Golfers Finish Second at First Fall Event

Sophomore Rick Cochran placed second individually as well.

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OOLTEWAH, Tenn. - Rick Cochran fired a final-round 73 en route to second-place individual honors and Middle Tennessee posted a second-place team finish as well here at the 2006 Scenic City Invitational at The Honors Course. The Blue Raiders battled soft, wet and windy conditions during Tuesday's final round, posting a team score of 308 that included Cochran's one-over-par round as well as a three-over-par round from freshman Kent Bulle. Middle Tennessee finished second behind Charlotte, besting SEC programs Mississippi State and Ole Miss, Conference USA schools Southern Miss, Memphis and UAB, Sun Belt foe South Alabama and ACC school Virginia. Head coach Johnny Moore was very pleased with his team's performance against probably the toughest field the squad will face all year and on one of the most difficult golf courses that any of the players have ever seen. "I'm very happy with the way the team played. A top eight or nine finish against this field would have been very good for us," Moore said. "We got off to a great start with the 285 [Monday]. That's an outstanding score. We lost a little bit of our intensity the final two rounds and the course got harder and harder, but we saw a lot of positives and we'll take those with us as we play more tournaments this fall." Moore said his young team of two freshmen, two sophomores and one junior performed admirably despite its lack of experience at this level and against this type of competition. "We know [Nick] Bailes is going to play better, but the other guys stepped up and we played well as a team in all three rounds. No one quit or got their head down," Moore said. "The weather wasn't real kind to us [Tuesday], but the mark of a good team is to keep plugging until the very end and we did that." Sophomore Cochran had an up-and-down round with three birdies, four bogeys, an eagle and one double bogey. The Paducah, Ky., native had three bogeys and two birdies on the front nine, double bogeyed the par-3 16th after hitting his tee shot in the water but came back with an eagle on the par-5 17th. He placed second with his three-round total of 216, two shots behind UAB's Garrett Osborn. "I had a couple of three putts in the middle of my round, at 6 and 7, but I think this is one of the smartest rounds I've played," Cochran said. "I made a few putts down the stretch to keep that score." Cochran said he learned valuable lessons last season, albeit the hard way, that made a big difference on Tuesday. "The difference is knowing when to go at holes and when not to, learning how valuable a bogey is compared to a double [bogey] and taking [double bogeys] out of play," he said. "Experience the hard way last year really taught me some of those lessons. But I also think a lot of it has to do with confidence and

knowing that if I aim away from the flagstick to hit a smart shot, that's where I'll hit it." Bulle battled his way to a second straight round of 75, including a birdie at the par-5 17th hole. His final score of 224 placed the Glasgow, Ky., native ninth in his first collegiate tournament. "This was a really tough course. I wanted to play well enough to help the team and I think I did that," Bulle said. "I had personal goals but not really a number in my head. You have to play each hole and then add up the numbers at the end. "This has been two long days and definitely a different experience from high school for me. Coach [Whit] Turnbow said that at some point everyone will get tired and then it's not about ability but guts, who wants it more. I just tried to battle each round and keep hitting good shots." Sophomore Chas Narramore struggled through a tough front nine, but shot even par on the backside for a final round 79. The Kingston, Tenn., native carded three double bogeys in the round after none in his two rounds of 72 on Monday, but fought back with birdies on 11 and 14. His three-round total of 224 was good enough to tie for seventh overall. Redshirt freshman Craig Smith birdied the par-5 2nd hole but struggled through most of the rest of his round, including three straight bogeys to start the back nine. He got up-and-down on the 18th hole for a par and a round of 81. His three-round score of 233 placed the Springfield, Tenn., native tied for 39th place. Junior Nick Bailes posted rounds of 77-83-83 on the 7,200-yard plus course and tied for 74th overall in the individual scores. Bailes had trouble all three rounds after leading the squad in qualifying coming into the week. Middle Tennessee returns to action next week at the Jaguar Intercollegiate on the Azalea City Golf Course in Mobile, Ala. **2006 Scenic City Invitational**

Final Individual Scores

2. Rick Cochran 67-79-73=216
t7. Chas Narramore 72-72-79=223
9. Kent Bulle 74-75-75=224
t39. Craig Smith 72-80-81=233
t74. Nick Bailes 77-83-83=243

Final Team Scores

1. Charlotte 294-296-300=890
2. Middle Tennessee 285-306-308=899
3. Mississippi State 300-295-306=901
4. UAB 305-301-302=908
5. Memphis 301-305-304=910
6. Ole Miss 294-305-313=912
7. Chattanooga 302-308-304=914
8. UT-Arlington 303-303-315=921
t9. Southeastern Louisiana 305-312-314=931
t9. Louisiana Tech 310-307-314=931
11. Rice 305-314-318=937
12. Mercer 311-316-313-940
13. Virginia 317-310-315=942
14. Furman 297-315-332=944
15. Southern Miss 316-307-323=946
16. South Alabama 314-312-321-947
17. Francis Marion 314-309-325-948

TOURNAMENT NOTES

COURSE FAMILIARITY: The Honors Course was host to the Tennessee Amateur Match Play Championships and four Blue Raiders participated in the event - Chas Narramore, Nick Bailes, Craig Smith and head coach Johnny Moore. The course was set at up 6,800 yards for that event, more

than 400 yards shorter than this week's event. Former Blue Raider Josh Nelms won the event, while all three Blue Raider players made it through the 36 holes of stroke play and into the match play rounds. **UNDER PAR ROUNDS:** Rick Cochran's first-round 67 was one of just seven rounds under par on the first 18 holes and one of 12 through the first 36 holes of the tournament. Only two rounds under par were posted on the final 18 holes. Also, Chas Narramore's pair of even-par 72's was very rare as well. Just five other even par rounds were fired during the 54-hole tournament.

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