

Shells golfer Sharpmack heading to Eastern Illinois

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
November 9 2017 2:25 PM



ROXANA – Bailey Sharpmack only began playing golf at the start of her high school days at Roxana High in the fall of 2014.

Now she'll be playing golf for the women's team at Eastern Illinois next fall.

Sharpmack signed a letter of intent to join the Panther program next year in a ceremony at RHS' Larry Milazzo Gym; EIU is a member of the Ohio Valley Conference with

schools such as Southeast Missouri State, Eastern Kentucky, Austin Peay, Murray State and Tennessee State.

“I'm really excited to sign (with EIU) today,” Sharpmack said. “Eastern's such a great school and I'm really excited to be a part of their golf team.”

One of Sharpmack's friends is on the women's golf team at EIU and it helped draw Sharpmack to Charleston. “One of my friends is actually on the golf team at Eastern and she told me how much she loved it,” Sharpmack said. “I kept my options open and they were really patient with me while I looked around.

“Eastern was my right fit and a place that felt like home.”

Sharpmack finished in a group tied for 50th at this year's IHSA Class 1A girls tournament at Red Tail Run Golf Course in Decatur, finishing with a two-day total of 32-over 176; she qualified as an individual for the state tournament with a 15-over 87 at the Marquette Catholic Sectional at Spencer T. Olin Golf Course in Alton and medaled several times over the course of the regular season.

Sharpmack took up golf at the start of her freshman year at Roxana on the suggestion of a friend of hers. “One of my friends told me that I should play golf because I wasn't playing any other sport at the time,” Sharpmack recalled, “so I picked it up; I ended up falling in love with the game – I just improved from there.”

“We're really, really happy about this; it's been a long process,” said Bailey's dad, Glen Sharpmack. “It started early in the summer and as the summer went on, more colleges showed up to watch her; the interest grew and grew and grew. We took our time, we told Bailey to take her time and not to jump into anything, but Eastern was always really, really important to her.

“They've got a great education program and she's wanting to be a teacher; everything just fell into place.”

The best thing about Sharpmack heading just 2.5 hours away from Roxana is that EIU is far enough away from home that she will get some separation, but not so far away that it won't be a long drive home. “We can get to her in two hours but it feels far enough away where she can get some separation and do her own thing as well,” Glen Sharpmack said. “It's a huge relief (that the process of choosing a school is over); she really wanted to get this done in the early signing period and was wanting to get something finalized by (the state tournament) so she wouldn't have that over her head.

“It was almost done at state; we thought we had our answers there, and Coach (Mike) Moncel always said there was a spot for her; he's been very patient and said there was always going to be a spot for her there.”

Sharpmack plans on majoring in elementary education at Eastern. “I really love kids; I love working with kids,” Sharpmack said of why she decided to major in elementary education, “like at my church and out of school and volunteering and stuff; it felt like the right thing for me.”