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Rochester Adams golf sets sights on ultimate goal

By Christian Davis
C & G Sports Writer

LAKE ORION — The memory of missing last season's boys golf state finals is still fresh in the mind of Rochester Adams junior Ben Vanorman.

The Highlanders had grown accustomed to being in the final tournament of the year, qualifying 24 times in the past 32 years.

But last season, it missed getting out of its regional by three strokes.

"I've thought about it every day. I made it freshman year, and that was special. But I want to do it this year when I'm the leader, that's important to me," Vanorman said, as the Highlanders finished sixth in the state in 2009. "That's the goal of the year. We care about other tournaments, but in the end, all we care about is making it to states and representing our program."

Coach Dan Picot agreed.

"That's always our motivation — to try and be that (team) that puts their notch on the tradition that we have," he said. "So any league, district or other tournament accolades that we get from here to there, those are bonuses. (Those are) things that we can use as stepping tools and educational chances to just better ourselves and see where we are."

What the Highlanders are now is a youthful, talented squad.

The Highlanders have four returning starters in juniors Jamie Stanton and Vanorman, and sophomores Eric Busa and Marcus Robinson.

"We don't know how low our scores can go yet, but we know we have a certain base," the coach said. "These guys are all super competitive and all within four or five strokes of each other. When we look at that, that's the kind of competitive nature we like to have. Now we'll see who rises to the top."

Picot said the key is handling the pressure when each shot becomes all that much more important.

"When you play in the summer, it's just a tournament and you go to the next one," he said. "With this, there's an end to our season."

Vanorman said the way to handle the pressure is to stick to your routine.

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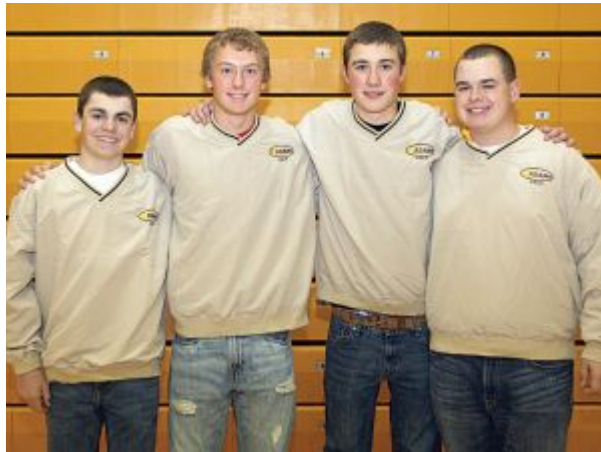


Photo by Erin Sanchez

The Rochester Adams golf team hopes to make it back to the state finals after missing last season. Pictured, from left, sophomore Marcus Robinson, junior Jamie Stanton, junior Ben Vanorman and sophomore Eric Busa are the squad's returning starters.

"You have to do the same thing every shot and have the same thought process," he said. "That's the one thing I've been focusing on the most this year and trying to stress to the whole team."

Playing as a team is exactly what Vanorman feels will return the Highlanders to the final.

"An individual might play well, but we might play poorly as a group," he said. "For us to make it to states, we have to have four or five good scores."