

# Teens upstage pros

By BRUCE MATTHEWS



A COUPLE of schoolkids made a late decision to play competition golf together ... and a week later walked away with one of Victoria's most prized amateur titles.

Kingswood juniors James McMillan and Karena Vendy created history yesterday as the youngest winners of the Sir Dallas Brooks Trophy.

The teenagers won the state mixed foursomes event by beating another Kingswood member Peter Morris and his Rosedale partner Catherine Pearce 4 and 3 in the 18-hole final at Metropolitan.

McMillan, 15, and Vendy, a

year older, never did get to play Metropolitan's closing par-four hole as they swept through a field that contained 30 professionals among the 174 pairs who entered the competition started by former Victorian governor Sir Dallas Brooks in 1955.

McMillan, a Year 9 student at St Bede's College, Mentone, and Vendy, in Year 10 at Avila College, Mt Waverley, even managed to get back to Kingswood for an end-of-year nine-hole "muck up" on Saturday after their semi-final victory.

Neither could fully comprehend the magnitude of their

## MICKELSON INSPIRES CUP RECORD

THE Japanese team of Shigeki Maruyama and Toshi Izawa finished at 30 under par after firing a 58 in the best-ball format at the World Cup in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, yesterday.

After a 65, Australia's pairing of Craig Parry and Adam Scott fell into a tie for eighth on 24 under, as Phil Mickelson's spectacular performance drove the US back into contention.

achievement, holding a trophy that carries the names of big-time golfers, including Shani Waugh, Tom Crow and Eric Routley.

"We're pretty pleased with

Mickelson fired 10 birdies and an eagle as he and teammate David Toms tied a World Cup record with a 15-under 57 in the third round of the two-man team event.

The Americans head into the final round on 27 under, two shots behind second-placed Fiji and one behind South Africa.

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but I hadn't played with James before."

The tall blonde, cousin of former *Neighbours* actor Krista Vendy, left it until the last minute to make a name for herself. "We left it a bit late. We had a phone call on Saturday night (last week) to say if we wanted to play in the Dallas Brooks Trophy, there was a spot for us," she said.

The pair made a nervous start yesterday to be two down after two holes against the experienced Morris, an eight-handicapper who met Pearce when she became a regular customer of his newsagency.

McMillan, who plays off a four-handicap, was the mainstay of the team with his long iron accuracy and ability to recover from difficult lies

during the alternate shot competition.

The teenagers hit back hard by winning five of six holes on the front, Vendy calmly holing a breaking 5m birdie putt at the eighth to extend the lead to three-up. They found trouble at the sharp left-to-right dogleg ninth, eventually conceding the hole, and struggled again after hitting a tree with the second shot at the next hole.

But McMillan recovered the half the hole and a rock-solid par at the short 11th restored the three-up lead.

McMillan hit a superb four-iron approach to 5m behind the flag at the 15th and Vendy rolled the birdie attempt to within 5cm of the cup to clinch victory.

## Import turns on the class

By KANE WHITE



ENGLISH import Vikram Solanki bucked the international trend at the weekend, posting an unbeaten century for Essendon against Hawthorn-Monash University.

After sitting precariously at 2-10, Solanki's 103 pushed Essendon past Hawthorn-Monash University's 188 and secured the six points.

The former England one-day right-hander gained support from captain Craig Berger (35 not out) and Ben Fletcher (33).

"It's good to get over the line, but after a shaky start it is much more satisfying," Solanki said.

"I've only managed two hundreds since I've been here. I've had a lot of good starts, but I've not made use of those."

Coach Stephen Sandri said Solanki was clearly Essendon's best player.

"His ability to read the game in any situation is quite valuable," he said.

"He's a quality player and quality person."

Teen speedster Emmett Bronca made light work of a bewildered Melbourne outfit at Arden St, collecting 6-38 in a big North Melbourne victory.

Melbourne could muster only 127, a total the Kangaroos passed in 34 overs with the loss of just two wickets. Scott Porter's unbeaten 50 stood out for the Roos.

Prahran (9-175) reclaimed top spot on the ladder by thumping a dispirited Richmond (65) in a showing that saw just one Tiger manage to achieve double figures.

Skipper Bryce McGain (5-15) proved the Prahran destroyer, backing up the batting performances of Bushranger Jason Arnbarger (43) and Anthony McQuire (44).

Dandenong also struggled with the bat, setting a paltry target for Northcote of 81. Northcote (4-83) ran up an easy victory in less than 19 overs, with Tim Welsford leading the bowling demolition (5-15).

South Melbourne (2-176) registered its first points of the season, running down Footscray Victoria University's 175 without difficulty.

Michael Hansen scored 71 not out for the Swans.

St Kilda (200) relinquished the competition lead, going down to the Camberwell Magpies (6-253) at Junction Oval.

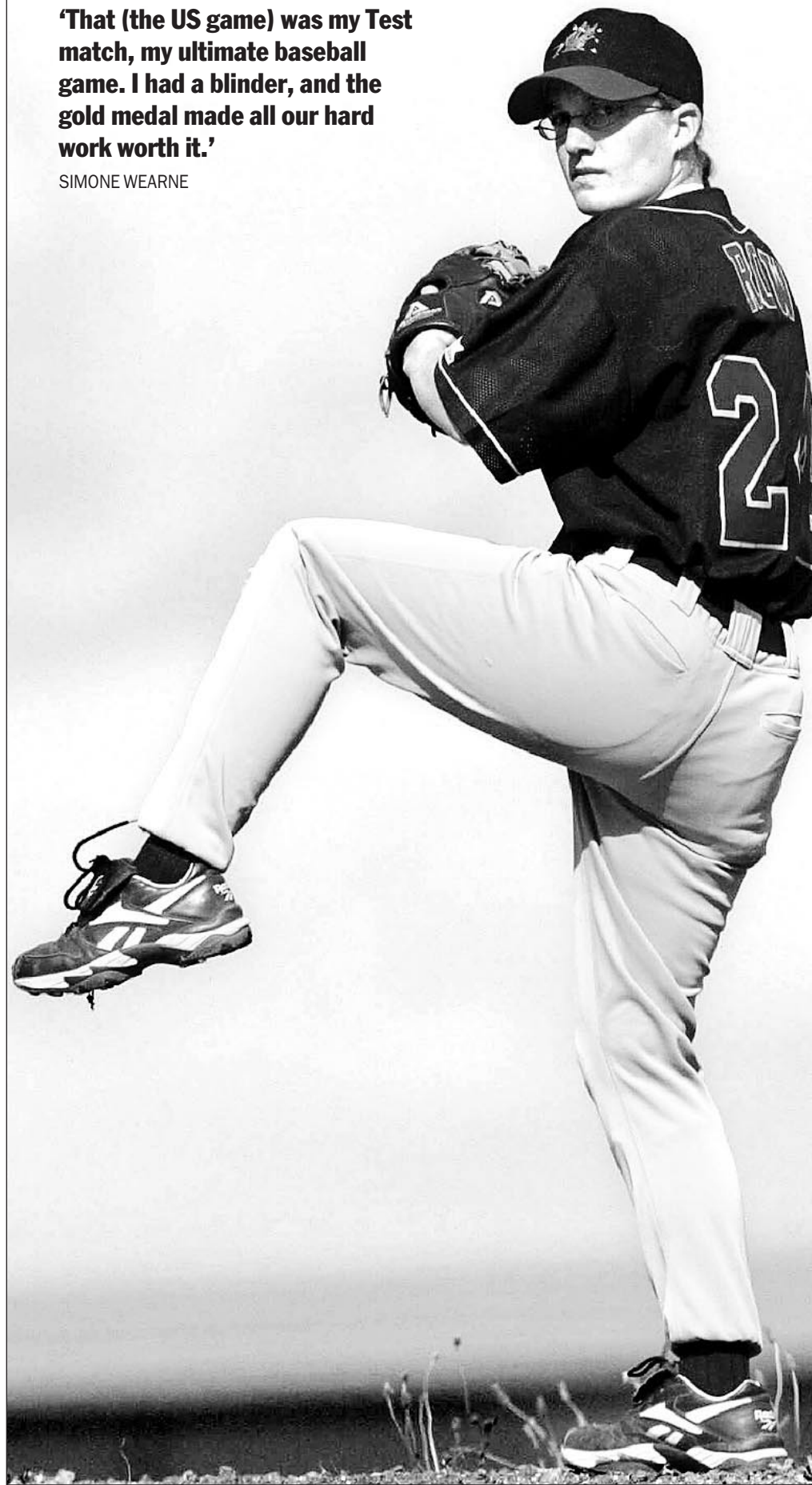
Tim O'Sullivan's 74 and Adrian Jones' 4-34 were highlights for the Saints, but Camberwell was a little too steady.

Carlton (9-224) eclipsed Geelong (8-223) at Princes Park in a tight match in which six players scored more than 40. Geelong captain Clinton Peake top-scored with 66.

In other matches, Matthew Mott contributed a captain's 84 not out to deliver Frankston Peninsula (4-206) victory over Ringwood (9-203), while Fitzroy Doncaster (8-215) just got home over Melbourne University (9-213).

**'That (the US game) was my Test match, my ultimate baseball game. I had a blinder, and the gold medal made all our hard work worth it.'**

SIMONE WEARNE



Throwing out a challenge: Aussie star Simone Wearne. Picture: GEORGE SALPIGIDIS



## Pitcher perfect, that's Wearne

By MICHELLE AINLEY

SIMONE Wearne has more in common with Shane Warne than initials and a similar surname.

The 22-year-old pitcher from Berwick is a "Sheik of Tweak" herself, but on the baseball diamond, not a cricket pitch.

Today she steps up to the plate in the green and gold strip as Australia entertains the US, Japan and Canada in a week-long tournament at the newly built Geelong Baseball Centre.

After winning the Women's World Series in Florida in September, Wearne and her teammates — half of them Victorians — are out to ram home their supremacy on home soil.

Wearne and catcher Sue Fairhurst were co-winners of the MVP in Florida. But for Wearne, widely regarded as the world's best female pitcher, the MVP came a distant second to the gold medal Australia won at the tournament.

Her stellar performances in Florida included pitching all seven innings of a must-win game against the US. Wearne reckoned she threw about 120 pitches in that game.

Australia beat the US 7-4 and went on to win the gold-medal match against Japan the next day, with their exhausted starting pitcher on the bench.

"That (the US game) was my Test match, my ultimate baseball game," said Wearne. "I had a blinder and the gold medal made all our hard work worth it. I'm addicted to baseball. I love it."

That's not surprising when you consider her sporting pedigree. Her mother and father, Anne and Michael, both played baseball, as did her grandfather, Ken. And her brother, Scott, is in his third year of a baseball scholarship at a US college.

The diminutive right-hander throws four pitches — fast ball, curve ball, slider and change-up — and her fastest recorded pitch is 114km/h.

She will be pitching to a stand-in catcher this week as regulars Fairhurst and Kelly Manzie both have to miss the tournament.

Four matches will be played from 11am each day this week. Finals are scheduled for Saturday, with the gold-medal game on Sunday from 7pm.

## Women must step up

AUSTRALIA faces the prospect of having to qualify for next year's women's water polo world championships, a far cry from the Olympic gold medal-winning exploits two years ago.

The Australian women ended their miserable World Cup campaign in Perth in sixth position, their worst finish in the competition's history.

The Australian line-up is vastly different to the one that beat the US in the Olympic final, with only three players remaining: captain Naomi Castle, Jo Fox and Taryn Woods. However, five members of the squad played in last year's junior world championships and coach Istvan Gorgenyi said they must step up.

"When we had to win, there was just a huge amount of pressure put on our young girls and they didn't know how to handle it," he said yesterday.

But Gorgenyi's greatest worry is the lack of funding for his team. He said the sport's top talent was opting to walk away from the pool because they could not afford to play.