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Smith's strong run at U.S. Amateur ends in round of 64

Blue Raider sophomore falls 3-2 in match play

MT Media Relations

SAN FRANCISCO - [Craig Smith](#)'s impressive showing at the 107th United States Amateur came to an end Wednesday but not before the Middle Tennessee sophomore enjoyed a strong run that saw him reach the field of 64 at The Olympic Club in San Francisco.

Smith finished 4-over 144 and tied for 25th overall out of the 312-player field during the two-round stroke play portion of the tournament. Smith's two-day play enabled him to make the cut and earn a spot among the top 64 amateurs in the world.

The low medalist at the 2007 Sun Belt Conference championships as a freshman, Smith was paired against UT-Chattanooga's Jonathan Hodge in the first round of match play and, despite playing extremely well, suffered a 3-and-2 setback.

"It was a great experience and I believe I gave myself a good chance throughout the tournament," Smith said. "I didn't necessarily play my best throughout but I was able to battle through some things and hang in there. I was really pleased with the mental part of things and how I approached that on a very difficult course against some of the best amateur players in the world."

Smith was even on the par-4 No. 2, and Hodge birdied to go 1-up and he was able to maintain at least that much of an advantage throughout the 16 holes that were played before the match was decided.

Smith was solid on the front nine but was 2-down despite a 1-over 71 at the turn. Hodge took a 2-up advantage when he birdied the par-4 No. 6, but Smith got back to within 1-up when he birdied the par-4 No. 7.

Hodge picked went 2-up at No. 9 and increased his advantage to 3-up after No. 11. From there the in-state rivals matched one another hole for hole before the match was decided after No. 16.



Craig Smith reached the round of 64 at the U.S. Amateur in San Francisco. (Bradley Lambert)

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