

Alton Girls Golf Team Finishes Fourth In Season Opening Scramble Event, Will Take 2020 Season One Day At A Time

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GODFREY - The Alton girls golf team had a very good showing in their season-opening event, coming in fourth in their Fall Scramble/Shamble Kickoff with a team score of 242 at Rolling Hills Golf Course in Godfrey Saturday afternoon.

Edwardsville and O'Fallon tied for first in the event, both teams posting a 207, with Belleville East in third at 234, Collinsville coming in fifth with a score of 249 and Highland came in sixth with a 283.

The tournament was the first high school sporting event played in the Metro-East area since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, and Redbird coach Carey Cappel was very happy to host the tournament and get the season underway.

"Yeah, it was great that, number one, we're able to get out and play and compete," Cappel said, "and number two, we're happy the weather held off, so we're just thrilled to be out here playing."

And the fact that the Redbirds were able to hold the tournament is a feather in everyone's cap as well, despite the restrictions imposed by the Illinois High School Association, among other factors that could come into play later on in the season.

"Yeah, I mean, again, we were just happy to get out here," Cappel said. "Obviously, it was a little bit warm today, and uncomfortable. We're wearing the masks for everyone's safety, trying to social distance. So we're doing everything we can to hopefully continue to have a season this year."

The fact that the Redbirds, as well as the other teams in the state, are having their season is a win for everyone, and Cappel and her team will be playing with a simple motto in 2020.

"Our motto this year is just 'play like there's no tomorrow,' " Cappel said, "so we're taking it one day at a time, and we're just hoping to be able to practice on Monday, compete on Tuesday of next week, and we're not looking much farther than that at this point."

Cappel thought that her team had a good showing, with everything that the players have learned through practice being shown on the course during the meet.

"We were really pleased with what we saw today," Cappel said. "The girls are transferring everything we're working on in practice over to play. They're working really hard, they were feeding off each other really well today. So I couldn't ask for a better turnout from today's tournament."

The low score for the Redbirds were the team of seniors Natalie Messinger and Riley Kenney, who shot a one-under par 70. But Cappel felt that each of her pairs played well throughout.

"You know, I haven't even looked at the scores yet," Cappel said. "I don't know who shot low. We saw really great things from every girl individually. Our short game looked pretty good today. I know that Riley Kenney was hitting it well off the tee, Natalie was really consistent. Olivia Boyd and Na'iah Simmons were feeding off each other really well today, and then, Josie (Giertz) and Sam (Eales) finishing up for us. So they all played fantastic."

As far as team goals for the new season, Cappel left it up to her players to set their own goals, and are very flexible as the season progresses.

"I let them set their own goals, and those goals might change from day to day, that they're going to work on when they come out and work on the range before a tournament, at practice," Cappel said. "Our goal, really, is, number one, just have fun, because we don't know how much of a season we're going to have. And obviously, we want to improve from one day to the next. So we're not really setting specific goals, except just day by day. For example, Monday, we're really going to try to improve our lag putts and our long irons off the range."

But the fact that the Redbirds will be able to have their season is very good, and the team will go out and take things one day at a time.

"We're just coming out day by day," Cappel said, "and we're just looking to have fun, and enjoy."



[Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.](#)