



Lilia Henkel of Grand Rapids Wins Michigan Girls Junior State Amateur Championship

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[41st Michigan Girls Junior State Amateur](#)

EAST LANSING – Lilia Henkel of Grand Rapids made some early birdies in turning back Alissa Fish of Clarklake 6 and 5 in the title match Wednesday and won the 41st Michigan Girls Junior State Amateur Championship presented by Pepsi at Forest Akers West Golf Club.

Henkel, 16 and a Forest Hills Northern High School student, said the key was her strong start in the title match.

“Alissa couldn’t get up and down a few times and I capitalized, and I made a few birdies to start off the round nice for me, too,” she said. “It feels pretty great to win. I don’t think it has fully kicked in yet. I was kind of in a slump in my high school season and I didn’t have that high of expectations this week. It was a tough field, but I just played my game and it worked out for the best.”

Henkel, who last summer won the GAM Junior Stroke Play 15-and-under title, said her irons were strong in match play.

“My game was pretty even all week, and when I needed one part of it because something else wasn’t working, I came up with it,” she said. “In the match play, I stuck my irons in there and made some putts, too.”

Henkel topped Jasmine Ly of Madison Heights 3 and 2 in the semifinals to reach the final, and Fish topped Ariel Chang of Macomb Township in 19 holes to make it to the final.

Henkel wanted to thank her teacher Brandon Roby, a teaching professional at Cascade Hills Country Club in Grand Rapids. “He has really helped me with my game,” she said.

Mckenna Kehoe Wins 15-and-under Crown

A 15-under Junior State Amateur champion was also crowned in the tournament. Mckenna Kehoe of Strathroy, Ontario, topped Laura Liu of Rochester Hills 6 and 5 in that title match.

Kehoe beat Kate Brody of Grand Blanc 5 and 4 in the semifinals, and Liu topped Samantha Coleman of Northville 4 and 3.

“I feel like it was one of my better tournaments,” said the 13-year-old Kehoe. “I’m really happy I decided to play in it. It was fun.”

Kehoe said it was her biggest win, though not her first. She has won some junior tour events before, and she said her iron play and short game were the keys in this victory.

“They were the best part of my game,” she said. “I tied the match on hole 3 and then I could tell my game was going to be better.”

Forest Akers hosted the championship for the sixth time in history and 90 junior golfers competed in the overall and 15-and-under division.

The championship has a storied past with winners like Michigan Golf Hall of Fame member and LPGA Tour player Suzy Green-Roebuck, LPGA Tour player Stacy Snider, and recent Michigan Women’s Amateur champions Aya Johnson and Kerri Parks.