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BOYS STATE GOLF WHEATON ACADEMY



Wheaton Academy's David Flynn

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Staff photo by Steve Bittinger

By Dave Owen

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If Wheaton Academy's boys golf team was fit to be tied Saturday, it didn't show in the Warriors' reaction.

Normal University High stormed from behind on the back nine Saturday to earn a share of the Class 2A boys golf state title with the Warriors (both at 643), but there was more joy to share than anything else after Wheaton Academy's first boys state team title in any sport.

"The way we look at it, we're state champions," Warriors' coach Bob Broman said. "Nobody else beat us, so we're champions. And if the IHSA wants to give out two trophies, that's their business."

Wheaton Academy played like champions, especially at the start of the final round.

Defending Class 2A individual champion David Flynn (sixth-place 152 for the tournament), Drew Biddle (tied for eighth overall at 153), Jeff Berg (169) and Lars Olson (170) all shot 39 or under on the front nine, highlighted by Flynn's 37.

"On Friday we didn't play all that well (one stroke behind Sacred Heart Griffin), but typically we bounce back so that didn't

Warriors state scores

David Flynn	75-77-152
Blake Biddle	75-78-153
Jeff Berg	83-86-169
Lars Olson	86-84-170
C.J. Urbanowski	87-85-172
Jay Gulbransen	xx-91
Elio Vento	92-xx

bother me," Broman said. "Then we came out Saturday and played very well with four guys in the 30s on the front nine. But on the back nine ... I can't explain what happened. Every boy started playing well below how they're used to playing."

The numbers say it all, as instead of having all four scorers under 30 as in the front nine, the Warriors' entire lineup suddenly posted scores of 40 or over on the back nine.

But through the struggles, Wheaton Academy hung on late. Biddle, Olson and C.J. Urbanowski (172) all parred the 17th. And while the rest of the lineup had a bogey or double bogey on the 18th, Flynn parred that hole as the Warriors

had the perfect score needed to grab the state title.

"We almost gave it away, but we didn't," Broman said of Normal University High's rally from a 12-stroke deficit through nine holes. "We had built up a big enough lead on the front nine."

The title was a fitting finish for Wheaton Academy's senior-dominated lineup. Of the top five finishers, all were seniors except sophomore Olson.

"I was very happy for our seniors," Broman said. "David Flynn was downstate all four years, and several other seniors were down there three times. To come back with the first state championship is a memory those boys will have for the rest of their lives."

Along with the championship, the closeness of the 2009 team is something Broman will remember.

"You start a few years ago with a group of individuals and see how they became close friends," Broman said. "They hung out together and did things away from golf. And in the summer they would enter the same tournaments or schedule rounds together. That's the kind of dynamic that really made it fun to coach them."