

Shamrocks, Chargers dominate area honors

BY STEVE KOWALSKI
STAFF WRITER

Instead of a reward, the Class A boys golf state meet must have felt like a punishment for the teams and individuals who qualified.

Cold, wind and rain greeted the players Oct. 20 and 21 at Forest Akers Golf Course in East Lansing. Redford Catholic Central, Livonia Churchill and Plymouth Salem qualified from Overland and the Shamrocks persevered the best with a fourth-place finish.

But whatever took place at the state meet, the players knew what they accomplished in the previous two months wouldn't be washed away from their coach's minds in one weekend.

CC and Churchill were led by strong senior classes and have three representatives each on the All-Observer first team.

The Shamrocks won the Catholic League championship after going 10-0 through the dual meet season. CC placed second in the Class A regional at the Pontiac Country Club.

Churchill won the Pinckney Invitational and was later crowned the Western Lakes Activities Association and Class A regional champion. Salem handed the Chargers their only dual-meet defeat during the regular season and placed third in the same regional at Oak Pointe Golf Course.

The following is a profile of each golfer on the first team:

ALL-AREA TEAM

Chris Klehler, senior, Livonia Churchill: The four-year letter winner was co-medalist at the Class A regional with teammate Gary Kraus, scoring 74 at Oak Pointe Golf Course. He was medalist at the WLAAC meet with a round of 70 at Lakes of Pinewood.

He had a 37.35 average with a low of

ALL-AREA GOLF

34 and four scores of 35. He tied for ninth at the Brighton Invitational with 70.

His only struggle came at the state meet, recording 83 on the first day at Forest Akers Golf Course in East Lansing.

"Chris had a dream season," coach Kirk Osler said. "He was a determined competitor at every event he played in and it showed in his results."

He finished seventh at the Class A regional with 77, tied for ninth at the Brighton Invitational with 70, and 13th in the Catholic League meet with 79 at RiverView Highlands.

"It was a little down going into the last stretch of the season and he got it all together at the end," Osler said.

Brandon DiPaola, senior, 22-year-old Catholic Central DiPaola made Class A at state after recording a stroke average of 37.9 per nine holes and taking seventh in the individual standings at the Class A meet with a seventh-place finish of 154 (73-81). He also tied teammate Misak for medalist at the Catholic League meet with 74 at RiverView Highlands.

He was ninth at the regional with 79 at Pontiac Country Club. He was 13th at the East Lansing Fall Classic (78-76) and third at the East Lansing Invitational with 75.

Also earlier in the season, DiPaola was 13th at the Pinckney Invitational with 78 and sixth at the Brighton Invitational with 73.

"Brandon was probably one of the best players CC has had in 10 years," Osler said. "He is an excellent putter. When he's missing 'shots,' he makes up for it with his skill on the green."

Mike Hjeltnstad, senior, Plymouth Salem Hjeltnstad carded 78 to tie for second at the WLAAC meet with 74 at the regional to tie for fifth. The four-year letter winner had a dual meet average of 38.1 as a senior.

His low nine-hole total was 34 and he had two 35s. He shot 71 in the first round of the East Lansing Fall Classic, and 85 at the Class A meet.

"He had a stretch there for the duals in a row he was one over par or better," Salem coach Rick Wilson said. "I think we'll miss a guy who was that consistent. The thing about Mike is he didn't make many mistakes out there. He didn't allow himself to have a real bad hole to blow him out of the round."

"He is a good putter, drove the ball and managed the course well."

"He's a good all-around athlete and strong on the course."

Brian Karabalski, senior, Redford Catholic Central Karabalski came on strong near the end of the season, leading the Shamrocks to fourth in the team standings at the Class A state meet with a second-place total of 149 (72-77).

His 72 gave him first place after the first round. He had a 39.0 nine-hole average and played his strongest at the 18-hole tournaments.

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ALL-OBSERVER BOYS GOLF TEAM

FIRST TEAM

Chris Klehler Churchill
Dave Higham Churchill
Gary Kraus Churchill
Chris Misak Redford CC
Brandon DiPaola Redford CC
Mike Hjeltnstad Plymouth

SECOND TEAM

Ryan Andrejewski Plymouth
Jeff Lister Plymouth
Derek Fox Farmington
Kevin Horton Harrison
Chris Hargens Redford CC
Craig Piskorski John Glenn
Steve Polanski Stevenson

HONORABLE MENTION

Mark O'Keefe, Mike Gabbert, John Corey, Redford Union; Matt Dland, Brett Pichla, Gordon City; Art Hoffmeyer, John Hoffmeyer, Matt McClellan, Redford Thurston; Mike Cotter, Livonia Churchill; Brian Fox, Plymouth Salem; Chris Thompson, Westland Glenn; Brent Rickard, Farmington; Jeff Moscow, Harrison; Aaron Stephen, North Farmington; Brett Reistman, Livonia Stevenson; Mike Melbers, Plymouth Canton; Jeff Berger, Livonia Franklin.



Dave Higham
Liv. Churchill



Gary Kraus
Liv. Churchill



Chris Misak
Redford CC



Brian Karabalski
Redford CC



Brandon DiPaola
Redford CC



Mike Hjeltnstad
Ply. Salem

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