

Puett comes back for fifth city golf title

By MELANIE HAUSER

Staff Writer

After winning the city women's golf title in 1961, 1962, 1963 and 1965 and the state public links title in 1966, Barbara Puett put her clubs in the closet and began raising a family.

For 10½ years, Puett didn't even pick up a club — she didn't have time with three children running around the house.

But now, the two oldest Puetts are in school, the youngest one — aged 21 months — has his own seat in the golf cart, and the mother is busy making a comeback.

After finishing second to Jan Rapp last year, Puett defeated former champion Martha Rader 2 and 1 Friday to win her fifth city title at the Morris Williams Municipal Golf Course — one more, she quickly adds, than her husband Roane has won.

"This tournament's been played under a lot of adversity for me," Puett said. "I've had to contend with babysitters, out-of-town relatives and my father-in-law died earlier in the week. I've been kidding people that if I hadn't had all this to contend with, I probably wouldn't have played well."

Puett's short game kept her in contention as

she and Rader were even going into the 14th hole.

"I birdied No. 14 and I feel like that was the turning point. It was the bright spot, then I won No. 15 with a par."

Then Puett grimaced as she added, "Even though I had a minor setback with a-four putt on the next hole, I have to say I played well. I didn't three-putt the whole tournament. Just that one four-putt."

Coming back into a sport that depends so much on timing and concentration wasn't easy for Puett. She had stayed physically fit during

her years off, playing tennis and walking, but there was more to it.

"I've played all the sports, and golf is the most difficult. It takes a lot longer to get back," Puett said. "I was lucky to make the finals last year. I think I had more confidence this year, because I'd played more. This year, every time I got on the tee, I knew I had a chance to win."

She also spent a little time with Harvey Penick, the pro at Austin Country Club. "Harvey helped me from the beginning and I went to him this summer again for help," Puett said. "He's got a way of telling you things simply that really helps."