



# Perfection

## Aaron's wins title

BY **JEFFERY SIMMONS**  
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Orel Hershiser would be jealous of the season Ceilee Gudat had in the girls 10-12 senior league.

Gudat went the entire season without allowing a run, including her best performance to date in the league championship game. Gudat led Aaron's Heat and Air to a 10-0 victory over Smile Doctors to take the tournament title.

The Aaron's Heat and Air ace was nearly spotless in the championship game, recording all 12 outs via strike-out.

Gudat retired 11 in a row before Gracie Randolph reached in the top of the fourth, only to see the game end with Gudat's 12th punchout.

"Ceilee worked hard all offseason. I knew she was going to be better this season because she sacrificed a lot of things to play the game," said Aaron Gudat, proud father and head coach of Aaron's Heat and Air. "This team just makes plays. Our offense was always going to put up runs. This team would make any coach look good."

Aaron's Heat and Air, which finished 11-0, didn't have similar struggles at the plate. The home team put up five runs in the first and added four more in the second to get in position to win by run rule.

Gudat led the game off by reaching on a double, getting pushed around the paths by Layla Walker's groundout. Emma Johnson followed with a base hit,

while Kaylee Skelenka drew a walk to get two runners in scoring position.

Makayla Cagle came through big with a two-out single on an 0-2 pitch, getting Skelenka around to make it 3-0 after Gudat and Johnson scored on passed balls.

Caitlin Washer and Leah Jones followed with singles of their own, bringing Gudat back to the plate with two outs and two on while ahead 4-0. Gudat pumped a shot into center-field, scoring Washer though Jones was tagged out at home to end the inning.

Walker started the second with a bang for Aaron's Heat and Air. The lanky righty cranked a 1-2 pitch to down the left-field line, sending a one-hopper off the fence. Walker was able to cruise around for an inside-the-park home run, pushing her team ahead 6-0.

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Jeffery Simmons photo  
**Aaron's Heat and Air pitcher Ceilee Gudat didn't allow a run all season while leading her team to a championship in the girls 10-12 league.**

# Dumping the camera for clubs

There are many rules in journalism – most of them I don't know. One I do know is to not make yourself part of the story.

Monday, I failed in my responsibilities.

Instead of spending my afternoon covering the illustrious Industrial Development Board golf tournament, I pulled out the clubs and teed it up myself. As one person told me later in the day, "a bad day golfing is better than a good day working."

He's probably never seen me play golf.

From the outset, I warned my teammates – former Ole Miss golfer (and our star player) Jennifer Gilliam, Doug Randolph and Michael Scott (not the one from 'The Office') – that covering sports doesn't equate to being good at sports. If they didn't believe me,



**SIMMONS SAYS**

**JEFFERY SIMMONS**

my first shot told the story.

We rode out to our starting spot, which doubles as one of the most menacing spots on the McMinnville Country Club course. The par-3, No. 17 is straight uphill, with the tee box sitting 170 yards (and almost 50 feet below) from the hole. With trees on either side, there's really nowhere to go but up.

Or in my case, straight right into the trees. The sound of my ball ping-ponging off trees resonated long enough for the realization to set in

that it was going to be a long day.

There were some highlights though.

One of the few times I had a good shot was on the par-5, No. 3, where I missed by just a few yards winning the longest drive contest. Thinking I was really feeling it by the time I got on the tee box at No. 4, I almost swung out of my shoes while pounding a drive down the middle.

Then Jennifer promptly hit a drive a few yards past mine, putting me back in my place.

Around the same time, I asked Michael about Dunder Mifflin, a joke he's probably heard 1,000 times. I laughed and started talking about our player rankings, where the tournament tries to seed the four-member groups by letter.

I was our designated D

player. For those familiar with the alphabet, you can probably guess where that ranked me on our team.

I asked Michael about our A player – who I had started calling "Dandy Don." He turned and asked me, "You mean Doug?" I was dumbfounded. When we stopped, I confirmed that yes, my teammate – who I had already played nine holes with – was in fact named Doug, not Don.

On top of being a below-average golfer, I was a below-average teammate too.

We finished the tournament 3-under, well out of the running for the championship (won at 9-under). But our team had fun and everybody hit a few shots to keep us coming back to the course in the future.

It's the best when you can turn a bad day golfing into a good day at work.



Jeffery Simmons photo  
**Former state champion and Ole Miss graduate Jennifer Gilliam was a much better golfer than the sports guy.**



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