Kahl clinches Medal Play title in playoff

By DAVE NELSON

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Like a pitcher struggling with his best fastball, Terry Kahl threw an assortment of junk at The Ranch Country Club's 5,370 yards for 18 holes on Sunday before winning the State Medal Play golf championship in a sudden-death playoff.

"I really didn't have much going for me out there today," the 22-year-old collegiate ace from the University of Colorado admitted after draining a birdie putt of 17 feet on the second hole of an extra hole with Pat English. "Frankly, I didn't play very well." Kahl insisted after rallying from a two-shot deficit on the final two holes to force the first playoff since 1957 when Ron Moore of Cherry Hills Country Club faced Randy Carey in an 18-hole match at Denver Country Club.

Kahl took a precious one-shot lead into Sunday's final round after carding a brilliant 66 Saturday. But he could do no better than match The Ranch's pair of 71 Sunday while English posted a 69 which left the two tied with 72-hole totals of 228.

"I KNOW I was fortunate in this tournament," Kahl insisted. "I kind of scared it around today. But I'm really proud of myself. I played nearly as well as I could." Kahl added that he was grinding away and hanging in there and didn't quit or give up on himself. That's really important to me — maybe even as important as winning the tournament.

Meanwhile, the sudden upsurge of events proved to be a bit of a disappointment for English, whose father, Jim English Sr., has claimed the State Medal Play championship three times, including back-to-back victories in 1938 and 1939. "I played 16 holes almost perfect and then I guess I half-choke on the last two," English admitted.

The 19-year-old sophomore-to-be at Stanford held a two-shot lead with only two holes remaining. English battled gruffly to salvage his par on the 157-yard 17th after catching a trap with a wayward 5-iron off the tee. He blazed out of the sand to within five feet of the pin and holed out the difficult, pressure-packed, par-saving put.