



**JESSICA YUEN**  
**NVHS BOOSTER CLUB FEATURED ATHLETE OF THE WEEK**  
**GIRLS GOLF PROGRAM**

*The NVHS Athletic Booster Club is proud to present the featured athlete of this week, golf player JESSICA YUEN. Coach Keller chose Jessica to be the featured athlete because she embodies every value the golf program hopes for in high school athletes: incredibly high athletic achievement, hard working ethics, and strong academic performance. Not only that, Jessica is a true leader. For those who are familiar with the Featured Athlete Program, you will remember that she was nominated last year, making her the only athlete to be featured twice in a row. That is not uncommon for Jessica, though. After winning the IHSA championship again this year, she has quite possibly established herself as the top high school golfer in the State's history. She has won the state championship twice (as a sophomore and a junior) and finished second in her freshman year (and she still isn't even a senior yet!). We'll for sure be seeing more of Jessica in the future.*

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Last year we talked about your expectations and strategies for competing in the State tournament. What has changed for you since winning State in your sophomore year? How did you prepare for this year's championship?*

**Jessica:** The difference on winning state this year compared to last year was I think the competition and also the pressure and what was at stake. For me, this year was the toughest compared to freshman year and sophomore year. Competition grew as the years went by. I also knew what to expect at state because I wanted to do well and be near the top and I played there a couple of times before. Last year winning state was such an excitement and such a huge accomplishment where I was so happy. This year was more of retaining the title, keeping my name

up there and staying close to the top. It was a tough win for me because I was struggling throughout the start of high school golf. It was an up and down season where winning state this year was a huge relief for me.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *So did you feel the pressure to repeat your performance?*

**Jessica:** Yes, definitely. I was struggling so badly to a point where it was exhausting and mentally I was extremely tired. Coming from the summer I was nervous for the upcoming season and I never experienced this before. Having the name of winning state last year totally put even an enormous amount of pressure and it was hard to maintain the level of stress. I also felt as though people expected me to do well all the time, which added another level of pressure.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *How did you cope with the pressure?*

**Jessica:** It wasn't easy but I managed to let go of what people thought and tried to bring my confidence back. I started to tell myself to do my own thing and not think about what others expected me to do. I told myself that it is better that I am struggling now rather than later so I can start to fix it now. Mentally I was very down but I think starting up high school golf again started to lessen that pressure. My way of keeping my mental hygiene up is I always have music with me. Wherever I go either on or off the course I have my phone filled with music and earbuds so that whenever I get bored or I start to think too much I start listening to music so that I can relax. I didn't really change my mental preparation after winning state for the first time. I sort of tried to repeat what I did the year before and kept my emotions inside like I did in the years before.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *People say "if it's working, don't change it". Coach Keller mentioned that after winning in 2013 you worked hard on changing your swing. Why?*

**Jessica:** I had many swing changes after my sophomore year for many reasons. The most important was to be in the higher level of golf by playing with high ranked players from around the world. I wanted to get stronger and somewhat bigger so I can hit the ball farther and gain the distance I need to be prepared for college. College was my number one goal and in preparation for it I thought to myself on how I could get better. I wanted to be in the top ranked players in the world, competing with them and also having a swing that is much simpler that can easily be fixed or tweaked.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *I can see college golf is definitely in your radar. Do you know where do you want to go from here?*

**Jessica:** My immediate plans are to get ready for winter training and to finalize where I want to go to college. I'm not 100% sure on where I want to go to college yet, so I will visit colleges here and there around the Midwest and work on preparing for the next spring season. I am leaning towards engineering as my major but still not sure what I want to do just yet. I am still looking forward to college visits in the following weeks and months. I want to pick a college that fits me best and stay close to home. I have thought about playing professionally beyond college. But I think I want to go to college first and see where that takes me and if there is an opportunity to play professionally then I would decide from there.