

Edwardsville girls golf team, Alton's Bemis, move on to next step in post-season play

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – For all the success **Edwardsville's girls golf team** has had this season, there's one team the Tigers haven't been able to get by.

O'Fallon.

The Panthers managed to get past the Tigers once again Wednesday, this time in the Tigers' IHSA Class 2A girls golf regional tournament at the par-72, 5,170-yard West and North courses at Oak Brook Golf Club.

The Panthers shot a team 313 to win the tournament, with the Tigers taking second with 336 and Collinsville taking the final spot to advance as a team to next Tuesday's Springfield Sacred Heart-Griffin Sectional tournament at Illini Country Club. The Panthers' Emily Marrs took the day's medalist honors with a 2-over 74.

Among area golfers who advanced as individuals, Alton's Morgan Bemis moved on with a 13-over 85 and Granite City's Megan Keel turned in a 19-over 91 to advance; the top three teams and top 10 individuals who were on non-qualifying teams moved into the sectional.

Bemis, however, turned in the day's highlight when she eagled the par-5, 400-yard ninth hole. "I've eagled before and I've gotten a hole-in-one on my home executive course,"

Bemis said. “But an eagle on a par-5 feels so different because it's usually a three-shot hole. I smoked my drive down the fairway and coach (**Carey Cappell**) is like 'you're only 138 (yards) out – you're going for it'.

“I said OK, and I got up; I had something like a 20-foot putt, I said 'no problem – sink it', and I did. I was jumping up and down, I was so excited – that was the best feeling.”

Tiger coach Abby Comerford was philosophic after the Tigers' second-place finish. “O'Fallon's beat us all year,” Comerford said. “Coming into the regional, we tried our best and O'Fallon put up some awesome scores; they're a fantastic team. Coming in second behind them, we did really well.

“**Addy (Zeller**, who led the Tigers with a 5-over 77) has been playing well all season, so her putting up a 77 after coming off (the front nine) with a 40, she got it together and played well (on the back nine). We have three returning (players) from last year, so it's a case that the girls know a little about how it works; we're looking forward to it.”

“It started off windy and cloudy, but it got nicer as we went on,” Zeller said of the conditions on the day. “Overall, I played OK; my front nine wasn't the best, but you can't help but think you could have shot lower. I'm happy (with her individual third-place finish on the day).”

“I think we were a little bit nervous out there to start the day,” **Cappell** said of her Redbirds, “but overall, improved from Thursday mentally, and that's what we were working on; all week, we were working on (their mental approach). I feel that was a huge step today.

“The greens were moving quick today, which plays to our benefit, since we're used to Rolling Hills (the Redbirds' home course in Godfrey) – they're usually really quick and pretty firm; that was towards our advantage.”

“We just played very average, except for my No. 1 (Keel),” said Warrior coach Karen Greenwald. “She started out very slow; she shot a 50 on her front nine (the Warriors began play on the No. 10 tee on the North course), but she came back and had some pars on (the GCHS back nine).

“We started off the season pretty good, but my No. 2 (Ashley Richey) had a shoulder injury; she was out two-and-a-half weeks and then with a back (problem) for two matches and then had some other health issues, so she was done for the season. I was missing my No. 2 player and then Phoenix Derner had a wrist injury and she was out about three weeks in the middle of the season. Some younger girls got some experience playing and they stepped up, so I'm excited for next year.”

For the Tigers, Zeller led the way; she was joined by Kayla Weinacht's 7-over 79, Paige Hamel's 8-over 80 and Sydney Sahuri's 16-over 88 in the Tigers' score; Jessica Benson had a 18-over 90 and Carlie VanPatten a 23-over 95. The Redbirds who joined Bemis' 91 in the team score included Annie Maynard's 25-over 97, Paige Wittman's 28-over 100 and Jenna Fleming's 30-over 102. For the Warriors, Derner had a 28-over 100, Emma Sturdivant had a 48-over 120 and Brittnee Patillio had a 54-over 126.

