

Practice. Perseverance. Putting.

Katch Edge has spent most of the last three years living those words.

The COVID-19 pandemic provided Edge plenty of time to play golf with his father, Kevin. Those rounds helped Edge realize his future in the sport could be brighter than he initially thought.

Last fall, a partial tear of the patella, a Grade 2 sprain of the medial collateral ligament and a dislocated kneecap in his right knee tested Edge's patience and ultimately helped him understand how hard he needed to work to realize his dreams.

Edge's dream to play sports in college became reality Friday morning when the New Hope High School senior announced his plans to play golf at Itawamba Community College during a signing ceremony in the school's multi-purpose room.

"When COVID hit, I really hadn't thought about golf," Edge said. "I would play it whenever family played it because that is what we did, but I never thought anything special about it.

"Throughout COVID, I noticed I was getting better at it. By the time school started after COVID, I discovered I was a whole lot better at golf than I would ever be at baseball, so I decided to move (from baseball) to golf."

Edge played in only two golf tournaments before the injury, which forced him to miss six weeks of golf and five weeks of playing center for the New Hope High football team. He admitted he had grown tired of sitting on the couch and was "ready to roll" as soon as he was cleared. When Edge was cleared to return to action, he played in only one golf tournament before the two-day state championship.

And while Edge would have loved to have received an offer to play football in college, he understands things happen for a reason and that he is excited about focusing on one sport.

“I always tell people I love football, but there is something about golf that brings me great peace,” Edge said. “I have no problem keeping up with that.”

Growing up, Edge played football, basketball and baseball and said he never really was 100 percent committed to golf. His confidence grew in those rounds with his father four to five times a week during the pandemic. He said those rounds helped convince him he needed to transition from the diamond to the links.

Kevin Edge said he could tell Katch’s interest and love for golf grew as he improved. He said Katch also played golf with his men’s group, which fueled his competitive fire.

“It is a sweet day, but it is a bittersweet day because he would rather play football,” said Edge, who played football at ICC and met his wife, Angie, at the school. Kevin and Angie also coached the New Hope High golf teams. “It is a cool story because he persevered and he has come a long way in a short time. We are very proud of the way he hung in there.”

Despite missing a chunk of the golf season, which was held in the fall for the first time, Edge tied for fourth (163) at the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) Class 5A Golf Championship at Shiloh Ridge Golf Club in Corinth. Edge was in contention for the title with nine holes to play (Corinth High’s Henry Huggins shot 160 to win), but he acknowledged having to walk the course so soon after his injury may have played a role in his finish. That’s why he is hungry to apply

everything he learned while he was injured and to focus on putting and the rest of his golf game.

“There are times it is going to get hard, but nothing is too hard,” Edge said. “You just have to stay at it and keep working and not give up. Set a goal and don’t stop until you achieve a goal.”