

Kennedy golfers settle for 2nd (again)

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 12 October 2013 22:36 - Last Updated Saturday, 12 October 2013 22:46

A steady stream of well-wishers patted the Kennedy golfers on the back and congratulated them on another successful season Saturday after they finished second at the Class 4A state tournament for the third time in four years.

The Cougars were Mississippi Valley Conference champs, CRANDIC champs and district champs again this year, along with other nice honors, and the well-wishers reminded them that placing second in the state tournament is pretty darn good.

For their part, the Cougars smiled and thanked everyone for their kind remarks, but inside they were obviously a little disappointed. They finished second by one shot last year and honestly thought they could climb to the top this time at Hunters Ridge in Marion, a course they've played often and conquered before.

"Second isn't bad," said Conner Koberg, who placed fifth in the individual standings, "but obviously we worked all year to win this. To come up short again is just another motivation for us for next year.

"I think we're all going to try and get a lot better come next season and I think we'll be right there again."

All six of the Cougars who played in the state tournament are juniors, so they'll be among the favorites for the state title in 2014. All six of them helped Kennedy in the state tournament during the first round on Friday, during the second round Saturday or during both rounds.

Kennedy shot a 312 Saturday, five strokes better than its opening-round 317 on Friday, but the Cougars simply could not catch Ankeny Centennial. The Jaguars fired a 310 on Friday and came right back with another 310 on Saturday for a 36-hole total of 620, topping the Cougars by nine shots.

There was a big gap to Dowling Catholic in third place at 645, a full 16 shots behind Kennedy.

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The Xavier Saints placed 10th at 663 and the Washington Warriors finished 12th and last at 684.

Griffen Matthias of Ankeny Centennial and Matthew Walker of Ottumwa finished in a tie for first place after 36 holes at 3-over-par 147, and Matthias defeated Walker for the title in a one-hole playoff. Walker, who won the state title last year, had to settle for second place.

Kennedy Coach Mark Wilden has become accustomed to settling for second place. The Cougars have finished 2nd, 4th, 2nd and 2nd the last four years as one of the most consistent men's golf teams in Iowa.

Wilden jokingly compared the Cougars to the old Buffalo Bills, who had a string of runnerup finishes in the NFL under former Coe athlete/assistant coach Marv Levy, but he was proud of the guys who claimed the runnerup trophy this time.

"We did some great things this year," he said. "Second place is still pretty good. I know some people say it's 'first loser,' but I'll take second place every year.

"We had a great season and this does not tarnish it," he said. "We've had a great run. The neat thing is, we've done it over four years and different kids have all contributed.

"The kids are not satisfied," Wilden noted, "but we're pretty happy."

Davis Sutton, ranked No.1 in the state entering the tournament, finished sixth at 80-75=155 for Kennedy. Cole Murdock and Seth Nutt helped the Cougars on Friday with their scores, while Tanner Stewart and Ross Grekoff helped on Saturday.

"I think we all showed a lot of heart out there," said Koberg. "I think we really hung in there and

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gave it our best."

Ankeny Centennial is a brand-new school, but the six golfers who played for the Jaguars this weekend all played for Ankeny High School last year when the Hawks placed 10th at the state tournament and know their way around a golf course.

Frank Lindwall from Washington tied for 10th place with an 80-80=160 to gain all-state honors. Matt Junge led Xavier at 85-80=165.

CLASS 4A STATE GOLF

Team Standings

1. Ankeny Centennial 310-310=620, 2. Kennedy 317-312=629, 3. West Des Moines Valley 326-319=645, 4. Bettendorf 321-328=649, 5. Des Moines Roosevelt 320-330=650, 6. Dowling Catholic 329-322=651, 7. Southeast Polk 330-321=651, 8. Johnston 335-320=655, 9. Burlington 330-328=658, 10. Xavier 332-331=663, 11. Pleasant Valley 333-334=667, 12. Washington 334-350=684.

Top 10 Individuals

Par 72

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. *Griffen Matthias, Centennial | 72-75=147 |
| 2. Matthew Walker, Ottumwa | 75-72=147 |
| 3. Aaron Wirt, DM Roosevelt | 71-78=149 |
| 4. Andrew Huseman, Centennial | 74-77=151 |
| 5. Conner Koeborg, Kennedy | 75-77=152 |
| 6. Davis Sutton, Kennedy | 80-75=155 |
| 7. Jeff Swegle, WDM Valley | 78-78=156 |
| 8. Erron Vandemore, Pleasant Valley | 80-77=157 |
| Jake Blocher, SE Polk | 77-80=157 |
| 10. Frank Lindwall, Washington | 80-80=160 |

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Alex Pohlmann, Bettendorf	77-83=160
Mitch Elkin, Bettendorf	84-76=160
Sam DeBartolo, Dowling	80-80=160

* Won Playoff

Kennedy - Conner Koberg 75-77=152, Davis Sutton 80-75=155, Tanner Stewart 85-76=161, Cole Murdock 78-87=165, Ross Grekoff 87-84=171, Seth Nutt 84-91=175.

Xavier - Matt Junge 85-80=165, Kellen Gray 80-86=166, Jordan Even 85-83=168, Ben Sagers 82-87=169, John Ingwersen 91-82=173, Luke Winker 88-87=175.

Washington - Frank Lindwall 80-80=160, Dominic Rodriguez 85-84=169, Evan Jankwietz 83-92=175, Jake Patterson 86-94=180, Max Claassen 86-94=180, Joe Slattery 87-77=184.