



## LOCKPORT GIRLS SECTIONAL GOLF



By Randy Whalen

For the Lockport Township girl's golf team, a stated goal would have been accomplished if there was a State Tournament. The Porters would have qualified for it.

That's because led by second-place finisher, Lizzie Anderson, they were second on Tuesday, Oct. 13 in the Class 2A Champaign Centennial Sectional at the University of Illinois Golf Course in Savoy.

"Oh yeah, that was the end goal," Lockport senior Claire Ancevicus said of going to state. "If we would have had a state tournament we would have reached that end goal."

The last time a state appearance happened? Try 33 years ago when Lockport finished second in a single class system in the fall of 1987. The Porters placed third the year before that. But after qualifying for the sectional as a team for the second time in three seasons this fall, they performed well at the sectional and nearly won it.

In the end, O'Fallon finished with a 326 to edge the Porters by four strokes. Lockport (330) was 11 strokes ahead of fellow SouthWest Suburban Conference team, Lincoln-Way Central (341) which was third and defeated the Porters by two strokes the week before at the Minooka Regional.

Quincy (345) and Edwardsville (345) tied for fourth. Springfield (362), Dunlap (363), and Washington (369) rounded out the 8-team field.

The Porters led by a stroke with three holes to go but couldn't quite capture the top spot down the stretch. Still, it was a great performance as they showed they were among the top teams in the state.

"It came down to the last hole," Lockport coach Matt Major said. "We were in it all the way until the end. The wind was steady at 25-to-35 miles per hour. So I was still happy for us to shoot that well. The girls did incredibly and it was still a very successful season."

Especially for Anderson, a junior who missed all of last season with a torn labrum in her left shoulder. She tied senior Morgan Anderson from Joliet Township for second with a 1-over 73. Sophomore Nicole Johnson of Edwardsville won the individual title with an excellent 3-under 69.

"When I was playing in that tournament (where she tore her labrum in May of 2019) I started on the 10th hole," Anderson said. "I tore it on the 16th hole and I boogied that (at the sectional) too. But then on my eighth hole, which was really 17, I got a birdie.

"It really didn't get too windy until the last nine holes, so it wasn't too bad. I had a couple of dumb mistakes that I wish I could have back. But I did pretty well overall."

Anderson won the top medalist honors the Wednesday before, Oct. 7, in the Minooka Regional at Heritage Bluffs Golf Course in Channahon.

Ancevicus and junior Bella Bozen each shot an 83 for the Porters, who got their fourth carded score from freshman Gianna White (91). Seniors Katie Tomczuk (93) and Fiona Heeney (94) rounded out the Lockport scores.

"Lizzie and Bella both played very well," Major said. "Lizzie drives the ball and that's her advantage. Bella really stepped up for us down the stretch. She was our fourth or fifth golfer most of the year but played

really well down the stretch. That was her best 18-hole score and it will be awesome to have her back next year.

"With Lizzie and Bella back, plus a young group of freshmen, the future looks good."

It certainly does but the Porters will miss their seniors. Especially Ancevicius, who was the individual SWSC Blue champion this fall and qualified for state as an individual last season, Heeney, and Tomczuk, as all were 4-year varsity golfers. Josie Brown, Krista Gikas, and Xenia Sinclair were the rest of the seniors.

"We had a really fun season, even with COVID-19," Anderson said. "We made the best of it and we're going to miss the seniors. We all wish we had state this year, it would have been really fun to go as a team but that's alright. Everyone hopes that next year state can happen."

Even if it didn't this year, there's a lot to remember for this group of Porters.

"When we got on the bus to go back to school I stood up and was like, 'I'm proud of each and every one of you,'" said Ancevicius, who is uncommitted but plans to play golf in college. "'Without anyone of you being on the team, we wouldn't be here. Anyone could step up on any given day.'

"At the end, I was really proud of the team. We set the goal and we reached it."