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ASHEBORO - There are some high school athletes participating in golf who are loud, boisterous, lots of high-fives and fist-pumping, maybe even a little cocky, and for some, those traits are needed to be successful.

Others are soft-spoken, quietly confident and so strong mentally that nothing seems to faze them as they make their way around a golf course - any golf course.

Southwestern Randolph High Schools' Dani Jaeck falls in the latter category, and her successful high school career continued with a second-straight Four Rivers Conference Individual Championship last week at Siler City Country Club.

She led the Cougars to the team title and is scheduled to compete Monday in the state 4-A regionals, which are being held at the Washington Yacht & Country Club in Washington.

She is looking to qualify for her third state championship tournament, having qualified as a freshman and a junior.



*SWR senior Dani Jaeck. All photos by Ken Jaeck.*



*2026 Four Rivers Conference Champion.*

"I felt normal going into it," said Jaeck, a four-time all-conference performer who finished first in the FRC Tournament, sixth at the regionals and 18th in the state last year as a junior, about heading into her final prep season.. "I wasn't too stressed about it. This year I kind of enjoyed it more, playing with a good friend of mine (senior Sarah Shaw)."

Jaeck cruised to the FRC title by carding a 94 at the Siler City Country Club, the only golfer to finish under 100, North Moore's Avery McNeill was second, 11 strokes behind with a 105. Eastern Randolph's Makenzie Richardson was sixth (114), ER's Braylen Brown was tied for seventh (116) and SWR freshmen Karissa Van Vliet (117) and Katelin Diehl (120) - both whom will compete at Regionals Monday - were ninth and tied for 10th respectively. Neither of the Cougars' first-year players had ever picked up a golf club prior to the season.

Diehl, based on her performance throughout the season, joined Jaeck on the all-league team.

In the team competition, the Cougars placed first with a score of 331. SWR was followed by North Moore (337), Northwood (342, ER (354) and Jordan-Matthews (357).

Jaeck once again showed the consistency needed to be crowned champion.



*Dani Jaeck rolls in a putt.*

"She is just consistent every round she plays," said SWR golf coach Terry Allmon, who was coaxed out of retirement one more time to lead the team. "She can drive the ball, she's not big at all, but she can hit driver good and keeps the ball in play, which is the most important thing for her. She is capable of birdieing any hole she plays. She keeps the ball in play and nothing seems to bother her. If she hits a bad one, she just forgets about it and goes to the next one. Her mental game is what separates her from other golfers."

It's taken some time, but Jaeck has perfected that part of the game.

"I don't worry about what I've done, I worry about the next thing," she said. "I stopped worrying about how other people are doing and just focus on myself."

As a freshman, she finished 21st in regionals and 59th in the state match. She placed 35th in regionals as a sophomore before her outstanding season last fall.

"She is very quiet," Allmon said. "Whenever I talk to her, you almost have to fight to get her to talk. She knows what she wants to work on and she will work on everything. She works on all of it. I know one day about everyone was gone and she was hitting balls out of the

bunker. She will work on all parts of her game."

The Cougars have also benefited from the two freshmen.

"She has one of the best swings," Allmon said of Van Vliet. "She will listen to everything you tell her. One of the guys from Tot Hill Farm was doing a little clinic and he said she could be good enough to play in college. It will take a lot of work, but she has all the tools."

Diehl has shown a lot of strength in her initial season.

"A little surprising, she never played before and she can hit the ball a long way," Allmon said. "She is really strong and has good eye-hand coordination. She has good clubhead speed through the ball."

Jaeck has obviously been a positive influence on the younger golfers.

"We don't interact as much as me and Sarah do, but we both encourage them," Jaeck said.

Randleman's Katelyn Duval and Layla White also qualified for Monday's regional tournament.