

# CSU Golfer J.D. Manning Wins CGA Match Play Championship

J.D. Manning of Ft. Collins defeated Danny Luirette of Aurora to win the 1996 CGA Match Play Championship at Bear Creek Golf Club.

Manning won the 36-hole championship 6 and 5. He played a solid round and didn't make any errors while Luirette struggled with his short game. Manning plays for Colorado State University and Luirette plays for the Colorado University team. Both will go to the Pacific Coast Amateur Championship in early August.

Manning, who grew up in Lincoln, Nebraska, defeated Tim Burns of Lakewood 1 up on 20 in the semi-final round. Manning was 6 up with six holes to go when Burns got his second wind to end up all square after 18 holes. Manning won on the second extra hole.

Luirette had defeated former Colorado Open Champion Brian Guetz of Columbine Country Club 2 up. In that match, Luirette found himself in trouble several times because of his ability to hit the ball so far but hung on to win the 18th hole and finish 2 up.



Match Play Champion J.D. Manning

## CSU golfer keeps title 'team' affair

By Todd Phipers

Denver Post Golf Editor

The Colorado Match Play Championship has gotten to be a family affair for the Colorado State golf team in recent years, and J.D. Manning kept it that way yesterday.

The 22-year-old CSU golfer, who will be entering his senior season this fall, defeated Danny Luirette of Aurora and the University of Colorado 6 and 5 in the 36-hole final match at Bear Creek Golf Club to become the fifth straight Ram to capture the title.

Teammates Jeff Fujimoto and Cam Osler were the winners in 1993 and '95, respectively, and CSU golf coach Mark Crabtree took home the trophy in '92 and '94.

Manning nearly didn't make it to match play after shooting a 41 on the front nine in Monday's 18-hole stroke-play qualifying round en route to a 78 that was just one shot within the cut for the 64 players who advanced.

"I hadn't played here in a long time and I got myself caught up in all the trouble," the Lincoln, Neb., native said of his faltering start. "But I turned it around, and once you're in (to match play), it's a whole new ballgame."

Manning had to go two extra holes to win a quarterfinal match, but he was in command from the outset in the finale.

"It just piled up on me kind of quick," said Luirette, who fell behind on the first hole of the morning round, was 5-down after nine holes and never made up the deficit.

"I got it back to 3-down after 18, so I was happy with that, but then he got three or four holes in a row on me," added the 19-year-old left-hander, who is going into his junior year at CU.

Luirette missed a short putt on No. 1 to

drop to 4-down starting the afternoon round, but won the second hole with a par and chipped in for a birdie to get to 2-down on the par-3 third.

That was as close as he would get, however, as Manning holed a putt of about 60 feet for birdie at No. 5 and won both the seventh and eighth holes with pars to get his advantage back to 5.

"That seemed to change the tide, at least for me," Manning said of his long-distance putt to recapture the momentum. "I was becoming a little more worried about it being close, and then I made that and, emotionally, I got into a better state."

"I'd played good on the back nine, and I thought if I could take to the back 2-down or so I had a good chance the last four or five holes," Luirette said. "I was down going to the back (in) about three-quarters of my matches."

But Manning's steady game kept the margin the same with halves from the ninth to 12th holes, and a 7-iron tee shot on the par-3 13th led to the 5-foot birdie putt that closed out the match.

"I don't think he was out of play today, so if you're going to beat him, you've got to make birdies," Luirette said of the champion's solid play. "He played good. I had to make six or seven birdies on the back, and I didn't have time. I ran out of holes."

The finish was set up on the 193-yard 13th hole by what Manning called, "probably the best shot I hit today."

"I hadn't gotten the distance right on that hole the whole tournament, but finally I did — on about the eighth try," he said. "I wanted to make that putt pretty bad," he said of the 5-footer for birdie on the next shot to wrap up the victory. "I didn't want to have to go play another hole."