

## Even claims Pribyl golf title

Written by Jim Ecker

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Like a lot of young golfers in Cedar Rapids, Jordan Even admires Zach Johnson and the way he manages a course.

Smart, steady, avoid trouble.

Even borrowed a page from Johnson this week and won the Pribyl Rotary junior championship with another solid round at Elmcrest Country Club Friday.

Even fired rounds this week of 75 at Gardner, 74 at the Cedar Rapids Country Club, 74 at Hunters Ridge and 74 again at Elmcrest to finish at 297 and clip Conner Koberg by two shots.

Johnson, a Masters champion and one of the leading money-winners in PGA history, won a Pribyl title when he was in high school.

"That's really cool. Knowing he came from this town, played here, won this," said Even, entering his senior year at Xavier. "I kind of follow him and see what he can do. Hopefully I'll make it there (to pro golf) some day. It's a good starting point."

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Even began the day with a six-stroke lead. Koberg fired a 70 to get in contention for the title, but Even's steady approach kept him in front.

"I hit the ball pretty solid," said Even. "My putting was good throughout the week. I tried to keep it down the middle.

"Like today, I hit only two drivers all day and that made it easy to play golf."

Even stuck primarily with his irons and put the ball on the greens. "And it worked out," he remarked.

Even felt comfortable with a six-shot lead heading into the final 18 hours, but knew there was work to to.

"I knew the guys below me had the ability to come back and go low," he said. "And going in late, I knew Conner (Koberg) was right there with me. I had to keep playing good golf.

"I wanted to keep playing golf like I've been playing. It was more I wanted to play 'smart' golf."

Even works at Elmcrest Country Club and gets to use the facilities, including the indoor facility during the winter when he's not pursuing another game he enjoys.

"I play hockey in the winter, which keeps me in shape," he said. "But once summer starts, I'm golfing every day."

Even plays hockey for the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders high school team. He's a left winger and scored goals this year, but said there's not much of a comparison between a golf shot and a hockey shot. "Not really," he remarked.

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Frank Lindwall of Cedar Rapids Washington placed fourth Friday with a 303.

The high school golf season begins next week, with Kennedy and Xavier expected to have strong teams again. Even has played against the Kennedy golfers for years and enjoys the rivalry.

"It seems like every year it gets stronger and stronger," he said. "It's going to be a fun year. It's going to be tough."

Even hopes to play golf in college, but is not sure where at this point.

Sam Martin finished fifth and Tanner Stewart was sixth.