# Men's golf finishes seventh at SBC Championships

## Turnbow named Coach of Year

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**MUSCLE SHOALS, Ala.** - Middle Tennessee's tournament winning streak ended at four at the Sun Belt Conference Men's Golf Championships here Wednesday after the No. 51-ranked Blue Raiders concluded the event with a seventh-place finish.

Although the Blue Raiders entered the tournament as the favorite as the highest-ranked team in the field, they failed to perform up to expectations on the Fighting Joe Course at the Robert Trent Jones at the Shoals facility and ended with a 5-over 869.

Denver won the team title with an 11-under 853, edging New Orleans by one stroke. South Alabama's Johnny Caldwell won the individual championship with an 11-under 205.

Even though the Blue Raiders failed to capture the league's automatic berth into a NCAA Golf Regional, first-year head coach Whit Turnbow believes his team has done enough to secure an at-large berth into the postseason event.

"The streak had to end sometime and we are all disappointed in the way we played here at this tournament," said Turnbow, who was voted the Sun Belt's Coach of the Year. "This is a small setback in what has been a phenomenal year and there is no way we are going to let this get us down because we have a lot of golf yet to be played.

"We set a goal before the start of the season to put ourselves in position not to have to win this tournament to get in a regional and we have done that. This is why we played the schedule we did. We look forward to getting into a regional and showcasing our game at the national level."

Blue Raider junior standout Chas Narramore was named first-team All-Sun Belt for the second straight season after another outstanding season. Rick Cochran also earned first-team All-Sun Belt honors after a strong tournament. Narramore finished 1-under 215 after shooting a 1-under 71 Wednesday and concluded the tournament tied for 14th. He was the only Blue Raider to shoot under par Wednesday.

"I don't think any of us really played as well as we are capable here this week but that happens. We just had it happen at the wrong time," Narramore said. "We have had a great season and we have worked hard to put ourselves in position where we could get an at-large even if we did not win the Sun Belt. I hope the committee values our body of work because we believe we have done enough. We just didn't put it together as a team for these three days and you have to be at your best to win the conference championship."

Cochran was 1-over 73 Wednesday and 2-under 214 for the tournament to finish tied for 12th. His strong season and subsequent play in the SBC Championships earned him all-SBC for the first time in his strong career. Kent Bulle, Jason Millard and Nick Bailes were each 2-over 74 Wednesday. Bulle finished the tournament 5-over 221, followed by Millard at 6-over 222. After a tough start that saw him finish 9-over 81Monday, Bailes rallied and finished 11-over 227 for the tournament.

The NCAA Regional participants will be announced May 5.

Sun Belt Conference Men's Championships
Robert Trent Jones at the Shoals
Fighting Joe Course, Par 72
Final Team Scores
1 Denver 284-280-289 853 -11
2 New Orleans 289-285-280 854 -10
3 South Alabama 290-282-284 856 -8
4 Western Kentucky 291-286-280 857 -7
5 Louisiana-Lafayette 280-289-294 863 -1
6 Troy 294-286-287 867 +3
**7 Middle Tennessee 293-284-292 869 +5**
8 North Texas 288-288-294-870 +6
9 Louisiana-Monroe 299-286-291 876 +12
10 UALR 296-288-300 884 +20
11 Arkansas State 297-299-306 902 +38
12 Florida Atlantic 304-309-295 908 +44

**7 Middle Tennessee (869)**
T12 Rick Cochran 73-68-73 214 -2
T14 Chas Narramore 71-73-71 215 -1
T29 Kent Bulle 76-71-74 221 +5
T33 Jason Millard 73-75-74 222 +6
49 Nick Bailes 81-72-74 227 +11

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