

**GILDER CAPTURES NORTHWEST OPEN THE CORVALLIS** - *Oregonian, The (Portland, OR)* - September 21, 1987 - page D01,D05  
September 21, 1987 | *Oregonian, The (Portland, OR)* | BOB ROBINSON - of the Oregonian Staff | Page D01,D05

Bob **Gilder** found an inner calm just in time Sunday at Royal Oaks Country Club, and it earned him a \$25,000 check.> In a tournament finish that had more than its share of suspense, the Corvallis tour pro won a sudden-death playoff for the championship of the \$155,000 G.I. Joe's **Northwest Open** golf tournament.

**Gilder** finally prevailed over fellow tour player Lennie Clements and amateur Jim Strickland on the second playoff hole, making a win-clinching par at Royal Oaks' 191-yard 17th hole.

**Gilder** rallied late for an even-par 72 in the final round to finish at 2-under 214 for 54 holes over the taxing 6,674-yard layout. Clements closed with a 71 and Strickland with a 73 to match him.

Former Oregonian Dave Glenz came next with a 73 and 216 after holding the lead briefly on the final nine.

“It's a thrill and it means a lot to me to win this one,” said **Gilder**, who also was tournament host of the expanded regional event.

That **Gilder** and Strickland even made it into the playoff bordered on the miraculous.

First, Strickland, the 20-year-old Arizona State University junior, holed a curling 40-foot birdie putt at the 418-yard 18th to pull into the deadlock with Clements, who already was in the clubhouse. Then **Gilder**, after shaking Strickland's hand, canned an 18-footer for par that made it a three-way tie.

“When that putt went in at 18, it was the most emotion I've ever felt in golf,” said Strickland, winner of the Sunriver Oregon Open earlier this year.

Of his 18-footer, **Gilder** said: “All you can do on a putt like that is try to make your best stroke and hope.”

In the playoff, with a crowd of about 4,000 looking on, all three players parred the first hole, Royal Oaks' 366-yard 10th. Clements narrowly missed hitting the jackpot there when his 10-foot birdie putt died on the lip of the cup.

Then came the 17th, the club's eighth in normal play and a hole that was Strickland's nemesis. He made a double-bogey there in the second round and a bogey the first time he played it Sunday.

Strickland hooked his tee shot into rough, pitched on and failed on a 22-foot par putt.

Clements missed the green to the right, while **Gilder** hit the putting surface but 65 feet from the cup. After Clements chipped to within four feet, **Gilder** lagged a foot away and tapped in for his par.

That left it to Clements to keep the playoff alive. He couldn't do it, running his par putt over the left lip.

“I can't give Bob enough credit for the putt he made at 18,” Clements said. “He simply took the (low pro's) check right out of my hands.”

The dramatic windup followed a round with dozens of ebbs and flows. Second-round leader Chris Mitchell quickly exited from contention by starting his round with a bogey and double-bogey. He three-putted the first green and four-putted the second, eventually shooting an 82.

**Gilder** got to 4-under par and into the lead with birdies at the second and fourth holes but then staggered all the way back to 1-over with a series of unfortunate visits into the course's many trees.

Strickland also wallowed on the front nine and seemed out of the title fight, especially when Glenz, who grew up in Coquille, birdied the 493-yard 11th hole to move to 4-under.

That's when things turned eerie. Glenz topped his drive at the 413-yard 12th and made a string of three bogeys that dropped him back.

Moments later, **Gilder** and Strickland, playing in the same threesome, seemed to find second winds. Both birdied three straight holes, starting with the 146-yard 14th, and climbed into a tie with the steady Clements who was in the group ahead.

“I made about a four-footer for my birdie at the 14th and, after that, I had a calm on my putts that I just hadn't had before,” **Gilder** said. “It might have been because I saw a leader board while I was playing the 13th and saw that I still had a chance. I had thought I was dead.”

All **Gilder** did was one-putt the last six greens of regulation play, including the 18-footer at the 18th after he blasted from a bunker. It was a spectacular accomplishment on greens as slick as those played in national championships on the tour.

“It could have gone a lot of ways out there today,” **Gilder** said. But he had made it go his way.