

# SPORTS

## Boys golf starts with fifth place finish in scramble

By Mike Monahan

ARCOLA - A young Arcola/Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond boys golf team started its season Thursday at Danville's Harrison Park and hosted by Oakwood in a five-player scramble. The Knight Riders won it last year. It was a bit earlier this year as the meet began at 9 a.m. instead of 1 p.m. meaning the golf team left at 6:45 a.m.

Arcola finished in a tie for fifth place out of 17 with a 65. The Knight-Riders tied with Saint Joseph-Ogden and Urbana. St. Thomas More was first with a 58 followed by Bis-

mark-Henning-Rossiville-Alvin (62), Dwight (63) and Iroquois West (64).

Participating in Arcola were Canton Wesch, Hunter Grant, Jackson Miller, Kendal Schock and Kody Burdick.

Last season Arcola had an older group and had three compete in the Class 2A sectional including Wesch (a sophomore). Aaron Seegmiller and Braden Kauffman were also in the sectional and the two were among five boy seniors.

"The first couple of days have been really good," said Gisinger of practice that start-

ed last Monday.

The Knight Riders have a total of 13 boys and 11 girls on the roster, including nine underclassmen on the boys roster and seven girls that are underclassmen (freshmen or sophomores).

"If it is not one of the largest teams in co-op history then it is close," said Gisinger, who is assisted by Brad McGill of Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond. "Our numbers have grown."

A total of nine boys and five girls on the roster last season for a total of 14.

### Boys

"We have a lot of young kids and it is a little different group than last year when we had a lot of experience with Kauffman, Clay Seal and Seegmiller. We have a lot of kids that don't have that knowledge of the game."

Thursday, Aug. 10 Wesch was the No. 1 golfer, while Grant at two, Jackson Miller at three, Schrock at four and Burdick at five.

"Last year it was more just play, play, play and this year it is 8-10 guys go play and the other 14-16 work on these things one day," said Gisinger. "I think we will see a lot of improvement throughout the season."

Wesch said he has always put pressure on himself no matter what he is doing. So being No. 1 is not too bad.

"After I just focused on the fact I am just doing this for fun, like it is not a job for me and yes, there are all of these expectations on me, but somehow you have to block that out and focus on yourself and just get after it," said Wesch. "There is always going to be that pres-

sure, but I put pressure on myself already and nothing is going to beat that pressure. I am focusing this year on enjoying golf and just to live in the moment."

Wesch said he is working on being a leader especially with Burdick.

Gisinger said of the first three days, "We have been trying to get the guys that really want to compete for the top five spots on the course, playing competitive golf and then we took the best five guys of the first three days to Oakwood. We will rotate the 4-5-6 spot until we figure out who it is."

The main thing for the first three days was to get the new-by's and the freshmen and some of the people that had not played before to get the basics; how to chip and putt and how to keep score and the rules and then get the guys ready to go into a competitive mode."

The senior boys are Hunter Grant, Jackson Miller and Arick Stutzman. Grant along with Wesch, a sophomore, earned all-Lincoln Prairie Conference by shooting an 84 and 93 respectively. Logan Schrock, a sophomore, earned all-LPC honors last year, but is out for the season with a broken elbow.

"Logan Schrock played in the top six last year," said Gisinger. "He was probably going to be our two or three so that hurts our team but it gives someone else a chance to step up. Wesch was in our top three and maybe was second in average. Hunter Grant is back. Jackson Miller played last year and Max Rardin is back. He didn't play last year. He played football. He played golf as a freshman. We have a young in-

experienced squad. I think we will get a lot better."

Gisinger knows they won't be winning meets by a lopsided margin this year and he said "it will come down to the little things and we will be working that plus the team will be working on not wasting shots."

Gisinger said, "We are really going to lean hard on our leaders; Jackson Miller, Hunter Grant, and Canton Wesch"

Team goals will be a little bit different this year according to Wesch as Arcola won the conference meet by 77 strokes.

"Last year we had 3-4 guys that would be in the top three or four every tournament, but this year I still think we are going to win the conference, but it will definitely be close, especially with Sullivan. I have the expectation to win the conference as a team and I think we can get it done. You just have to tweak those minor mistakes and get it done that way."

Gisinger said, "It will be a different challenge for us coaches and as a team. "Our goal is still to win the LPC (won it four years straight). It is going to be a lot more difficult especially with Sullivan coming into the conference this year. They are always pretty good at golf. We still think we have the best team in the conference. I think we have the best player in the conference in Canton Wesch."

### Girls

Returning from last season are Avery Alexander and Lily Vanda both sophomores and Brooklyn Gingerich (sophomore) came on the team late last year.

The Knight Riders have eight new players.

"Lilly and Avery have some

experience playing matches. We can't take 25 kids on the golf course and keep them all active. There are different levels. Canton needs to work on things that some other kids don't need to work on yet."

The girls worked on chipping and putting Wednesday, Aug. 9. The freshmen learned about golf etiquette and rules.

"Avery Alexander played in the conference tournament," said Gisinger. "She is the only one who thought she was ready to play in an 18-hole match last year. That experience will help her this year. I think we have some girls, including freshmen Jaiden Miller and Megan Miller have some ability and talent. They have been around the game a little bit. I have really been impressed with Claire Seal, who has not played golf before, but she is extremely athletic. I remember watching her play on the basketball court last year against us and she is really competitive. All I told her was to keep her head down and be an athlete. She was hitting the ball pretty well. I think if she sticks with it by the end of the year she will be a pretty decent golfer for never having played before because she is so athletic. I think CC Davis has a nice swing. They all have potential, but golf is really hard. It is a hard game to get good at quick. Hopefully they stay patient with it."

I don't know if we will play a match for a few weeks with the girls. My goal is to have a few of them ready to play at the Tuscola Invitational. I would like to have at least two girls and maybe four ready to go compete in team events."

Seal and Brooklyn Matheny are the lone seniors on the squad.

### 2023 Arcola/Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond golf schedule

(All home meets are at the Kaskaskia Country Club and all meets are at 4 p.m. unless noted)

Thursday PARIS;  
Monday at Tuscola Invitational, 1 p.m.;  
Tuesday CLINTON and OKAW VALLEY;  
Aug. 24 at Moweaqua vs. Meridian;  
Aug. 28 at Tuscola vs. Fisher, Casey-Westfield/Martinsville;  
Aug. 29 at Casey vs. Casey-Westfield/Martinsville and Tri-County;  
Aug. 31 at Villa Grove vs. Villa Grove and Central A&M  
Sept. 8 at Blue Ridge Invitational, 8 a.m.;  
Sept. 11 at Okaw Valley (Eagle Creek Golf Course);  
Sept. 12 TUSCOLA;  
Sept. 13 TRI-COUNTY and DECATUR LSA;  
Sept. 15 at Mt. Zion Tournament, 1 p.m.;

Sept. 18 at Altamont vs. Altamont and Sullivan;  
Sept. 19 VILLA GROVE;  
Sept. 20 at Mattoon (Mattoon Country Club);  
Sept. 21 at Moweaqua Golf Course (hosted by Sullivan), 10 a.m.;  
Sept. 22 at Charleston, 1 p.m. (Stan Adkins Fall Classic);  
Sept. 27 Class 2A boys regional, TBA;  
Sept. 28 Class 2A girls regional, TBA;  
Oct. 2 Class 2A sectional boys and Class 1A girls;  
Oct. 6 and 7-boys Class 2A state at Weibring Golf Club, Normal; girls Class 1A girls state at Decatur's Red Trail Run

### 2023 Arcola/Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond boys roster

Coach: Greg Gisinger 3rd year 31-3; assistant coach: Brad McGill  
Freshmen: Kole Binder, Coye Grant, Kody Burdick, Cameron McGill, Landen Franklin  
Sophomores: Canton Wesch, Logan Schrock, Jack Miller  
Juniors: Kendal Schrock, Max Rardin  
Seniors: Hunter Grant, Jackson Miller, Arick Stutzman

### 2023 Arcola/Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond girls roster

Freshmen: Jaiden Miller, Megan Miller  
Sophomores: Lily Vanda, Avery Alexander, Jada Bontreger, Skyler Graham, Brooklyn Gingerich  
Juniors: Chloe Sadowski, CC Davis  
Seniors: Claire Seal, Brooklyn Matheny

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