



### **By Jan Rahn**

*Managing Editor*

With 12 Plainsmen golfers on the roster, six of whom are seniors, Coach Troy Kemling said the team's strength will come from their leadership.

Entering the season, Perkins County golfers will take part in a dual at home on Monday against Creek Valley.

There are four returning letter winners, all seniors; two more seniors, two juniors, three sophomores and one freshman rounding out the team.

Many of the boys have played competitive golf since they were freshmen and they will need to play level-headed, consistent golf, said Kemling.

"One of my goals for the season is to work on our short game enough that it becomes our team's strength," he said. "The quickest way for improvement is through the short game."

Kemling said not qualifying as a team for state in the past is the weakness—last year the team played off for the final qualifying spot and lost.

None of the players has been on a team that qualified, and senior Alex Johnston is the only individual to qualify for the state meet, explained Kemling.

"We have to believe that we are individually and collectively good enough to deserve to go," he said. "We need to turn this weakness into a motivator for us, driving us to higher standards each day."

A big disappointment was losing golfer Caleb Breazeale for the season due to a knee injury suffered at the end of the basketball season.

"His experience and leadership will be missed," said Kemling.

Districts this season are probably the most challenging the team has had in the past few years, he said. The Perkins County Plainsmen have hosted districts at Westwind [Ogallala] for the past three years, which is the only course the seniors have played to earn a trip to state.

Kemling said this year the team travels to Kearney for districts to play at Meadowlark Hills, a course with many water hazards to traverse.

They will also play against tough competitors from St. Pat's, Valentine and Kearney Catholic. Golfers include: Seniors Blake Poppe, Alex Johnston\*, Austin Thelander\*, Colton White\*, Jake Sexson\*, and Cole Whalen; juniors Kelan Sis and Chase Miyamoto; sophomores Kaden Kammerer, Shane Ourada, and Brennan Toner; and freshman Austin Fay. The asterisk (\*) depicts letter winner.