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SPORTS



Todd Chin follows through on a drive at Meshingomesia. **Photos by Sean Douglas**

Chin captures Amateur

By Sean Douglas

With a combined 12 titles between them, two of Grant County’s all-time best performers in the Grant County Amateur Tournament – Todd Chin and Andrew Varner – battled over two weekends and four rounds of golf for Grant County supremacy.

The duo was separated by one stroke after their rounds at the Marion Elks and Arbor Trace last weekend. After Saturday’s round at Walnut Creek, the gap remained the same, as Varner, an eight-time champion, headed into the final day at Meshingomesia leading by one stroke.

“That was probably the closest tournament I’ve seen,” Varner said. “It was one or two shots over the last 36 holes. Usually some is way ahead or way behind.



Todd Chin accepts his first place plaque from Robbie Riddle, Meshingomesia's Golf Professional.

This year it was [a grind] on every shot.”

Behind a strong performance on the back nine, seven straight pars, and a clutch birdie putt on 17, Chin secured his fifth Grant County Amateur title this past Sunday.

“When the first weekend of the county [tournament] rolled around, I was feeling pretty decent,” Chin said. “I hit my irons good there, and I knew that was going to propel me. I just built on it from there.”

Chin finished with a 74

(+2) and a final score of 282, while Varner, who saw his two-year winning streak snapped, finished with a 75 (+3) and a final score of 283.

“I never did anything horrible today, but I never did anything to put any pressure on Todd,” Varner said. “He played well. He hit a great shot on 17 that pretty much won the tournament, I think.”

In any golf tournament, albeit amateur or professional, a win or a loss often comes down to one or two shots.

Chin sealed his victory on the second to last hole.

“I just wanted to hit a solid shot off the tee, and I did,” Chin said. “That set me up for a perfect nine iron into 17. It calmed me down.”

After his strong drive,

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Plymouth Club selected for County HOF

By Sean Douglas

While the Grant County Sports Hall of Fame is full of incredible individual athletes, it also features a plethora of tremendous teams that made their mark in Grant County sports history.

Six of the Marion Giants’ eight state champion basketball teams, including the Dream Team from 1985-1987, are enshrined. So, too, are the 1984 Marion baseball team, the 1954 Mississinewa Indians basketball team, the 1969-1970 Oak Hill football team, and countless others.

This year, another successful, and historic, group will join the ranks, as the Plymouth Club Bombers, who dominated fast-pitch softball from 1976-1985, are set to be inducted as part of the Hall of Fame’s 12th class.

Hall of Fame as individuals. They were so good.

“It was a lifestyle. When summer hit, these guys lived at the diamond.”

With managers like Rollin “Maggie” Lounsbury, Leon Zachary, and John Hoffman leading the charge, together with players like Jeff Timmons, Ronny Carmin, and former Mississinewa Athletic Director and baseball legend Rick Atkinson, the Bombers were the premier summer attraction in the city of Marion.

In an era before smartphones, Netflix, and the Internet, the Bombers drew crowds by the thousands to watch them play at Matter Park.

The Bombers are just the second non-high or college team to be inducted into the Hall, and the first since the Twin City Bankers were inducted back in 2015.

Over a period of 10 years, the Bombers, which fielded players from Marion, Anderson, Muncie, Greentown, and other cities across the state, dazzled the city of Marion every summer with their skill, their drive, and ultimately, their love of the game of softball. The team won three state championships in 1978, 1979, and 1982, and competed around the Midwest in states like Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois.

“This is when fast pitch softball was king,” Grant County Sports Hall of Fame President Andy McCord said. “There were guys from all around the region that came and wanted to play for the Bombers. This is a team that had multiple members of the softball

“It was not unusual back in the day to see the Plymouth Club Bombers playing in a tournament or a game [at Matter Park,] and there would be 4,000 people watching a game,” McCord said. “It was a spectacle to see, it was entertaining, and the softball was really, really good, too.”

“People got together and they did things. That was part of the attraction of it – going out and spending the whole day hanging out and watching the tournaments. Not only were they family members and friends, but they were a talented group of players. They were treated like Major League players, and justifiably so.”

While the aforementioned players and managers enabled the team to perform at such a high level, the Bombers’ meteoric rise would not have been possible without Kerry Clevenger, one of the team’s biggest sponsors during their incredible 10-year stretch.

“I think [it was] the combination of the talent and players that they had and

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