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EDITOR'S PICK

Girls Golf Coach of the Year: Guiendon keeps Walton on cusp

By Liam Dreesen MDJ Sports Writer
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Heather Guiendon

Special

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The Walton girls golf team finished second in the Class AAAAAAA state championship tournament, it marked the best finish by any girls team in Cobb County.

Walton coach Heather Guiendon has now coached the Raiders to back-to-back runner-up finishes in the state tournament.

For her efforts Guiendon has been named the Cobb County Girls Golf Coach of the Year by the county coaches.

“I’m very flattered.” she said, “It’s only my second year coaching golf, so I really enjoy getting to talk with the other coaches, and we’re all out there trying to support our players, and it’s always focused on any issues that come up and overcoming those. And in general, we just have a lot of fun.”

Guiendon said leadership from the top was the key to the team’s success in the state tournament.

“Our senior Saanvi Vankatesh, is a really strong, consistent player. And so she led with a 72 and then a 74 on Day 2, and she consistently comes in at or under par.” Guiendon said, “Then we have a really strong junior, Annika Gomeyac, and she actually placed third at state with a 71 and 73 so those two leaders in our senior and junior levels really carry our team tournament each weekend”

She said she is excited for Gomeyac to take over as leader of the team because she does not let the emotional things impact her play at all.

Guiendon said she is a very supportive coach and she focuses more on her players' mental aspects of the game and lets them and their swing coaches work more on the physical aspect.

"I try to help them see the positives in their game and really focus on the positives and stay in the moment." she said. "Not letting what happened previously on a hole affect them, or focus too much on what's coming next. So like one shot at a time, just staying in the moment."

Walton finished behind Lambert in the state tournament the past two years and Guiendon said it's going to remain a challenge to beat them, but she is trying to build the Raiders to be able to compete for state championships.

"I'm looking into expanding our programs so we can include middle school camps to start getting girls to play golf at a younger age." Guiendon said. "Trying to get them more experience before they get to high school."