

SPORTS > OC VARSITY > HIGH SCHOOL GOLF

Orange County boys golf athlete of the year: Tyler Guo of Crean Lutheran



Crean Lutheran's Tyler Guo hits a tee shot as he competes in the CIF State Boys High School Golf Championships at San Gabriel Country Club in San Gabriel on Wednesday, May 30, 2018. (Photo by Mark Rightmire, Orange County Register/SCNG)

By **DAMIAN V. DOTTORE** |

PUBLISHED: June 11, 2018 at 3:42 pm | UPDATED: June 11, 2018 at 3:43 pm



The Register's All-County boys golf team.

Tyler Guo was almost perfect.

One poor decision, one wayward shot at the CIF-SS Individual Championships among the 266 he took in May prevented the Crean Lutheran junior from completing a rare sweep of the CIF postseason boys golf tournaments.

"It was definitely frustrating," Guo said. "But I do not regret my decision. It was a win-or-die situation."

The pin on the 18th hole at Rancho San Marcos Course in Santa Barbara was on the left side of the green, and he decided take dead aim at it even though it brought water into play. He pulled his approach, sending the ball into the middle of the hazard.

He said he wouldn't have tried that shot if he would have known that he was tied for the lead at 4-under par when he walked onto the tee of the finishing hole. But his goal was to shoot a 66, which he thought would almost guarantee a victory.

That one bad shot resulted in a two-shot swing for Guo on the leaderboard, and he ended up carding a 2-under par 69 to finish sixth in the CIF-SS Individual Championships.

Guo still had a remarkable run in May, winning the CIF-SS Southern Individual Regional, the SCGA So Cal Championship and the CIF State Championship. He has been selected by the Register as the Orange County boys golfer of the year.

Guo was dominant at the end of the season, posting four consecutive rounds in the 60s and finishing the final month of the season 20 under par despite playing on some of the most challenging courses used in high school golf.

"It's probably confidence that helped me get this far," Guo said. "I know my game is great, and I will be top three for sure if I perform well. Twenty under par is just a number, but the journey is not. The true treasure is not being able to win it all, but to make my school, my parents, my friends and myself proud."

He credits the inconsistent greens used during the Saints' season for his ability to go so low during the postseason.

"It was frustrating because I know I am hitting good putts, but the ball is just not dropping due to the poor green conditions," Guo said. "So I decided to stop making excuses and learn how to adapt and overcome any course I play. The key to that is patience."

He opened the postseason with an 8-under 64 at Skylinks Golf Course to win the CIF-SS Southern Individual Regional by three strokes. His score edged the regional record set by former Servite standout Patrick Cantlay by one stroke.

That triumph was a sign of things to come.

He added a 69 at Rancho San Marcos, a 7-under-par 65 in winning the SCGA So Cal Championships at Brookside Golf Club and a 3-under-par 68 during his victory at the CIF State Championship at San Gabriel Valley Country Club.

He finished the postseason with a 66.5 scoring average.

Despite his run of low scores, he said he felt like the underdog heading into the state tournament because rarely does a player win both the So Cal championships and state in the same season. He said that mind-set gave him the attitude he needed to pull off the rare double.

"I love to compete in an environment where I am not favored to win, because it makes me care-less about the result," Gio said. "I am very proud that I was able to win back to back."