

Kalida Retains PCL Golf Championship Leipsic's Crow Takes Medalist Honors 2004 PCL Tournament

Putnam County Sentinel – Charlie Warnimont, Sports Editor

There were some that figured there could be a changing of the guard in the Putnam County League golf circles this season. Guess again.

Although Kalida has struggled at times this season, the Wildcats seem to be improving their play as the season winds down.

On Monday, it was business as usual for Kalida as the Wildcats retained the PCL golf title by shooting a 321 at Country Acres.

Ottoville finished second in the six team field with a 332 followed by Continental in third at 345 and Fort Jennings was fourth with a 350. Leipsic finished fifth at 357 and Miller City was sixth with a 385.

While Kalida won the team championship by 11 strokes, the race for medalist honors was a bit closer.

Leipsic sophomore Jason Crow earned medalist honors Monday as he shot an even par round of 72, edging out Fort Jennings senior Ross Stechschulte by three shots. Kalida's Ben McIntyre was third with a 77 and Continental's Kurtis Brown was fourth with a 78.

Although Kalida only had to replace two regular from last year's championship team, they struggled out of the gate this season. However, the Wildcats have started to play better the last two weeks that started with an invitational win at Delphos.

"We have started to play better the last two weeks," Kalida Coach Schnipke said. "From one through five I feel we are pretty strong now."

"Like today we had one kid shoot an 84 and that's the score we throw out. I like to think that all the practice they have been doing has paid off. We're out here hitting balls and playing rounds and I feel that is now paying off. Plus I'm out here helping them and hopefully that is helping. They all have an open mind. They may not do what I say, but they listen and that helps."

Playing on their home course Monday, under bright sunny skies, the Wildcats had two scores in the high 70's and three in the low 80's to help them retain the title.

Ben McIntyre led the Wildcats with a 77 and Andy Unverferth followed with a 79. Barry Schroeder came through with an 82 for Klaida and Andy Rampe had an 83. Brandon Brickner had an 84 for Kalida.

"This was a good team effort," Schnipke said. "We went 77, 79, 82 and 83, so that's some pretty good scoring. If we can throw out an 84 the next two weeks, we should be okay (Schnipke said referring to the upcoming sectional and district tournaments).

"Although some of them are new, I like to think that the pressure of playing in a tournament like this doesn't bother them. Several of them play baseball and they did a good job playing late into July. And a couple of them play basketball, so they should know what pressure is all about."

While Kalida plays their home matches at Country Acres, Leipsic's Jason Crow recently played an 18-hole match on the course and finished fourth with a 78. Five days later, the

sophomore was back on the course and took six shots off that score as he took medalist honors with a 72.

His score broke the Leipsic school record for 18 holes, which was a 75 by Garrett Korte.

"It was a pretty good round," Crow said. "I hit every green but I had some trouble putting so it could have been better. But I'll take it. Playing here the other day did help me. I did a few things different and I played better."

Crow had two birdies and two bogeys during his round on Monday. Both of the bogeys came on the back nine, but he then birdied the par 5 18th to finish at even par.

"He's been scoring well all year," Leipsic Coach Paul Cain said. "He's been the medalist in 13 of the 15 matches and tournaments, we have played in. Last year he averaged 41 for nine holes and this year its 37 and that will come down today. I think the mental part of his game has improved. Last year he'd shoot in the 30's in practice and then carry that into the matches. Plus he played in a lot of junior tournaments over the summer and that has helped a lot."

Six players were named to the PCL first team, along with Crow. Stechschulte's 75 earned him first team honors, while McIntyre with a 77 and Brown with a 78. Nick Miller (79) of Ottoville also was named to the first team along with Andy Unverferth of Kalida.

The second team consisted of the Wildcats Barry Schroeder, Andy Rampe and Brandon Brickner, Continental's Todd Sigler and Matt Kramer of Ottoville.

SCORES

KALIDA 321 - Ben McIntyre 77, Andy Unverferth 79, Barry Schroeder 82, Andy Rampe 83 and Brandon Brickner 84.

OTTOVILLE 332 - Nick Miller 79, Matt Kramer 83, Ryan Schimmoeller 85, Josh Vorst 85 and Tyler Miller 88.

CONTINENTAL 345 - Kurtis Brown 78, Todd Sigler 83, Nick Wilson 86 and Ross Morgan 98.

FORT JENNINGS 350 - Ross Stechschulte 75, Trent Stechschulte 86, Kurt Menke 90, Michael Pollock 99 and Torey Bonifas 103.

LEIPSIC 357 - Jason Crow 72, Josh Cain 90, Brian Steffan 97, Jay Niese 98 and Bryn Steffan 103.

MILLER CITY 385 - Beau Pester 95, Andy Rump 96, Mike Westrick 96, Bryan Hermiller 98 and Brandon Dobbmeyer 110.