

Waterloo's Dunakey wins match play title

By Bob Denney

Gazette sportswriter

Waterloo's Doug Dunakey may have set the retail sale of wooden golf clubs back 50 years Sunday at Cedar Rapids Country Club.

Dunakey scorned his driver in favor of a 1- and 3-iron, to negotiate the tight, tree-lined fairways and post a victory in the second annual State Match Play Golf Tournament.

Dunakey, however, was driven to the limit by Des Moines City champion Al Bailey before pocketing his first major state title since the 1981 Waterloo Open. Dunakey needed a 2-foot par putt on the 18th green to give himself a 1-up victory.

The 22-year-old Dunakey began the day with a 1-up semifinal victory over Ames' Ned Zachar, while Bailey downed Cedar Rapids' John Jacobs, 2 and 1.

WITH ONLY 50 MINUTES rest, Bailey began the championship match two holes down after registering a pair of double bogeys. Bailey, who suffers from an irregular heartbeat, had his third dizzy spell of the tournament — playing against Jacobs on the 15th hole in the semifinals.

But, like he did so often during the tournament, Bailey bounced back to put the heat on his opponents. He made two pressure putts on the 16th and 17 holes to draw even with Dunakey.

Bailey dropped a 10-foot par putt on the 16th, then entertained the gallery on the par-4, 393-yard 17th by knocking an 8-iron approach 50 feet below the hole before banging home the uphill birdie putt.

Dunakey said the jolt from that putt awakened him.

"I FIGURED I HAD better make things happen on the 18th, because I didn't want to go extra holes," he said. "Al was really controlling the pace of play. I tried to slow it down but couldn't. I was happy that I could end it when I did."

Bailey ran into trouble on the par-4, 350-yard uphill 18th, when his tee shot landed in the rough on the left hand side of the fairway with a large tree limb in his way. He punched a 7-iron approach to the back of the green 50 feet above the cup and three putted for bogey. His 5-foot par putt ended on the lip of the cup.

• Please turn to page 2B. Golf

GOLF: Turning point: No. 12

From page 1B

Dunakey's approach was 10 feet away from the flagstick off the green, and he two-putted from there. Dunakey carded a 6-over par, 77, to Bailey's 78.

"I'm glad I made it a match after we both weren't playing well to start the round," said Bailey, 39, who reached the quarterfinals in this tournament last year. "I was happy to make the finals. It was the fourth straight match where I was two down after two holes. I knew I could come back.

"IF THERE WAS A turning point, I'd say it was the par Doug made on No. 12. That was the biggest putt of the tournament."

Dunakey held a 3-hole advantage over Bailey when he missed the green on the par-3, 197-yard 12th. Bailey, meanwhile, chipped off a steep hill to within a foot of the cup. But Dunakey made his 10-foot left-to-right par putt and was not in trouble until the 17th.

THE MORNING SEMIFINALS matched Zachar, who is contemplating turning professional, against

Dunakey. Zachar, 24, fell two down to Dunakey after taking a bogey-5 on the 16th hole, but his par at the 17th drew him to within one of Dunakey.

"After the bogey on 16, I hit three good shots in a row," said Zachar, whose semifinal finish will move him into the top five in the Amateur of the Year point race. "I wished my birdie putt on 18 would have dropped. It was a good tournament for me."

In the day's other semifinal, the 64-year-old Jacobs fell behind one hole on Bailey on the par-4, 13th hole. Jacobs' approach landed in a greenside bunker and he needed three to get down from there. Bailey sewed things up by dropping another big putt — a downhill 42-footer — on the 16th.

Jacobs praised Bailey's play and his courage.

"I was glad that I was briefed before the round on Al's illness," said Jacobs. "It would have scared me to death, seeing a guy lie there on the ground. But, he played very well and deserved to be there."