

## STACY PRAMMANASUDH: LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD By LISA D. MICKEY

With her first full LPGA season now a part of her impressive start, Stacy Prammanasudh, is already looking ahead to where her professional golf career will take her. If this year looks anything like last year, "Stacy P," as she's called by most, may accomplish some of her goals in only her second full season on the LPGA Tour.

As a full member of the LPGA Tour in 2004, Prammanasudh completed her first full LPGA season ranked 31<sup>st</sup> on the LPGA's Money List with earnings of \$381,333. She posted four top-10 finishes last year and her best finish came at the Franklin American Mortgage Championship in Franklin, Tenn., where she finished third. She currently is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the LPGA's Solheim Cup point standings. The 12-player team will be announced late this summer, with the 2005 Solheim Cup set for Sept. 9-11.

A native of Enid, Okla., Prammanasudh launched her professional career on the FUTURES Golf Tour in 2003. She finished first on the Tour's Money List that year and was the FUTURES Tour's 2003 Player of the Year with two wins and a total of 11 top-10 finishes in 14 events.

The former University of Tulsa All-American earned her 2004 exempt LPGA Tour card by finishing in the top five on the FUTURES Tour in 2003. She was a non-exempt member of the LPGA Tour in 2003, but she elected to compete on the FUTURES Tour in the attempt to gain fully exempt LPGA Tour status.

Here is what Prammanasudh (called "Stacy P" by most) had to say about her first full season on the LPGA Tour:

**FUTURES Tour** - You just completed your first full year on the LPGA Tour, finishing 31<sup>st</sup> on the LPGA's Money List. Did you think your transition from the FUTURES Tour to the LPGA Tour would be this smooth?

**Stacy P.** - No. It helped that I started off the 2004 season so well. I finished fourth in the first tournament in Tucson, Ariz., tied for 13<sup>th</sup> at the Kraft Nabisco Championship, tied for sixth in Las Vegas and finished third in Tennessee. That got me going. It would have made for a really long season if I hadn't started out like that. I played well for 12 weeks and didn't miss a cut until the 13<sup>th</sup> event. I think I subconsciously talked myself into poor play and I missed three more cuts after that. It was like I was waiting for something bad to happen. You need to know what you're capable of doing, of how well you're capable of playing. You certainly can't listen to others.

**FT** - So, was 2004 easy?

**Stacy P.** - It was easier than I expected. Time goes by so fast when you're out there. It's really odd. I didn't feel like I played 25 tournaments.

**FT** - You had non-exempt LPGA Tour status in 2003 and yet you elected to play a full FUTURES Tour schedule. You could have Monday-qualified or tried for sponsor exemptions that year, but you stuck to your plan. Why?

**Stacy P.** - It was partially due to the fact that I wasn't getting into LPGA tournaments early in the season. I got tired of calling every week to see if I got in[to LPGA events]. I decided to play week to week on the FUTURES Tour and to focus on competing every week rather than on entering the LPGA Monday Qualifiers. I figured if you're able to get in a practice round on the weekend before the tournament, play the Monday Qualifier, then not compete again until Thursday's first round -- it just made for a longer week than normal. I didn't want to do that.

**FT** - How did your decision to play on the FUTURES Tour in 2003 benefit you the most on the LPGA Tour for the 2004 season?

**Stacy P.** - Probably just by getting used to traveling every week. When you're doing it for eight months, travel is a really different story. It's not like, 'Woo-hoo, road trip!' It's more about managing time, money and travel. Everybody took care of those details for you in college golf, but as a touring pro, you have to do it yourself. I still made a couple of mistakes in 2004 with hotel room reservations. I learned to plan well in advance.

**FT** - But isn't it an issue of pride with many players who earn non-exempt LPGA Tour status? Every player wants to compete on the LPGA Tour ASAP.

**Stacy P.** - It played out on its own for me. I was not getting into tournaments and I was in the top five among non-exempt players. Yeah, in your first year with LPGA status, you might be down the [non-exempt] list, but it's your dream and you finally got your LPGA card. But it's taxing mentally when you're wondering when or if you can get into LPGA events, and during that time, you're not developing your game at all. I made a choice to stay and play where I could compete every week and have a chance to earn my full [exempt] LPGA card by finishing in the top five with the FUTURES Tour. That's exactly what I did.

**FT** - Do you think 18 tournaments over a season is a better test of your ability than the LPGA Qualifying Tournament?

**Stacy P.** - Yes. Anybody can have a great week. It's really all about whether or not you can consistently play well over the long term.

**FT** - One year later, how much better are you as a player?

**Stacy P.** - Skill wise, it's hard to say. There's always room for improvement. The best players are consistent and their swings are reliable. For me, 2004 was about learning how I play when I'm playing well and when I'm not playing well. Nobody's going to play well all the time. [Laughter] I played two holes with Annika [Sorenstam] in howling wind in a practice round over in Korea. It was 40 degrees and blowing 50 mph. Annika quit. I played 18, but it was miserable.

**FT** - What were your biggest lessons in 2004?

**Stacy P.** - Being confident. You have to remain confident even when you're not playing that great. It plays a huge part, just to get through a round. Everybody on the LPGA has the ability to be there, but everything out there is a growing process. You have to work and go through different levels of competition. That first year, you're kind of half-oblivious, anyway. I think the next couple of years will really tell me something.

**FT** - What would you call the highlight of your 2004 season?

**Stacy P.** - Playing well enough to get into the [season-ending] ADT Championship in my first year. I finished 31<sup>st</sup> on the LPGA Money List, but I got into the field [in a tournament that has only the top 30 players]. Also, it was great having my dad [Lou Prammanasudh] on my bag. He caddied for me on the FUTURES Tour, but we had to drive and we never had any time alone. In 2004, I flew to some tournaments and we'd go our separate ways for a day or so. We got along better because of that. He told me he'd come back and caddie for me in 2005. I haven't found anybody I'm more comfortable with. I know my yardages. I know what clubs I hit. And if you can't read which way the wind is blowing, you probably shouldn't be out there. A caddie is a comfort factor. I do all of it myself and my dad keeps track of what I hit. We make a pretty good team.

**FT** - What are your goals for this new year?

**Stacy P.** - Making the U.S. Solheim Cup team. It's pretty much the pinnacle of women's golf to represent your country. There's no other tournament like it. Of course, I want to win on the LPGA Tour. I think I can do it, but I'm not going to get too wrapped up in trying to win. As long as I'm playing well, that will put me in a better position for that to happen.

**FT** - Do you think the FUTURES Tour was a necessary stepping-stone to the LPGA Tour?

**Stacy P.** - I think so. I proved to myself that I could compete on a consistent level. If I could excel there, it would take me to the next level.