

# **O'Keefe Shoots 77, Roderfeld 78, To Finish In Top Ten As Explorers Place Third At Hickory Stick Invitational**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
August 18 2020 1:54 PM



WOOD RIVER - Sophomore Aiden O'Keefe shot a four-over-par 77 to finish in a fifth-place tie, while senior William Roderfeld carded a five-over-par 78 to finish tied for seventh as Marquette Catholic came in third place at the East Alton-Wood River Hickory Stick Invitational, held Monday at the Belk Park Golf Course in Wood River.

Mascoutah won the tournament with a team score of 312, while Triad was second with a 319, the Explorers shot a 334 to come in third, 12 shots ahead of fourth place Jersey, who had a 346. Fifth place was shared by both the host Oilers and Civic Memorial, who both had a 355, Granite City was seventh at 361, Father McGivney Catholic was eighth at 367, Edwardsville came in ninth at 369, and Metro-East Lutheran was 10th with a 434.

The performance for Marquette was what head coach Ryan Geisler was expecting for the first tournament of the season.

"Honestly, I pretty much thought that we were spot on for our first tournament of the season," Geisler said. "But when we get to the meat of the mid-season, when we're in the thick of things, I see us being closer to a mid-320s team. We shot 334 today, so we've got a little work to do, but it's not really far off from the numbers for today."

But seeing the Explorers being able to go out and compete in their first tournament of a season filled with uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic was very gratifying for both the players and for Geisler.

"With all the uncertainty from if we were going to have a season, it was good for the kids to get out and compete today," Geisler said, "even with the conditions of wearing masks and social distancing. The spirits were really high, the kids really needed to get out and compete, and I was really happy to see that. And Belk Park was in fantastic shape, and that made the day a lot better as well."

Besides O'Keefe and Roderfeld, Grant Heinz shot an 85, Andrew Julian carded a 94, and William Schwartz shot an even 100 for the Explorers. All five golfers performed well for the Explorers.

"Things went well," Geisler said. "Our numbers one and two shot 77 and 78, so there's not too much room to improve there. Our numbers three, four and five played well, and I know they're working hard to improve."

Geisler is very hopeful of getting to play a full season, but also knows about the uncertainty of what may lie ahead, due to the pandemic.

"I just hope we get to finish the season," Geisler said. "It's good to get the kids back in and out before things start getting crazy."

The Explorers are set to play in the Alton Tee Off Classic Tuesday at Spencer T. Olin Golf Course at Gordon Moore Park, then play in the Madison County tournament Thursday at Belk Park. And Geisler is very happy with the way the season started for his team.

"I was very proud of them today," Geisler said, "and I look forward to seeing how the kids work hard and improve this season. And I think that if we get to have a postseason, we've got a shot to advance pretty far."

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)