

Golf and volleyball move to the forefront

Written by Scott Unash

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This weekend marks the annual Class 4A State Golf Meet, to be held this year at Finkbine Golf Course in Iowa City. The meet starts Friday and ends Saturday.

I don't usually give props to the Iowa High School Athletic Association, but moving the 4A golf season from the spring to the fall several years ago was a brilliant stroke.

Weather has always been a problem for the golf season, but it seems much less of an issue during the fall.

As a former high school golfer myself, I remember many days during the early spring where the temperature was in the 40s with the wind-chill somewhere in the 20s and no feeling in your hands trying to shoot a score to qualify for a meet that you weren't sure would even be played because the weather the next day was forecast to be even worse!

With that said, there have been several years where the Fall State Golf Meet has been plagued by miserable weather. In fact, a couple of years ago there were snowflakes flitting through the air as the state's best were out on the course vying for a championship.

That can't be helped. Mother Nature, like golf itself, is very fickle.

This year there should be no worries about the weather. The forecast calls for temperatures in the upper 70s and possibly even the low 80s. Let's hope the scores are in the low 70s or even a few 60s. I played Finkbine about six weeks ago and it was in tremendous shape.

Best of luck to the Kennedy and Linn-Mar golfers as they shoot for team titles.

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The regional volleyball pairings also were released by the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union and once again they have done a terrific job in trying to get the state's top teams to Cedar Rapids for the state tournament.

The tournament will be held at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena next month while the US Cellular Center is being renovated. Hopefully, it will be reopened in time for the 2013 tournament.

Looking at the pairings, it will be tougher for Metro teams to qualify this season. Kennedy likely has the best shot to advance. The Cougars have a bye into the regional semifinals against either Xavier or Davenport Central and likely would run up against either North Scott or Bettendorf in a regional final, if they get that far. Both Kennedy and Xavier were in last year's state tournament.

How does the tournament shape up for the rest of the Metro teams? Upsets will be needed.

Washington likely will meet top-rated Iowa City West in a regional final. The trio of Linn-Mar, Prairie and Jefferson are in the same regional with perennial power Dubuque Hempstead.

In Class 3A, Marion finds itself in the same regional as top-rated Dubuque Wahlert. In 1A, Cedar Valley Christian opens its first postseason in any Iowa high school sporting event by taking on a ranked Lisbon team on Oct. 19.

Whoever qualifies for this year's tournament, it should be memorable due to the venue. Hopefully, all goes well at the Stable in November.

(Scott Unash is the sports and program director at KGYM-AM 1600. He is a six-time winner of the Iowa Broadcast News Association play-by-play Announcer of the Year Award. Scott and Mark Dukes co-host the Gym Class weekdays from 3-4 p.m. on KGYM)