



Alton's Natalie Messinger Has Excellent First Outing With Kenney At Redbirds Golf Scramble

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GODFREY - Alton senior golfer Natalie Messinger teamed up with fellow senior Riley Kenney to shoot a one-under par 70 to finish among the leaders at the Alton Scramble

/Shamble Kickoff tournament Saturday afternoon at Rolling Hills Golf Course as the Redbirds came in fourth place, shooting a team score of 242 for the event.

It was the first high school sporting event in five months, with the COVID-19 pandemic hitting Illinois very hard, and Messinger felt that she and her partner played very well indeed.

"We played well," Messinger said during an interview after finishing her round. "I played with Riley Kenney, another senior on the team, and we played really well. Shot a one-under today. We're never satisfied, but I think we played really well."

Messinger kept her approach going into the tournament simple and easy.

"Just to come out here and have fun," Messinger said, "and just play golf."

With the tournament being the first high school sporting event since mid-March, Messinger is very happy that the Redbirds will be able to play their season after all.

"Yeah, we were all really excited to hear that we could still have our season, for sure," Messinger said.

And now that the season's underway, and given all of its uncertainty, Messinger is taking the very simple and easy approach, along with her teammates.

"Actually, our quote is 'play like there's no tomorrow,'" Messinger said. "And I completely play by that. Take every shot, enjoy every shot, live in the moment, especially, because we don't know if we're going to be able to play in our next event. So, never take anything for granted."

Messinger feels that her consistency is her strong suit, hitting the greens in regulation.

"I would say, probably, consistency," Messinger said. "I'm able to stay in the fairways and hit greens."

Messinger's goals for the new season are also very simple.

"Be better than last season," Messinger said with a smile. "Always improve. Learn something every day."

Messinger's goals for her team are also consistent with the mantra of one day at a time.

"For the Redbirds, our goal as a team is just, again, to come out here and have fun," Messinger said, "and be together and never take anything for granted. Continue to improve as a team."

Messinger is also making goals for a possible IHSA postseason series, should things go right.

"I have a lot of goals in postseason," Messinger said.

If there's no postseason, a change to play for the Southwestern Conference title is also a strong possibility.

"I'm looking forward to that," Messinger said, "and competing in that."

But the chance to play the 2020 season after all is the most important thing for both Messinger and her teammates.