

# Bowman captures state women's amateur title

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## GOLF

NAPLES — Tammy Bowman took advantage of her closest friend's late-round errors Friday to win the Florida State Women's Amateur Championship at the Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club.

The pro shop manager at Wekiva Golf Club near Orlando, Bowman outlasted Joan Pirkle, 2 and 1, to capture her second state title.

"I won the first one in 1971, and that was 15 years ago," Bowman said. "That's too many years between championships."

Although the two finalists have been friends for years, and share a home in Orlando, both were bent on winning the Florida Women's State Golf Association's most prestigious tournament.

"I was out there to play the golf course, not

Joan," said Bowman. "I was just trying to hit the greens and, hopefully, make some birdies. But I only made one."

"I really wanted to win," said Pirkle, who plays out of Arnold Palmer's Bay Hill Club in Orlando. "But if I had to lose to somebody, I'm glad it was Tammy. And it was very relaxing, playing with Tammy."

Neither was able to seize command in the early going. Pirkle went 1-up with a par after Bowman three-putted for bogey at No. 3. But Bowman pulled even with a 12-foot birdie putt at No. 5.

Bowman took a brief lead at the 10th after Pirkle three-putted, but the two were even again when Bowman bogeyed No. 11.

After both parred the 12th, Pirkle's problems began in earnest.

She pushed her approach into the rough at the right of the green on No. 13, then skulled her chip shot 20 feet past the pin and bogeyed. Bowman's par gave her a 1-up margin.

At the par-5 14th, Pirkle's second shot flew left into a clump of tall trees, and the bunkers guarding the green prevented any decent approach to the flag. She bogeyed the hole, while Bowman parred and moved to 2-up.

Pirkle won the 15th after Bowman's third shot was short because of a restricted backswing brought about by a large tree. With the lead now trimmed to one, Pirkle missed a four-foot putt at 16 for a bogey. Bowman's par hiked the lead to 2-up.

The match ended at No. 17 when they halved the hole with pars.

"I don't think the skulled pitch at 13 was my downfall," said Pirkle. "The problem with the trees and the bunkers at 14 was worse. And then that missed little putt at 16 added up to

three mistakes in a hurry."

Bowman was satisfied with her round, even though she was not hitting her irons close enough to pick up the birdies she was seeking.

"My only really bad shot was that second shot at 15," she said. "I really thought I'd hit a good shot there, but it didn't get past that tree."

Bowman and Pirkle were partners on the team that won the 1985 National American Cancer Society Golf Tournament at Doral in Miami.

"So now we've got to get back home and start getting ready to try to defend that one," said Bowman. "That was a big win for us and we'd like to do it again."

Shirley Johnston of Naples gained the tournament's sixth flight title with a 1-up win over Mary Ellen Pollock of Casselberry. Meanwhile, Mary Sturgeon of Naples topped Jeanette Forsyth of Fiddlesticks, 5 and 3, to take the ninth flight championship.