

Arriola looking forward to joining Barton golf program



Louisburg senior A.J. Arriola recently signed his letter of intent to join the Barton Community College golf program in Great Bend.

A.J. Arriola didn't think golf was going to be his future in college, outside of just playing in his free time.

Louisburg's run to the state tournament last season changed all that for him. Arriola helped his team qualify for state and he played in the state tournament for the first time in his career.

One might consider it a life-altering experience. When that happened, Arriola knew he wasn't done playing competitively.

The Louisburg senior found a home as he recently signed with Barton Community College to join the golf program in Great Bend.

"I knew I wanted to play golf in college since last year around the time we made it to state," Arriola said. "Making it to state was a confidence booster and I knew if I devoted my time to improving I could play at the next level."



Louisburg's A.J. Arriola signed with the Barton Community College golf program in front of family and friends earlier this year. Seated next to A.J. is his father John Arriola, his sister Julia and his mother Shelly Gibson. Standing (from left) is Louisburg assistant coach Barry O'Brien and head coach Brian Burns.

Arriola has certainly put in the time as he has become the Wildcats' No. 1 golfer this season after making strides as a junior. He has earned four individual medals already this season, with two more meets left on the schedule before postseason action gets underway.

That success is what Arriola hopes to bring to the Barton program – one that is ranked 20th in the country for junior colleges. It was a program that he quickly grew to enjoy, along with head coach Doug Kaiser.

“What made me love Barton was how nice the coach was,” Arriola said. “He showed that he cares a lot about his players and it definitely played a role into my decision. My expectations aren't that high for myself, I am just going to focus on my game, improve and hopefully will succeed.”

Now that his college decision is made, Arriola can now focus

on the rest of his high school career, including making another trip to the state tournament.

After just missing the cut on the first day of state last season, Arriola is focused on getting back and making a run in the second day.

“I have two goals for my last season and that is making it to state and finishing first in a tournament,” Arriola said. “Hopefully I can accomplish both those things.”