe has now won eight consecutive state championship matches at the Broadmoor's South Course.