

Highlighted by triumphs in national championships, Southern Californians have consistently been near the top of the leaderboard in many national and major tournaments this summer:

BECKY LUCIDI of Poway had one of the summer's highlights, capturing the U.S. Women's Amateur at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, N.Y. The USC senior beat Brandi Jackson of Belton, S.C. 3 & 2 to take home the title.

Lucidi never trailed in the match, winning the first hole with a par. Her lead was 6 up after the morning round, and despite slipping at the start of the second round, her par on the 34th hole was enough for the title. In her semifinal match Lucidi made six birdies and closed out her match against Lindsey Wright of Pepperdine in style, by eagling the 17th hole to win 3 & 1.

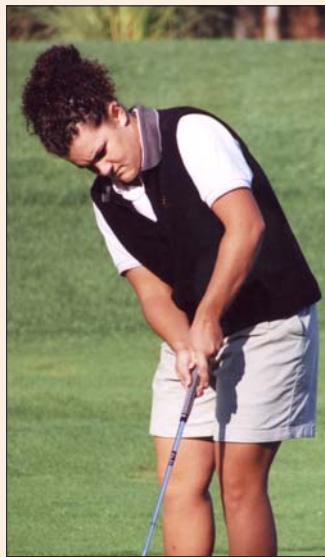
Lucidi will also represent the United States in the World Amateur Team Championship, to be held at Saujana Golf and Country Club in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October.

Former SCGA member **DON POOLEY** captured the U.S. Senior Open, winning a five-hole playoff over Tom Watson. SCGA member **BOB CLARK** was low amateur (see story on page 22).

Much of Pooley's early nurturing came at Victoria Club in Riverside where his father introduced him to the game at age six. "The club was huge in my development as a golfer. That's where I played all my golf when I was young," he notes. "I was there almost everyday."

Pooley's relationship with the club has remained strong even after he left Southern California. Two members, along with his father, were his first sponsors when he turned pro. The club hosted a dinner for him when he won the 1985 Vardon Trophy and will host another at the end of this year to celebrate his Senior Open triumph.

HWANHEE LEE, a UNLV student who lives in Long Beach, almost matched Lucidi's feat, but lost in the finals of the U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links at Sunriver Resort in Sunriver, Ore. **YVONNE CHOE** of UCLA and Temple City made it to the semifinals, but failed to make it an all-California final when she lost to eventual champion **ANNIE THURMAN** of Highland, Utah.



The Beach Boys would have loved the U.S. Girls' Junior Amateur, at Echo Lake Country Club in Westfield, N.J. because three of the four contestants in the semifinal round were California girls. **JENNIFER TANGTIPHAIBOONTANA** of Long Beach, **ALLISON MARTIN** of Bakersfield and **HANNAH JUN** of San Diego all made it to the Final Four. Tangtiphaibontana eventually lost in the finals to medallist **IN-BEE PARK** of Eustis, Fla.

At the U.S. Amateur Public Links at The Orchards GC in Washington, Mich., **JAY CHOI** of Cerritos made it to the round of 16. The next week, nine Southern Californians competed in the U.S. Junior Amateur at Atlanta Athletic Club. Defending champion **HENRY LIAW** and **DANIEL IM** of La Mirada both made it to the round of 16. Im lost his match in 26 holes, the second longest match in Junior history.

In a national championship across the pond, **DENNIS REILAND** of Irvine reached the quarterfinals of the British Mid-Amateur at Formby, while **MIKE PLATE** of Bakersfield and **ROBERT FUNK** of Canyon Lake both made match play at the British Amateur at Royal Prothcawl.

In other amateur tournaments:



Switching sports has worked well so far for 25-year-old Philippine native **HEIDI CHUA**. The Carson resident was remarkably consistent in the seventh California Women's Championship at Industry Hills Eisenhower Course. She had rounds of 75-74-74 to beat **ANNA TEMPLE** of Berkeley by two strokes. Before taking up golf, Chua was a top volleyball player until knee injuries prompted a different course.

Newly crowned SCGA Amateur champion **NICO BOLLINI** was having a great summer even before he claimed the title at El Caballero CC. He finished third in the Southwestern Amateur in mid-June at the ASU Karsten GC by shooting a 12-under-par 276. On June 2, he claimed medallist honors at the North & South Amateur at Pinehurst Resort & CC by shooting 67-69. He lost in the first round of match play.

California Amateur champion **EDDIE HEINEN** has also had a successful summer. Besides winning at Pebble Beach, Heinen beat a strong field at The Scratch Players' Championship at Diablo Grande Legends West GC in Patterson. He shot 9-under-par 207 to tie University of Washington's **BROCK MACKENZIE**, and then won in a playoff. Mackenzie would later win

the Pacific Coast Amateur (see page 18 for details).

In one of the first major tournaments of the year, centennial SCGA Amateur champion **JOHN PATE** finished third in the Azalea Amateur, held March 31 at The CC of Charleston. He shot 3-under-par 281.

KEVIN STADLER of USC, the Pac-10 *Male Golfer of the Year*, shot 70-70-65-67 to finish second in the Monroe Invitational at Monroe Golf Club in Pittsford, N.Y. Later in the summer, Stadler, the son of former Masters champion Craig Stadler, got a sponsors' exemption into the B.C. Open, but missed the cut after rounds of 71-77. He also made the round of 16 in match play at the U.S. Amateur.

Incoming UCLA freshman **SPENCER LEVIN** of Elk Grove won the 99th NCGA Amateur Championship by defeating Fresno's **JASON HIGTON**, 6 & 4, in the 36-hole championship match at Spyglass Hill GC.

The 18-year-old Levin was 4 up after 18 holes. Higton cut into Levin's lead by birdieing the 19th hole, but failed to win a hole the rest of the match. Levin closed him out with a par on 14.



Levin went on to reach the quarterfinals of the U.S. Amateur (see page 17)

Pepperdine students **BRIAN O'FLAHERTY** of Westlake Village and **MICHAEL PUTNAM** made it to the round of 16 in the Pacific Northwest Men's Amateur at Spokane, Wash.

— Sean Martin

Bob Clark: a champion once again

Playing the 455-yard 18th hole at Caves Valley Country Club, Bob Clark knew he had a good chance at victory, but no idea exactly where he stood in relation to his competition. He had started the final round of the 2002 United States Senior Open Championship 18 shots back of leader and eventual champion Don Pooley, but that wasn't who he was concerned with. Clark was gunning for the gold medal awarded to the amateur returning the low score for 72 holes. In that competition, he had started the day with a six shot lead over lifelong amateur Paul Simson of Raleigh, N.C.

"This was something I had been preparing for for two years," the 1969 NCAA champion says. "It dawned on me that if I were to qualify for the Open I could get into the Senior Am, which is my major tournament because I'm not likely going to win the Open."

After he tapped in for bogey on the final hole, Clark, a Murrieta resident, learned that his two years of work had paid off, after his friend, Chris Melitas, yelled from the grandstands the words he wanted to hear most, "Bob, you're low am!"

This was good news for Clark, who called being low amateur his biggest accomplishment since winning the NAAs. "I'm a really scrappy player," he says. "Each bad swing would cost me about two shots there. In every round except the (1-under-par) 70 (in the second round) I played 16 good holes and two bad ones. It was a pretty scary deal."

No matter what, the Senior Open is always an enjoyable experience for the Murietta resident because he gets to compete against, and beat, players he hasn't seen since he competed against, and beat, them in college. He has no intentions of competing on this level on a week-to-week basis anytime soon, though. "I have two girls, a 9-year-old and an 11-year-old," he says. "I want to see them grow up. Golf is not worth that to me, though I must say everything I have in my life I have because of golf."

Clark will continue to play a full schedule of amateur golf during the fall. His performance at Caves Valley earned him a return trip to next year's Senior Open, as well as exemptions into this year's U.S. Amateur, U.S. Mid-Amateur, and his major, the United States Senior Amateur, to be held at Timuquana Country Club in Jacksonville, Fla., at the end of September.

Clark will play in the Amateur, but will skip the Mid-Amateur because it is the week before the Canadian Senior Amateur, which is the week before the U.S. Senior Amateur. He loves playing in USGA events, saying they are, "the ultimate, ultimate high. Nobody runs a better tournament. It's always a fun deal to take out my USGA medals and just look at them."

The two-time All-American at Cal State Los Angeles admitted he doesn't have the best match play record, especially in national events, but he hopes that will change. A recent semifinals appearance in the Long Beach Match Play Championship may show his luck has turned. "I got to knock off some college kids, and that's always fun," he said.

The defending SCGA Four-Ball champion, with fellow Bear Creek CC member Ed Cuff, hopes his good play will continue into the U.S. Senior Amateur. "If I could win that tournament it would definitely top (being low amateur in the Senior Open) in my mind," he says.

— Sean Martin

