

1973 District Champions

Giants 'ready to play'

A quiet Charlie Baker, Ross golf coach, who has refrained intentionally from blowing the horn too loudly as the pressure continued its grip on the Ross high golf team, finally said it Friday.

The Giants had just repeated as district Class AA champions.

"We are ready to play in the state tournament."

It was a simple expression of the coach's belief that the Giants indeed belong in the state tournament, that they have the talent to challenge for the ultimate title in the state.

"Last year we went in the thing (the state tournament) through the back door. We didn't go in the back door this time. We went right in the front.

"Last year we played well and got the breaks. This year, we just played darn well."

Baker explained that his "back door" reference was not particularly aimed at the fact that Ross finished third in the sectional in 1972 and then went on to win the district and advance to the state. Rather, his reference was to the fact that in 1972, Ross played with two juniors and two sophomores and was not necessarily expected to make the trip.

This year, things were different.

"Ever since the Buckeye (the conference championship tournament) everybody has had us in the state. That really put the pressure on, but the kids really hung in there."

Noting the pressure that was applied by the Giants' being expected to play in the state tournament, Baker said, "You know you almost live with these kids for a couple of months and you really get to know them. Going up (to the district) in the van, they were just like someone had put a vise on their heads, the tension was that great."

But the Giants shook the pressure of being "expected to do it" and also shook the challenge of Toledo St. John's. The two ran away from the rest of the field, so Ross really had little trouble qualifying for the state.

The difficulty was in beating St. John's for the top spot.

The Giants, with Jim Decker leading the way, shot a 312, coming from behind on the back nine to edge St. John's by one stroke.

Decker fired a 37-36-73, just three strokes off the pace of

medalist John Hill of St. John's. Hill had 35-35-70 over the par 36-35-71 Glengarry Country Club course in Toledo.

"He had some unbelievable rejects on the last four or five holes," Baker said of Decker's performance. He referred to putts that appeared to be down in the cup, but came out or rimmed the hole.

The other senior in the Ross quartet, Bob Moll, had some bad luck on the back nine but still had a fine 36-41-77 for the second best round by a Ross golfer.

Moll finished the front side with two birdies and seemed to be really rolling, but on the twelfth hole, his ball hit a telephone pole inside the course and went out of bounds. Officials ruled that he had to take the penalty in spite of the fact that the pole was inside the course. With the penalty and its discouraging influence, Moll had to settle for a 41 on the back side.

It was juniors Buck Baumann and Rob Hall who really turned things around for the Little Giants on the back nine.

After nine holes, Ross trailed St. John 157-160.

Baumann had lots of trouble on the front nine, going in the water and finding the greens difficult. He had a 45—extremely high for the fine junior linksman. Hall also struggled somewhat, shooting a 42 on the front side.

But the juniors really charged on the back side as the Giants came from behind to edge St. John's.

Baumann shot a fine two-over par 37 on the back side. "He really got it together on the back side," Baker said after the meet.

Hall parred the final five holes and finished with a 38 on the backside.

The strong performances on the back nine gave Baumann an 82 and Hall an 80.

Second place St. John also got a 76 out of Greg Fedurek, an 83 from Dirk Swart and an 84 out of Matt Szymanoski.

Third place Defiance was 20 strokes behind St. John's at 333. Sylvania had 335, Tiffin Columbian shot 336 and Sandusky and Findlay tied at 337. St. Francis was eighth with 340 while Galion shot 352.

The trip to the state last year by these same four young golfers ended up with an eighth place finish. "Last year, I was just happy to be there," Baker said. "This year, as said before—we are ready to play golf."



ROSS HIGH'S LITTLE GIANTS won the district championship at Glengarry Country Club in Toledo Friday and qualified for the state Class AA golf meet: From left to right above are Bob Moll, Jim Decker, Rob Hall, Buck Baumann and coach Charlie Baker. (News-Messenger Photo by Bruce Crippen)

STATE FARM



JIM DECKER



BOB MOLL



ROB HALL



BUCK BAUMANN

Members of Ross High's district champion golf team headed to state tournament this Friday and Saturday