On the Links with Clarksburg and Poolesville High Schools

By Jeff Stuart

The Clarksburg Golf team finished with eleven wins and seven losses. “We had twelve kids try out,” said Head Coach Thomas Laddbush. “I picked eight boys and one girl based on a three-day tournament. The girl, Lauren Miller, is a beginner.” The golf team is allowed one or two practice times a week by MCPS, and the team tries to arrange its own practice on a range or a golf course, then there is one match a week. “We try to practice five times a week, Monday thru Friday. We can't go on Saturdays because the courses are too busy,” added Laddbush. Meets are arranged between four teams, each playing with their top six golfers. “If you beat all three teams you get three points…and [you] count your first five scores in nine-hole matches.”

The remarkably-consistent Conner Miller, a junior, was the number-one player for CHS. “He averaged, like, forty-one for all the matches, right on the money. Conner shot an 82 at the MCPS District Tournament on October 4 at Poolesville,” said Laddbush. With a team made up of mostly juniors and seniors, there are two seniors in the starting lineup, Alex Hall and Chris Viqueira. “We didn't have any superstars, but we had three really good players. (Conner Miller, Alex Hall, and junior Stefan Wroblewski). Conner and Alex qualified for the Montgomery County Invitational.” The other regular players are juniors Alex Belman and Mike Opiekun. The team was undefeated last year allowing them to move up to the middle division. This year, the Coyotes finished in third place this year and will remain in the middle division.”
Alex Belman figured prominently in the September 28 contest at Worthington Manor. “It came down to the last match,” said the coach. He shot a 49. “Alex didn't even know the he needed to make a couple of good shots for us to beat Sherwood—but he did. That was our best day and it cost me a lunch. I had to buy them all pizza and coke.” CHS won all three matches, shooting 223. Mac Raum and Uda Virk round out the team.

“The big story this season,” said Poolesville Head Coach David Gillespie, “was that Victoria Huang (Sr) qualified for the State Tournament. She missed qualifying by one stroke last year and made it by one stroke this year. When she was a sophomore she was a middle of the pack golfer, but she took the initiative over the summer to get her own golf coach and came back for her junior year a much, much improved player. Her stroke averages were, like, six, seven, or even eight strokes less than the previous year. She became a major force on the team.” Victoria is also an honors student. The State Tournament was held at the University of Maryland Golf Course on October 26. “Our team goal,” said Gillespie, “was to remain in Division II, a more competitive division that we were in a couple of years ago, and we did that. Individually, Charles Smith was consistently number one, followed by Anthony Caputo, Andy Baker, Alex Yee, Cory Thomas, and Swami Rajaram.”On August 30, at Blue Mash Golf Course in Laytonsville, the Poolesville golf team (8-9-1) began its 2010 season defeating three opponents. The Falcons scored 233, edging Magruder (234), Blake (242), and Springbrook (289). Smith led the effort, shooting 43. Caputo won his group with a 45, while Rajaram came through with a 46. Also scoring for Poolesville were Thomas (48), Baker (51), and Huang (52). In the Girls 9 Hole Tournament at Laytonsville just two days later, Lindsey Kalor and Huang both scored 46, tying for sixth out of eighteen players. Whitney Carmack came home in sixteenth.

On September 7 at Worthington Manor, the Falcons (242) lost to top finishers Sherwood (213), Gaithersburg (220), and Blake (225). The leaders for Poolesville were Smith (44), Caputo (47), Thomas (50), Kalor (50), Alex Yee (51), and Baker (60). In the second Girls Nine Hole Tournament at Laytonsville on September 15, Kalor again led the team, posting a 43. Carmack showed what she could do with a round of 44. Huang also played well, posting a score of 47. On the same day at PB Dye Golf Course in Ijamsville, Poolesville, shooting 235, posted wins over Clarksburg (245) and Springbrook, but the top finisher was Gaithersburg with 225. Smith and Caputo again led the Falcons, both scoring a 43. Baker played well, shooting a 47. Yee was next with a 49. September 21 at Little Bennett Golf Course, Poolesville (236) bested Blake (251), but could not get past Rockville (223) or Clarksburg (224). Baker was low man coming in with a 44. He was followed by Smith who posted a 47. Next were Craig Morton and Rajaram who both came home with 48s. The regular season ended on September 28 at Worthington Manor shooting 233, giving them a win over Magruder (236) but losses to Sherwood (224) and Clarksburg again (223). Smith was low man with a 42 while Yee came through with a 43.