

2018 GCWGA Golf Season

Senior Met

By Mark Schmetzer

Linda Coffey is familiar with Metropolitan Senior Women's Championship playoffs, but she didn't know until October 3 how close she came to playing in another one this year.

Coffey captured the Overall Gross championship of the postponed 47th annual event on September 20-21 at Clovernook Country Club, but only after Melinda Hileman's birdie putt on the 17th and last hole rimmed out.



Linda Coffey

"Wow," said Coffey, who plays out of Hamilton Elks Golf Club and was in the group ahead of Hileman's. "I had no idea. I didn't watch their group. I had no idea how close we were when I came in. I knew they were right behind me by a stroke or two after the first day."

Coffey shot an 84-78 – 162 during the two-day, 36-hole, medal-play event, finishing one stroke better than Hileman's 86-77 – 163.

“I would say the last day was kind of fun,” said Hileman, who plays at Vineyard Country Club. “I didn’t know who where we were in the running or who was in the group ahead of us. I didn’t share this with her, but we were in the very last group and the group ahead of us had some trouble. We were waiting for quite a bit in the fairway, and a couple of the girls said to me, ‘You should be in the running.’”

“I had no idea where they were. Honestly, I didn’t want to know what my score was. I knew I was playing pretty well.”

“I almost birdied that hole. The ball was in the cup and rolled out. It was kind of a little bit of a downhill left-to-right. It just hit the edge on the right side and rolled out.

“Had that dropped,” she added with a laugh, “we could still be playing.”

Hileman also came up short in the Overall Net category, won by Lisa Grein of Ivy Hills Country Club with a 64-64 – 128. Hileman was able to capture the Augusta Flight Gross and Net titles. Grein also left with the Inverness Flight Net title, while Melissa Homan of Hyde Park Golf and Country Club won the flight’s Gross championship.

Coffey’s rounds also left her with the Muirfield Flight Gross and Net championships, duplicating the dual titles captured by Kenwood Country Club’s Norah Clark in the Diana Calkins Flight. Marilyn Miller of Legendary Run Golf Course won the Seminole Flight Gross championship, and Donna Harpsoe of Wetherington Golf and Country Club went home with the flight’s Net title.

Coffey and Hileman both had glowing words for the tournament, postponed from mid-August by stormy weather.



Lisa Grein

“It was gorgeous,” Coffey said. “We were really glad to not have to play in the pouring rain, which is what it was like when it was originally scheduled. It was perfect weather for golf both days.”

“I think the field was a lot smaller than they’d hoped for,” added Hileman. “With it being reschedule, everything kind of changed. The course was in very good shape, considering the way the summer has gone. I know some courses have been struggling, but I think Clovernook definitely did a very nice job. I loved the maturity and the old-course feel with the narrow fairways and mature trees,”

“It was hilly,” Coffey added. “There weren’t a lot of flat lies out there.”

Coffey’s overall championship surpassed the couple of Cincinnati Publix titles she won, as she said, “in another lifetime” as the biggest of her career. “I guess I’d have to say so, yes,” said Coffey, who finished third last year behind Lynn Thompson and UnAe Mueller. “I’ve come in second before. In one year, I was in a three-way playoff. It was either last year or the year before. We had to go out and play sudden-death. I ended up losing to Lesli Hopping. One year, I ended up coming in second behind Lynn Thompson.”

Her approach to the tournament was simple. "I was just really focused on trying to not make many stupid mistakes," she said. "The first day, I had six three-putt holes. I was hoping to try to not repeat that the second day. The second day, I had one three-putt.

"I just tried to play smart golf – not hit a driver if I didn't need to, for example. Hitting a lot of the greens in regulation both days was a key."

She especially savored being able to share part of the experience with her parents, who live in nearby Groesbeck. They were able to watch part of her round.

"After it was over, I drove over to their place with the trophy," Coffey said. "They love to be out there watching me play."

Hileman, who moved to the area from Louisville four years ago, believes the Senior Met would've surpassed the couple of club championships she's won as her most impressive triumph.

"I didn't pick up the game of golf until I got married," she said. "I was a softball-basketball Division III athlete, and our coach for softball didn't want the combined swings of golf and softball."

There's a good chance this won't be the last time Hileman finds herself competing for titles.

"We're empty-nesters now, so we can play more," she said.