

Trio of Northside Sisters To Make Up Lady Rams 2017-18 Golf Team

By Brian Hamilton

Karlee (16), Erika (14), and Ashlee Allen (12) will all be able to play as a team to represent Northside High School for the first time next season. Karlee and Erika have been playing as individuals but for Northside to compete as a team, they will need three players to form a team. Ashlee will enter 7th grade this fall and will now be eligible to play on the varsity team, meaning that the Allen sisters will literally be the Northside golf team. "It's just us," said Karlee. "There was another girl who used to play a few years back, but she graduated." Gregg and Kay Allen were never big golfers. "Mom never played golf," said Erika. Karlee began playing at the age of six when her father put her in the 'First Tee' program. "I cried every single day," Karlee said of having to leave her parents each day for the program.

"But I always wanted to come back" The sisters said that their dad wanted to put them in a sport when they were young, and golf was a sport where the family could all get together and play even when they were older.

In their most recent tournament through the Alabama Golf Association (AGA), all three sisters placed, with Karlee finishing in 3rd place, Erika finishing in 6th place, and Ashlee finished 2nd in the State Junior Championship. The two older sisters chose to plead the fifth when asked whether or not the youngest was as good as them. "Were in different age



PHOTO BY KAY ALLEN Sisters (L to R) Erika, Karlee, and Ashlee after competing in the Alabama Golf Association tournament in Huntsville, Alabama

of the state tournament. Karlee has advanced to the state tournament twice, in 2015 and 2017. Erika also advanced to the state tournament this past spring. Ashlee won the Birmingham Golf Association (BGA) Girls' Junior Tournament last Thursday at Indian Hills Country Club in Tuscaloosa.

In talking with Ashlee, she said it didn't take much convincing for her to take up the sport, since she had grown up watching her sisters play. Ashlee said it was a combination of her sisters playing and her enjoyment of playing as well. All three of the girls have played volleyball at the junior high level with Ashlee just recently making her junior high volleyball team. According to her parents, Karlee also has several schools scouting her to play golf at the collegiate level, while others have become aware of Erika too. "They start (recruiting) really early in golf," said Kay Allen. "In gymnastics, golf, tennis, and those sports, they start recruiting a lot earlier than the others," said Gregg Allen.

Karlee said that her favorite golf course is Bent Brook in Birmingham, while Erika said that her favorite was Musgrove Country Club in Jasper, Alabama. Ashlee said that her favorite course to play was Ol' Colony in Tuscaloosa. The sisters all now volunteer for the 'First Tee' program at Ol' Colony, with Ashlee and Erika volunteering with the 5-6 year olds and Karlee working with all age groups.

divisions," said Erika. If the three are unable to make it to the state tournament as a team next season, then they can enter the high school state tournament as individuals.

In Karlee's first year, she made it all the way to the state tournament in her 8th grade year. She shot an even par and finished in second place after the first day



PHOTO BY BRIAN HAMILTON Ashlee (12) shooting a putt on the 18th hole of the Birmingham Golf Association tournament.