

KENNEWICK - Have you ever noticed the happy, wide-eyed look on the faces of people right after they step off a wild roller coaster ride at an amusement park?

Then you know the kind of smile that Rod **Marcum** wore after he won the 1988 Sandvik/Washington **State Open** championship yesterday.

Marcum's final-round, 1-over-par 73 at **Meadow** Springs Country Club mussed his hair, made him sweat and gave him a three-day total of 215, a stroke under par and one shot better than runner-up Jim Blair.

Rick Acton of Seattle was third, two strokes behind Blair, with 218.

“After 10 holes, I thought I had it in the bag,” said **Marcum**, who was the tournament leader after two rounds. The 29-year-old professional from Warden Golf Club near Othello picked up \$10,000 for the victory.

“I started thinking about what I was going to say to the press, and waving to the crowd,” said **Marcum**. “I had a three-shot lead and I started to relax. Started counting my eggs.

“But, I made three up-and-downs for pars on Nos. 13, 14 and 15.

That saved it for me.”

Those pars knocked the momentum from the sails of challenger Doug Doxsie, who was paired with **Marcum** for yesterday's round.

Doxsie, an assistant pro at Seattle's Broadmoor, briefly took the lead after back-to-bask birdies on Nos. 3 and 4. But one hole later, **Marcum** reclaimed the lead with a bird of his own and a Doxsie bogey.

Putting problems and a couple of pulled shots during the final nine holes sandbagged Doxsie's chances of winning.

Doxsie missed birdie and par putts on Nos. 10, 12, 14, 15 and 16 that hit the edge of the cup, hopped over the hole, burned the rim, or lipped out.

“I just had one of those days where nothing dropped,” said Doxsie, 26. “But the missed putts didn't hurt as much as hitting the ball in hazards on No. 8 and No. 16.”

Doxsie, who took a double bogey on the par-3, No. 8 and a bogey on No. 16, finished at 219, tied with Mike Davis of Portland and Harlan Stevenson of Twin Lakes Village.

Blair, who had a closing round of 70 (2-under), was 1-under for the tournament when he stepped on the 18th tee.

“Basically, I choked,” said Blair, who is the pro at a Park City, Utah, course that is still under construction. “I hit a poor drive and second shot, and finished with a bogey.”

Acton was another player who felt he could have won.

The 1979 Washington **State Open** titlist carded a 1-over 73 yesterday, but was undone by double bogey on the par-3 8th hole.

Acton said he lost his composure during a stoppage in play while playing partner Jeff Bloom waited for an official's ruling.

``I three-putted No. 8, and I let that upset me on the next hole, where I three-putted again," said Acton, who also was bothered by broken dental work and a flight back to Seattle between the second and third rounds.

``I was tired today, that's why I used a cart, and my medication started wearing off near the end of the front side.

``But **Marcum** played very well today and in the earlier rounds."

Marcum, a Richland native, was the clear favorite of the large, vocal gallery that followed the second-round leaders throughout yesterday's round.

Shouts of ``Give'em hell, Dink (his nickname bestowed by his late father)," and ``Do it, Rod" erupted from the sun-splashed gallery on the hilly, 6,923-yard layout whenever **Marcum** hit the ball well or holed a putt.

``I felt like I was playing all of the Tri-Cities today," said Doxsie, who is a close friend of **Marcum**'s. They met when **Marcum** was an assistant at Tacoma's Fircrest while Doxsie was a member of the University of Puget Sound's team.

``I didn't mind the gallery at all," said Doxsie. ``If I could not win, I wanted Rod to take it."

Marcum said the pressure of trying to please his hometown fans helped rather than hurt.

``A crowd makes you concentrate more, you don't have time to think about your last shot. Besides, I'm usually playing so badly, no one is watching me," said **Marcum**, who said he made winning a Northwest major a goal two years ago. ``This is just great. I can't think of a better place to win.

``I know this isn't the U.S. **Open**, but this (title) sure means a lot to me."

Marcum, who prepared for the second and third rounds by having a few beers with friends, said he has most of prize money spent already.

``I'm going to put a lot (of the prize money) into merchandise for (the pro shop at) my course," he said. ``The owner, Dan Thomas, has really done a lot for me.

``And I'm going to spend about \$5,000 tonight buying beers for my friends."

NOTES: Fircrest pro Glenn Malm tied the competitive course record with a 6-under 66 yesterday. . . . Happiest moment by a non-winner - tournament organizers, who were saved further embarrassment when the champion's trophy arrived before the start of the final round.

Seattle's Rick Acton brought it to town on his flight from Seattle yesterday morning. Acton went back to the Puget Sound Area after Wednesday's second round to supervise a field day at Sahalee. . . .

Saddest story of the tourney - Portland's Walt Porterfield Jr., who was stranded at the course by friends who didn't wait for him to finish play and drove back to Oregon without him. The friends dropped off Porterfield's clothing, but forgot to leave his street shoes. So, he sat shoeless while waiting for a ride to the airport. If that wasn't enough misery, Porterfield lost \$175 of prize money when he was given a penalty stroke for signing an incorrect scorecard. ``I kind of wonder if I should get on a plane or not," said Porterfield.. . . **Meadow** Springs will be the site of the next three Washington **State** Opens.