

Finally healthy Furnish signs with Mo. State

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 11 November 2011 11:02 - Last Updated Friday, 11 November 2011 16:03



Cedar Rapids Jefferson senior Megan Furnish was all smiles Wednesday evening as she mingled with family and friends at Airport National Golf Course.

She had several reasons to be happy. For one thing, she's finally healthy again. And for another, she invited everyone to Airport National to watch her sign her national letter-of-intent to play golf at Missouri State next year.

Furnish battled a sore back during the golf season last spring and sprained her ankle during the volleyball season, but those were minor ailments compared to her worrisome battle with Lemierre's Syndrome this fall.

It began as a sore throat and developed into an extremely serious condition.

"There was a blood clot in my neck and it was causing me to be really sick and put me in the hospital," she said. "It's really rare. It lasted about a month."

Furnish said she spent about five days in the hospital while doctors treated her condition. She lost about 15 pounds. "We were worried, but my family comforted me," she said.

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It was a dangerous situation, so dangerous that it was potentially life-threatening. "If it had not been treated it could have been deadly," she acknowledged.

Furnish said Lemierre's Syndrome strikes people at random and doesn't know why she was vulnerable. She finished taking her antibiotics about a week ago and has regained 10 pounds.

Furnish is extremely glad to put that traumatic episode behind her. Now she can look confidently ahead, toward her final year at Jefferson and then to her enrollment at Missouri State.

Furnish studied Missouri State online, investigated the golf program, visited the school in Springfield, Mo., and got to know the golf coach. Everything clicked.

"I'm really excited," she said.

Furnish won the Iowa PGA junior golf title this past summer and played in the Junior PGA championship in Indiana. She also played in the USGA Junior National Tournament in Illinois, gaining valuable experience against elite golfers.

"I think the one thing I gained is confidence, being able to compete against the best golfers in the nation," she said. "It shows I can compete with them.

"I loved it," she said. "Everybody was really welcoming, and I made some really good friends. We still talk and text all the time."

Furnish did not excel at either national event, but thinks she benefitted a great deal by competing. "It makes me want to work harder to be at that top level," she said.