

Passion for golf leads Erickson to 11th-place finish at state

SLEEPY EYE - A passion for golf that is second to none.

That's how Sleepy Eye United head golf coach Bryant Mages described his top boys' golfer this year in Carson Erickson.

That passion shows itself in several different ways, whether its working for career-low scores, setting his state tournament goals high or holding himself accountable when he didn't have his best day on the course.

Erickson's passion also inspires teammates, something every golf coach wants from a leader.

"Carson's passion for golf is second to none, and it inspires his teammates to be better golfers and inspires me to be a better coach," Mages said. "I can't put into words just how proud of him I am and can't wait to see what he accomplishes his senior year next year."

Erickson competed at the Class A State Golf Tournament in Becker this year for the second year in a row after reaching state with the SEU boys' golf team in 2021. He wanted a top-five finish at state this year, and while he came up short of that goal, he outdid 74 other state boys' golfers to finish in 11th place with a two-day score of 157.

Erickson was frustrated he couldn't put together the two-day performance he believed he was capable of at Pebble Creek Golf Club last week, but he's not deterred from improving over the summer and making another run at state next year.

"I'm going to try to get a little more distance in the driver," Erickson said. "You hit it farther, it'll make the game a little easier."

Erickson was an All-Journal golfer last season, and this season he took another step forward and was named the All-Journal Boys' Golfer of the Year.

Erickson also helped the SEU boys win the conference for the sixth season in a row, with a season-scoring average of 38 over nine holes. That average led the conference and came in large part to Erickson's improved putting.

Erickson also said his iron game made some progress from last season.

Erickson said the thing he was most proud of this season was his team winning the conference again, which brings into focus his leadership and team-first approach.

"Getting back to winning the conference as a team," Erickson said. "Losing a couple seniors, we didn't really know if that was doable this year, but we got it done and pulled through."

Erickson was also a unanimous selection as the Tomahawk Conference Player of the Year this season, an All-State golfer for the second time and was the medalist at 13 golf meets.

The awards and achievements for Erickson mean the hard work is paying off.

"It just shows that throughout the year, had a couple bad rounds, but for the most part, we kept it going in the right direction," Erickson said. "Just putting good rounds together even when I didn't have the best stuff, but hopefully we can do a little better next year."

Erickson will still have goals for himself in mind next season, but he's also willing to dial back his expectations when appropriate and take things meet by meet.

"After seeing the scores that were top five, it's definitely doable next year," Erickson said. "But we're going to take next year one meet at a time, try to get good rounds all year and see if we can put a couple days together at section and state time."

