

Elmcrest tames best golfers in state

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 10 October 2015 19:28 -



They held the 2015 boys state golf tournament at Elmcrest Country Club this year and the golf course won.

The best high school golfers in Iowa struggled with the winds, fast greens, narrow fairways and abundant trees at Elmcrest and nobody was able to break par for the 36-hole event.

Ben Epperly of West Des Moines Valley fired a 2-under-par 68 Saturday and won the championship at 2-over 142. Two golfers from Waukee tied for second at 8-over 148 and everybody else finished at least 10 shots over par.

Elmcrest is a tough course and the windy conditions made it even tougher, but nobody seemed to think the course was too tough for a high school meet.

"No, I don't think the course was too tough. I think it was just right," said Washington sophomore Alex Slattery, who had the best round among Metro golfers Saturday with a 74.

"We're the best players in the state and we had a tough time playing it, so I think it's just the right amount of challenge."

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Waukee captured the team championship for the fourth time in the last six years. The Linn-Mar Lions finished fifth, the Washington Warriors placed sixth and the Xavier Saints were 10th in the 12-team field.

Max Thrune of Linn-Mar tied for ninth at 14-over 154 to lead all Metro contestants.

The Washington Warriors enjoyed a strong year and were hopeful of competing for the title on a familiar course, but they finished 20 shots behind Waukee. Four of their best golfers shot in the 80's Saturday and nobody cracked the leaderboard. Slattery led the Warriors in 16th place, a full 16 shots behind the champion.

Washington Coach Denny Goettel was naturally disappointed with the results, but proud of his team's performances this season.

"I'm not disappointed with these guys at all," he said. "We've got a great bunch of guys, we've had a great season.

"In the nature of sports, you have to perform at the right time to win. We thought we had everything set up and were kind of on our home course here."

Five members of Washington's six-man team for the state tournament are members at Elmcrest, but it didn't help a bit. They never got on a roll and things went haywire for some very good athletes.

"When things are going well, you keep it going well," said Goettel. "When things are going tough, it's hard to get it straightened out."

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Washington had four underclassmen in the tournament and will return the nucleus of another good team in 2016.

"We didn't perform, and that's OK because what's important was that we all had fun," said Slattery. "We all enjoyed the chance to play at state. That's a big deal for a lot of our players and seniors to go out at a state championship.

"I think it makes our players hungry for next year," he said. "The fact that we didn't perform well and still had a great season is good news for next year. And I think next year we're going to have one of the best teams in the state and we'll be contending for a state title again."



TEAM STANDINGS

1. Waukee 616, 2. Ankeny Centennial 624, 3. Dowling 627, 4. West Des Moines Valley 627, 5. Linn-Mar 635, 6. Washington 636, 7. Johnston 643, 8. Davenport Assumption 651, 9. Des Moines Roosevelt 652, 10. Xavier 653, 11. Burlington 670, 12. Pleasant Valley 671.

TOP 10 INDIVIDUALS

Par 70

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1. Ben Epperly, WDM Valley 74-68=142
2. Tripp Kinney, Waukee 72-76=148
- Andrew O'Brien, Waukee 70-78=148
4. Willis Gaer, DM Roosevelt 76-74=150
5. Jace Mueller, Burlington 76-75=151
6. Max Gogel, Assumption 72-80=152
7. Corey Matthey, Sergeant Bluff 75-78=153
- Brandon Russell, Centennial 78-75=153
9. Max Thrune, Linn-Mar 74-80=154
- J.D. Goodfellow, IC West 77-77=154
- Chris Winkel, Centennial 75-79=154
- John Stroud, Dowling 79-75=154

LINN-MAR: t9. Max Thrune 74-80=154, t16. Jake Sevcik 75-83=158, t32. Brent Larson 80-83=163, t32. Jordan Bohannon 83-80=163, t41. Andrew Wood 80-85=165, t44. Jack Recker 81-85=166.

WASHINGTON: t16. Alex Slattery 84-74=158, t18. Joe Slattery 81-78=159, t32. Frank Lindwall 77-86=163, t32. Connor Neighbors 78-85=163, t37. Logan Bracey 84-80=164. t59. Jabe Gonder 83-88=171.

XAVIER: t24. Tyler Breitbach 83-77=160, t44. Mitch King 84-82=166, 48. Brody Robinson 82-85=167, t49. Luke Winker 77-91=168, t49. Sam Martin 85-83=168, t56. Matt Neumeyer 84-86=170.