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UIS notes: Ace makes McKillips' day in golf tournament

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Posted Apr 01, 2010 @ 12:53 AM

Last update Apr 01, 2010 @ 07:03 AM

Golfers at the Wisconsin-Parkside Invitational played the final round in on-and-off rain, but a hole-in-one brightened University of Illinois Springfield Prairie Stars sophomore Ryan McKillips' day.

He scored his first hole-in-one on the No. 3 hole Sunday at Otter Creek Golf Course in Columbus, Ind. He aced the par-3, 197-yard hole using a 4-iron.

"It took a couple of bounces before the pin, then went in," McKillips said. "I was very surprised that it went in. I asked around, 'Did it actually go in?' I didn't yell, scream or jump up and down.

"The thought that crossed my mind was now you can't shot 80. That would look bad."

McKillips, a suburban St. Louis native, finished the round with a 74 and as the Stars' highest placer. He tied for 27th. He shot a 79 Saturday.

After achieving the rare feat, McKillips endured razzing from his twin brother, Mike, who also is on the team.

"He was just saying that he shot a 74 and he didn't get a hole-in-one," Ryan said.

It's the second straight season a UIS golfer had a hole-in-one with Scott Belcher achieving the feat last year.

Home search

There's a chance the UIS baseball team will play its home games at Chatham's Community Park when the Stars take the field in 2011 for their inaugural season.

"We'd like to see college baseball in town," Chatham public works director Meredith Branham said. "We have a real nice facility. We would love to have them. The village board would certainly like to have them."

All of UIS' non-conference games are on the road, according to UIS athletic director Rodger Jehlicka, which means UIS needs a field for just Great Lakes Valley Conference home contests. GLVC games are played on Saturday and Sunday. Jehlicka said finding a place to play on Sunday isn't a problem.

UIS hasn't selected a site. The school still is exploring its options. Jehlicka said an announcement might not happen until August.

"There is so much pressure on the two parks (Lanphier and Chamberlain) here in town with four high schools and (Springfield College in Illinois)," Jehlicka said. "There are other fields around. There are fields in Jacksonville, fields in Rochester and fields in Riverton. We'd like for all of our home games to be in Springfield at Chamberlain Park or Lanphier Park, but it may not work out that way.

"The University of Missouri-St. Louis went through the same situation. They played games the first few years wherever they could play games. Maybe that's what we're looking at also."

Some of the dates UIS coach Brian Grunzke submitted to Chatham's village trustees are not available, according to Branham.

Branham stresses the community is willing to work with UIS.

"Whatever we can do to work it out with them we will," he said.

Tennis teams impress

Give the gold star to the UIS men's tennis team.

The Stars won all 27 matches last weekend at the Hack Keller Invitational at Washington Park.

UIS women's tennis squad had a noteworthy performance, too. The Stars posted a 16-2 record at the tourney.

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