



O'Keefe, Roderfeld Guide Explorers In Belleville Althoff Catholic Crusader Classic Tourney, Suhre Nails Ace For Tigers

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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BELLEVILLE - Marquette Catholic's Aiden O'Keefe finished in fifth place, while William Roderfeld ended up in a three-way tie for eighth, but Edwardsville's Drew Suhre had the highlight of the day with a hole-in-one on the ninth hole as the Explorers came in fifth and the Tigers seventh in the inaugural Belleville Althoff Catholic Crusader Classic, held Monday at the St. Clair Country Club in Belleville.

Waterloo Gibault won the tournament with a score of 309, with Breese Mater Dei Catholic coming in second with a 312. O'Fallon came in third with a score of 316, with the host Crusaders placing fourth with a 325, and the Explorers were fifth with a 330. Mascoutah finished sixth with a score of 332, the Tigers came in seventh with a 348, Belleville West was eighth with a score of 352, Freeburg came in ninth with a 354, and Breese Central was 10th with a 356.

Despite Suhre's ace, the first for the Tigers since 2017, it was a tough day for the young Edwardsville team, many of whom were playing the course for the first time ever.

"I think overall, things were pretty difficult for the kids," said Tigers head coach Adam Tyler. "Difficult and memorable, because Drew Suhre shot a hole-in-one. You don't see it very often, and I'm really happy for him. And the funny thing was that it happened at the worst part of the day. It was rainy and windy."

Tyler felt that the unfamiliarity of the course for many of his golfers was a big factor in the tournament for his team.

"Most of the kids have never played this course before," Tyler said, "so it played difficult for them. but T.J. Thiems was our number one golfer for the first time today, so that was very encouraging for him."

The individual winner of the tournament was O'Fallon's Caden Cannon, who shot an even-par 72 to take the crown, with Althoff's Avery Irwin and Mater Dei's Carter Goebel tying for second with identical 73s. The Knights' Ian Berndsen came in fourth with a 74, while O'Keefe and Gibault's Ryan Bollinger deadlocked for fifth, with both shooting 75. The Hawks' Alex Sweeney was seventh with a 76, and Roderfeld tied with Breese Central's Nate Rakers and Gibault's Max Bruening, all shooting 77.

Besides the scores for O'Keefe and Roderfeld, Nolan Rea shot an 87, Grant Heinz and William Schwartz both shot a 91, and Nick Wooden carded a 96. Thiems led the Tigers with an 84, while both Carter Crow and Hayden Moore each had an 87, Bennett Babington fired a 90, Suhre ended up with a 92, and Kolton Wright had a 98.

The Tigers will now play in the second round of the Southwestern Conference tournament Tuesday morning at Belk Park Golf Course in Wood River, and Tyler feels that Edwardsville will be ready to go at a very familiar course.

"We have to have a short memory, and go out there and play a course we're all familiar with," Tyler said. "I don't know if we are the best team tomorrow, but we're going to go out there, play relaxed tomorrow, have fun, and we'll see what happens."