

Experience will make difference

Written by Deb Egenberger
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Golfers open season at Kearney.

The experiences members of the Swede girls golf team had last season were not always pleasant.

Playing a course for the first time can cause tremendous nerves and not performing to personal expectation may leave golfers unhappy.

“I won’t say it was always a good experience,” said coach Jim Henke. “But it was experience, valuable experience and as long as they learned something along the way, it was worth it.”

That year of playing high school golf should make a world of difference for this season’s Swede team.

“I’ve already seen improvement from last year,” Henke said. “As long as they’re willing to learn and have fun in the process, we will be fine.”

Senior Elizabeth Graham returns in the No. 1 position for Gothenburg having lettered two straight seasons.

Graham finished seventh at the Southwest Conference meet last year and was named to the all-conference second team.

Teammate Sidney Thompson, also a senior, finished 12th at SWC and earned honorable

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mention.

“We’ll be looking to those two for a lot of leadership,” Henke said. “They’ve been pretty good at keeping everyone on a positive keel and that is important, especially for the younger players.”

Haley Scheidt, Anna Boson and Jourdan Matthies complete the group of returning letter winners.

“Having five girls with varsity meet experience should offer better balance,” Henke said.

The Swedes open the year Thursday at the Kearney Catholic Invite at Meadowlark Hills facing the 2008 Class C state champion Stars.

“We play in that meet because that’s where our district is,” Henke said.

With the C-4 district meet in Kearney, the Stars get a big advantage, one that Henke says they don’t need.

Two Kearney Catholic players medaled at state last fall and the team won the title by 36 strokes. Only one of the five team players graduated.

Minden, a SWC and district opponent, finished second at state in 2008 with one medalist. The Whippets also had only one graduate.

“The good thing about that is it leaves the third-place spot wide open,” Henke said.

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Gothenburg finished sixth in the C-4 district last fall with golfers who had little experience. With the improvement Henke has seen so far, he said making it to state is not an outlandish goal.

“I think we will be competitive,” he said.

Members of the 2009 Gothenburg girls golf team are (*denotes letter winner):

Seniors—Elizabeth Graham*, Haley Scheidt*, Sidney Thompson*.

JUNIORS—Anna Boson*, Becca Else, Jourdan Matthies*, Brittany Ostergard.

SOPHOMORES—Saraid Baca, Taylor Rittgarn.

FRESHMEN—Kristen Bartlett, Danielle Schriver, Cassandra Stevens, Heidi Teahon.