

Sports

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Golf: Lady Panther seniors go out with four top-four finishes at State

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HARTWELL - The Union County senior trio of Ally Horinek, Megan Rowe, and Grace Wischmeyer wrapped up their high school careers as three of the most decorated athletes in UCHS history.

Three straight region titles, two state runner-ups, a third, and a fourth place finish at state will forever highlight the resumes of the three members of the Class of 2018.

The high school careers of Horinek, Rowe, and Wischmeyer came to a close last week with a fourth place finish at the Class AAA State Tournament, hosted by Catechee Golf Club in Hartwell.

While fourth place isn't the way they wanted to go out, head golf coach Greg Chambers told his team they can hold their heads high knowing they never finished outside the top-four in two separate classifications (Class AA and AAA).

"I told them all that I was very proud of them and that I would miss them," he said. "They were a little down at first because their high school careers were over. I don't think they were down on themselves at all. I think they were just soaking everything in and enjoying being around each other as the tournament was coming to a close because it was the last time that we would all be together as a team."

"You always want to win the state tournament so we were a little disappointed from that standpoint but we are happy with our finish. To be one of the top four teams in the state is always an accomplishment."

According to Chambers, it was also a little bittersweet knowing their run at come to an end.

"I have coached for a long time and this was one of the toughest goodbyes that I can remember in my career. It was very difficult to say goodbye to each one of them because we had all been around each other so much over the last four years and we have spent a great deal of time together on the road traveling all over the state."

"It was also hard to say goodbye to their families because they have been around as well for four years and we were all like one big golf family. It was an honor to lead and



Coach Greg Chambers with the UCHS girls golf team following the State Tournament. Photo/Submitted

coach their daughters. I am very thankful and grateful for their support. They are great people and parents.

"I think it started sinking in with the girls on their last few holes, but it was very evident as they all approached the 18th tee box and as they walked off the 18th green for the last time as a Union County Panther."

Union County finished the two-day tournament at 91-over par (523) - nine shots back of third place North Murray and nine strokes better than fifth place Pierce County. (The sum of the three lowest individual scores account for the team total)

On day one, Union returned to the clubhouse at 46-over par (262). They were one shot better on day two, finishing at +45 (261) but it wasn't enough to contend with the leaders, Rutland and Bremen.

"I just told them to go play and not worry about everyone else, just go have fun and enjoy their last 18 holes as a Lady Panther," Coach Chambers said when asked how his squad approached the second round knowing it would take a remarkable comeback to threaten the top-two.

Horinek was the Lady Panthers' low medalist both days with an 81 in round one and an 80 in round two. Her two-day total of 161 (+17) was good enough for seventh place

individually - holding off eighth place Allie Cobb of Franklin County by one stroke.

Horinek came in five shots back of sixth place Christian Williams of Bremen and 12 shots off the lead of Murray County's Tori Owens, who fired a 1-under par 71 in the second round to erase a four-shot deficit entering the day.

Meanwhile, Wischmeyer and Rowe turned in matching scores in both rounds.

Wischmeyer fired a pair of 89s while Rowe completed her tournament with two 92s.

Rounding out the Union County scoring was junior Carson Chambers, who finished at 112 in round one and 114 in round two.

As for Horinek, the team's low medalist started and finished strong but it was the 18 holes in between that prevented her from challenging for an individual title.

On Monday, she opened the tournament with a 39 (+2) on the front nine but went on to play the final three holes of the round at 5-over for a 42 (+7) on the back nine.

On Tuesday, a double-bogey on the first hole led to a 42 (+5) on the front nine. However, the senior would regroup and par five straight holes before picking up a birdie on the 16th, a 150-yard Par 3, to turn in a 38 (+3) on the back nine.

Wischmeyer would also

overcome some struggles following a 9 on the opening hole of the tournament. However, she would settle down and play the next eight holes at +4 for a 45 on the front nine.

On the back nine, Wischmeyer answered a double-bogey on 14 with a birdie on 15 - a 267-yard Par 4. She would go on to finish at +7 (44) on the back nine for an 89.

On day two, the Maryville signee reeled off three straight pars on 6, 7, and 8 to turn in a 43 (+6) on the front nine. Unfortunately, the final two holes continued to give her trouble as she finished at +3 on 17 and 18, two shots better than her +5 Monday score over the last two holes.

Wischmeyer's two-day total of 178 (+34) was good enough for a top-15 finish individually.

Rowe finished the tournament as Union County's birdie leader with two - both coming Monday on the front nine.

Following a bogey on one, Rowe picked up the birdie on the second hole, a 153-yard Par 3.

Later, she answered back-to-back double bogeys with a birdie on the 348-yard, Par 4 seventh to match Wischmeyer's 45 (+8) on the front nine.

Pars on 12, 13, and 17 were the highlight of Rowe's back nine as she turned in a 47 (+12) for a first round total



Ally Horinek's tee shot to open round two. Photo/Todd Forrest

of 92.

Rowe proved consistent on day two, turning in another 45 on the front to go with a 47 on the back nine. The Columbus State signee picked up three pars on the front nine and four pars on the back.

Individually, Rowe came in 23rd with a 184 (+40) two-day total.

As for Chambers, the junior scored a 3 on the Par 3 second hole to highlight a front nine score of 54. She would fire a 58 on the back nine for an opening round total of 112.

Chambers solid play on the second hole continued as she picked up another par early in round two. Later in the day, she recorded another par on the Par 3 sixteenth.

Chambers, however, would save the best for last as her back-nine score of 53 on day two was her nine-hole low for the tournament.

This season marks the second year that the State Championship has been determined by two rounds instead of one. According to Coach Chambers, Union County has benefited from both formats but both usually the team that leads after day is able to hold on.

"I have coached (both formats) and I guess it just depends on how well you're playing," he said. "If you're in first place after day one, then you have to hold on to that lead,

but the two-day (format) was good for us last year because we were in fifth place after day one and climbed all the way back to second place."

"In both cases the team that led after day one ended up winning the tournament. There are benefits to both formats but I think you could settle it with the one day format."

In closing, Coach Chambers wished to thank the local golf courses and the players' families. Additionally, he mentioned how each of these girls are not only great golfers, but great people as well.

"I would like to thank Butternut Creek Golf Course and Old Union Golf Course for everything that they do for our program," he said. "We could not have accomplished everything that we did over last four years (without them)."

"I would like to thank the parents for all of their support. I just feel very fortunate to have been the golf coach for the last four years with all of these young ladies and their parents."

"These young ladies are great golfers who accomplished many championships, but what I will remember most of all is they are great people. I will miss them, but I am very proud of each one of these young ladies. They are moving on to a new phase of their lives and I know they will all do great things."



Grace Wischmeyer's approach shot on No. 1. Photo/Todd Forrest



Megan Rowe goes for the green on the first hole. Photo/Todd Forrest



Carson Chambers' second shot on the Par 5 first hole. Photo/Todd Forrest

Mon, May 21																					
Purple Tee / Slope: 136 / Rating: 71.6 / Catechee																					
Yardage	532	153	502	370	541	175	348	360	401	3382	428	371	345	153	384	267	150	618	394	3110	6492
Par	5	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	37	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	4	35	72
Allison Horinek	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	4	4	39	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	6	6	42	81
Grace Wischmeyer	9	3	6	4	6	3	5	4	5	45	5	5	4	4	6	3	3	7	7	44	89
Megan Rowe	6	2	6	5	7	5	3	5	6	45	6	6	4	3	8	6	4	5	5	47	92
Not included in scoring																					
Carson Chambers	6	3	7	7	7	4	7	7	6	54	7	8	6	5	6	7	5	7	7	58	112
Gross Score	20	9	17	13	18	11	13	13	15	129	15	15	13	10	19	13	12	18	18	133	262
To Par (gross)	5	E	2	1	3	2	1	1	3	18	3	3	1	1	7	1	3	3	6	28	46
Tue, May 22																					
Allison Horinek	7	3	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	42	5	4	4	3	4	4	2	6	6	38	80
Grace Wischmeyer	6	5	5	5	6	3	4	4	5	43	5	6	4	3	5	4	7	7	5	46	89
Megan Rowe	7	4	5	7	6	3	5	4	4	45	4	5	5	3	7	7	3	9	4	47	92
Not included in scoring																					
Carson Chambers	8	3	7	7	8	7	8	6	7	61	5	8	5	6	6	5	3	10	5	53	114
Gross Score	20	12	15	17	17	10	13	12	14	130	14	15	13	9	16	15	12	22	15	131	261
To Par (gross)	5	3	E	5	2	1	1	E	2	19	2	3	1	E	4	3	3	7	3	26	45

Union County State Tournament individual scorecards

Pos.	Team	Total To Par Gross	R1	R2	Total
1	Rutland Rutland	+53	245	240	485
2	Bremen Bremen	+55	246	241	487
3	North Murray North Murray	+82	259	255	514
4	Union County Union County	+91	262	261	523
5	Pierce County Pierce County	+100	272	260	532
6	Calhoun Calhoun	+110	270	272	542
7	Franklin County Franklin County	+136	300	268	568
8	Westminster Westminster	+163	294	301	595
9	North Hall North Hall	+172	309	295	604
10	Southeast Bulloch Southeast Bulloch	+181	310	303	613
11	Hart County Hart County	+188	306	314	620
12	Dawson County Dawson County	+200	311	321	632
13	Crisp County Crisp County	+299	356	375	731

Class AAA Girls State Tournament - final team standings