

# Penalty proves costly to Eaton

## Schabacker wins state stroke play championship by one shot

By GARY BAINES  
Camera Sports Writer

Few sports penalize players for seemingly insignificant matters quite the way golf does.

Just ask Craig Stadler, victim of the old building-a-stance-with-a-towel rule at the Andy Williams Open early this year.

Larry Eaton can relate, being similarly treated by the Rules of Golf. Eaton finished second by one shot to John Schabacker in the State Amateur Stroke Play tournament at Boulder Country Club. By coincidence, Eaton was penalized one shot on the 10th hole Sunday when his ball rolled over on the green as he was setting up to address his putt.

Eaton called the violation on himself, and as it later turned out, it cost him an opportunity to win the tournament in sudden death. As it was, the 56-year-old from Greeley finished runnerup for the second straight year.

"As it happens in golf, those mistakes often end up being important," he said. "It made the difference between losing and being in a playoff."

Still, it would be wrong to take anything away from Schabacker's victory because of the ruling. The 21-year-old from Englewood had plenty of chances to fold under Sunday's final-round pressure, but never did. Despite being in position to win a major tournament for the first time, he finished with a 1-over-par 71 and a four-day total of 8-over-par 288.

With his penalty stroke, Eaton shot 70 Sunday and came in at 289. '87 match play champion Gary Longfellow was another stroke back after a 72, while former University of Colorado golfer Mark Crabtree was fourth at 291 following his final-round 71.

Eaton's situation on the 10th hole was crucial to the tournament because it allowed Schabacker to take the lead for good. Instead of matching Schabacker's par on the hole, Eaton had to settle for a bogey. On the 11th, Schabacker sank a 10-foot birdie to give himself a two-shot edge.

"On 11 I kind of broke out," said Schabacker. "I felt bad for (Eaton) after No. 10, but it's just something that happens."

A 15-foot birdie on the par-3 15th put Eaton back to within a stroke, and the opportunities for him to catch Schabacker were there on the last three holes.

On No. 16, Schabacker calmly rolled in a 10-footer for par after missing the green. And on the 17th, Eaton lipped out a 15-foot birdie attempt.

But Eaton's best chance came on the final hole, a 434-yard par 4. There, Schabacker put his tee shot to the right, at the base of a tree, while Eaton drove into the center of the fairway.

"I had an opportunity to pick up at least one shot there," Eaton said. "I had 210 yards to the green and thought I had to hit my long iron so hard that I made a bad shot." He ended up 50 yards short of the flagstick.

Then it was Schabacker's turn. "The main thing was not to choke and make (double bo-

gey)," he said. "I just wanted to get the ball in the fairway and hope to get lucky." He accomplished his goal, chipping out from under the tree to the left side of the fairway, then hitting his approach shot on the green, but some 70 feet from the flag. Eaton, however, could put no pressure on as he left his third shot 50 feet short of the pin.

Like on 17, Eaton lipped out his putt, and both players finished with bogeys to leave Schabacker one ahead.

"Today I just let it get away," said Eaton, who has never won an open-division state stroke or match play despite being one of Colorado's top amateurs for decades. "No. 10 was just unfortunate, but the iron I hit on the last hole was the deciding shot."

"I don't like to admit it, but I might be beginning to run out of gas. I don't know how many more times I will be in contention here. But I played pretty well today; I don't have any complaints as far as that goes."

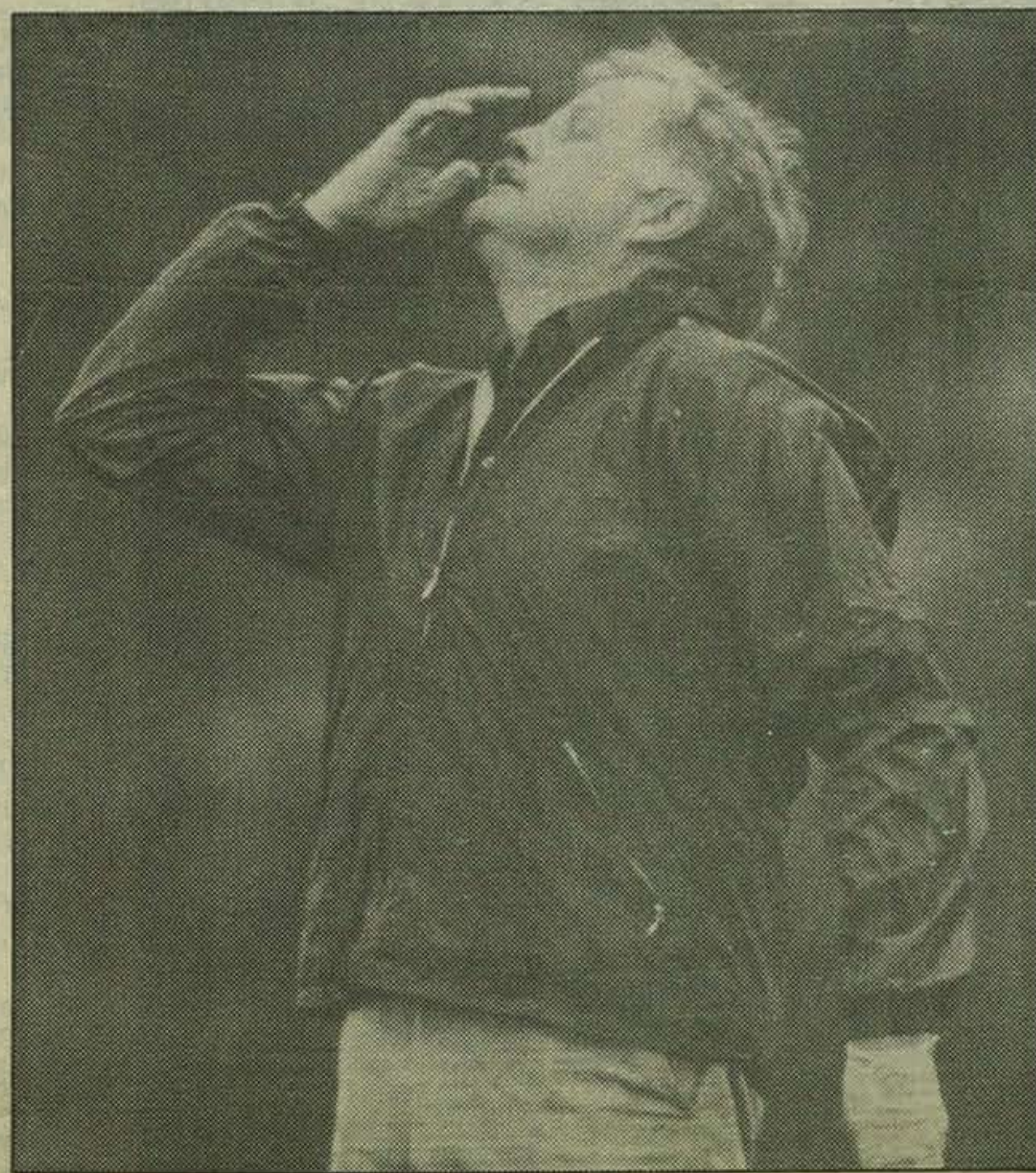
Indeed, there was only one round better than Eaton's Sunday, a 69 by Jim Brooks of Pueblo.

But Schabacker wasn't far off, making two birdies and three bogeys in a steady performance. With his victory, Schabacker became the third straight player from Cherry Hills Country Club to win the stroke play. Coincidentally, the player who started that streak in '85, Brandt Jobe, caddied for Schabacker Sunday.

"Brandt helped me stay relaxed all day," said Schabacker, a 1984 graduate of Mullen. "I knew that I was good enough to win, but I still got nervous on the back nine. I was a little intimidated (by Longfellow and Eaton)."



Camera staff photos by Vern Walker  
**CONFERRING:** John Schabacker (right) and his caddy, '85 state amateur champion Brandt Jobe, talk over how to play a putt.



**SO CLOSE:** Larry Eaton can hardly believe it as a long par putt on the 18th hole lips out of the cup Sunday.

### STATE STROKE PLAY RESULTS

Results after Sunday's final round of the state stroke play golf tournament held at the par 35-70 Boulder Country Club course.

John Schabacker, Englewood	71-71-75-71—288
Larry Eaton, Greeley	72-73-74-70—289
Gary Longfellow, Lakewood	73-73-72-72—290
Mark Crabtree, Fort Collins	70-74-76-71—291
Dave Brown, Englewood	68-77-74-74—293
Tom McGraw, Westminster	70-72-77-74—293
Jim Brooks, Pueblo	74-75-77-69—295
Rick DeWitt, Arvada	72-75-76-73—296
Stan Gonzales, Greeley	78-71-74-73—296
Dave Schey, Longmont	68-81-77-71—297
Guy Mertz, Longmont	76-70-80-71—297
Kent Moore, Englewood	70-74-81-73—298
Mike Mulhern, Aurora	77-71-75-75—298
Robert Heiny, Greeley	74-72-78-74—298
Chuck Melvin, Boulder	77-77-74-71—299
Kevin Cooney, Englewood	78-74-71-76—299
Gary Bloomer, Boulder	71-74-77-77—299
Terry Russell, Aurora	76-79-75-70—300
Pat Reidy, Englewood	76-77-74-74—301
Pete Bloomer, Boulder	74-73-76-78—301
Carter Mathies, Evergreen	74-80-74-73—301
Tom Brennan, Colorado Springs	72-74-77-79—302
Mark Spenner, Westminster	75-73-78-77—303
David Howe, Englewood	70-73-77-83—303
Reed Myer, Denver	76-75-75-78—304
Charles Fisher, Englewood	76-76-81-71—304
Bill Riddle, Fort Collins	70-77-82-75—304
Pete Churm, Boulder	69-76-79-81—305
Shannon Letcher, Brighton	76-77-76-76—305
Doug Nock, Boulder	78-77-75-75—305
Ted Warner, Sterling	78-73-78-76—305
Paul Alexander, Boulder	76-79-76-75—306
Clark Lyons, Boulder	75-72-79-80—306
Greg Sprigg, Englewood	77-74-78-78—307
Richard Merino, Denver	79-76-77-75—307
Tom Schultz, Trinidad	74-76-77-80—307
Joe Brady, Denver	80-74-81-73—308
Gary Cosel, Monument	76-78-76-80—310
Steve Fry, Steamboat Springs	75-79-78-78—310
Shawn McGechie, Grand Junction	73-82-76-79—310
Ray Makloski, Trinidad	79-74-80-77—310
David Wall, Littleton	79-73-80-78—310
Jim Cribbs, Denver	73-78-81-79—311
Larry Anderson, Greeley	75-76-84-79—314
Dave Wozniak, Aurora	77-75-76-86—314
Ted Scribner, Boulder	73-77-83-83—316
Kelly Kline, Colorado City	79-76-81-81—317
Bill Iversen, Fort Collins	75-79-79-84—317
Bruce Coffey, Loveland	74-81-84-79—318
Bruce Hayes, Boulder	76-79-77-86—318
Charlie Luther, Denver	79-73-79-88—319
Grant Maples, Golden	75-79-79-86—319
Geoff Howe, Longmont	74-80-81-84—319
Joe Torpey, Denver	73-78-85-84—320