

## Heather Wilbur (1976-2003)



*“I believe golf, steeped with tradition and excellence, is a game which really tests character. Every golfer yearns for that chance to have the perfect game, to shine in the presence of one’s fellow competitors and to master the golf course. It is my life’s work to meet this challenge.”*

Taken from the introduction Heather wrote as part of her plan to become a Professional Golfer

The goal of the Heather Wilbur Memorial Scholarship is to help other young golfers with similar character to follow their dreams.

Heather started golfing at seven years of age and quickly learned to love the game and worked harder at learning the game than most golfers her age. She made her first junior team in 1990 at age 14 and there was no stopping her after that; she qualified for the next five teams and in 1995 won the New Brunswick Junior Championship and her first Amateur title while still 18 years old.

Heather continued to dominate Amateur Ladies Golf in New Brunswick until 1998 before turning Pro in January 1999. Heather won four NB Amateur Titles and three Nova Scotia Amateur titles in four years. All the time working a bit at the golf club, going to school and practicing and playing golf every chance she could. She genuinely loved the game; she loved Country Meadows and the friends she made golfing.

Heather’s dream was to become an LPGA player, working tirelessly on her game and showing great improvement, she quietly went about her business following her dream. When she did turn pro the members at Country Meadows and golfers around New Brunswick rallied to fundraise so that she could go to Qualifying School in Venice Florida for the Futures Tour. She

qualified on her first attempt and headed back to Moncton to train for the upcoming season and to thank her many supporters. She was well on her way to obtaining her goal.

Heather was a member of the Futures Tour, which is the developmental tour for women around the world competing for exemption status on the LPGA from 2000 to 2002.

In 2000 she jumped into the Tour’s top 30 after only five events. Her best finish was a tie for third at the 2000 American General Futures Classic in Texas.

Heather had a hole in one at an event in Texas, and with the thoughtful spirit that Heather always possessed, she gave the framed golf ball and scorecard to Doug Sullivan her coach and friend. It has always had a special place in the Country Meadows clubhouse.



*Doug & Heather 2002*

Heather qualified for the 2001 US Women’s Open after winning the Pittsburgh qualifier by a two-stroke margin. She would play alongside her golfing idols at Pine Needles Lodge and Golf Club, North Carolina. She had made it to the LPGA’s most coveted tournament and was the first New Brunswick female golfer to achieve this goal.

While competing across North America Heather always called her family and friends from the road to let them know how she was doing. She often wanted to know more about what others were up to rather than discuss her own accomplishments. Heather was never one to talk about herself, always being very humble. This was noticed not only by her New Brunswick friends; one of the friends Heather made on tour described it this way, “Heather always put everybody ahead of herself, sometimes to her own detriment.”

The Futures Tour – while knowing Heather for only a few short years - established the Heather Wilbur Spirit Award in 2003. This player award, which is voted on by Futures Tour members

each year, is awarded to the player who best exemplifies dedication, courage, perseverance, love of the game and spirit toward achieving goals as a professional golfer. Heather was named by the tour as the first recipient.

During the Fall of 2002, after returning from a tournament in Mexico, she was diagnosed with Acute Myelogenic Leukemia (AML). While battling the illness, Doug Sullivan, her life-long coach, and Heather discussed creating a scholarship fund that would help other young golfers achieve their dreams. The funds that were raised to support Heather on Tour from earlier tournament scrambles would be transferred to a scholarship fund in her name that would continue to encourage young golfers. The scholarship committee decided it would also be very important to reward students who exemplified good character and scholastic ability along with their interest in the game.

All Heather's friends have fond memories of her on and off the golf course. Her work ethic, strong character and ability to put others before herself are some of her genuine qualities that made her so easy to love and look up to.

### Heather's Junior and Amateur Career Highlights

**1987** (age eleven) Won UCT Atlantic; placed 5<sup>th</sup> at North American UCT Championships in Chicago

**1988** repeated at UCT Atlantic; placed 4<sup>th</sup> at NA UCT in Ohio

**1990** NB Midget Champion, NB Junior team member for the first time at age 14

**1994** Member of NB team who won the Canadian Team Championship and finished 19<sup>th</sup> overall at Canadian Junior

**1995** Won NB Junior, Amateur, and Ladies Player of the Year

**1996** NS Amateur Champion, NB Mixed Champion, NB Player of the Year.

**1997** NB and NS Amateur Champion, NB Mixed Champion, NB Female athlete of the Year. NB Ladies team finished third at Nationals. NB Player of the year. Finished ninth overall at DuMaurier Series; final third among amateurs

**1998** NB and NS Amateur Champ, Low Amateur at DuMaurier Series Atlantic event; 16<sup>th</sup> overall.

### Heathers Professional Stats:

- Turned Pro January 1999
- Placed 14th at the 1999 du Maurier Series, CPGA Ladies Tour.
- Finished fifth at the 1999 FUTURES Tour Qualifying Tournament.
- Qualified and competed in the 2001 U.S. Women's Open Championship.

### Futures Tour stats:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>Best Finish</u>	<u>Top 10</u>	<u>Cuts Made</u>
2000	20	T3	2	15
2001	18	T7	2	16
2002	17	T8	1	11



2007 Scholarship Recipient



2008 Scholarship Recipient