

April 23, 2008

Women's golf finishes strong, ties for fourth at SBC Championships

Durham named All-SBC for fourth straight year

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MUSCLE SHOALS, Ala. - Middle Tennessee women's golf team put together a strong tournament run that concluded with a tie for fourth at the Sun Belt Conference Championships here Wednesday. The fourth-place finish was just one spot off the team's highest finish in the league.

The Blue Raiders' strong close enabled the team to finish near the top of the standings under first-year coach Chris Adams, whose team played the final five holes under par and closed the third round at 305 - the third-best round of the spring.

"When you look at the scores we really played well down the stretch and I'm very proud of the girls," Adams said. "We had a triple on 18 or we would have had a shot at an even higher finish. We had a little struggle in the middle of the round today but the players really battled back and I'm proud of that and how they performed overall."

Denver won the tournament going away with an 8-over 872, finishing 42 shots ahead of second-place UALR. Senior [Taryn Durham](#) was named to the All-SBC team for the fourth time in her illustrious career.

"I can't say enough about [Taryn Durham](#) and [Jamey Dillard](#) and the senior leadership they provided this spring," Adams said. "I'm glad I had the opportunity to coach them and get to know them this spring because as good as they are in golf, they are even better people. They are both such hard workers."

Junior [Leigh Wilkins](#), a Murfreesboro native who prepped at Oakland High School, was outstanding in the tournament and was the team's highest finisher. Wilkins concluded the tournament with an eighth-place finish at 10-over 226 - her highest finish in three conference tournaments. After shooting 5-over 77 in Monday's first round, Wilkins played the next two rounds at a combined 5-over-par.

"I think I could have played a little better but overall I am pleased," Wilkins said. "This is a good finish and something positive to build on going into my senior year. I think we played well as a team at the end and probably did better than people would have thought coming into the tournament."

Durham finished 13th in her final tournament as a Blue Raider with a 13-over 229, followed by freshman [Morgan Hale](#) who tied for 19th with a 233. Sophomore [Clara Leathers](#) was tied for 29th with a 236 and Dillard closed with a 237. All five Blue Raider golfers were among the top half of the field.

"I believe the future is bright and the girls are more comfortable with me now and we can build on this with some talented players coming back," Adams said. "I'm already looking forward to next year and the possibilities we have as a program. We are never going to be satisfied with being fourth at Middle Tennessee but I'm pleased that we made a good run at the end of the spring and have three of the players back that were in the lineup at the end."

Sun Belt Conference Championships

Robert Trent Jones at the Shoals

Schoolmaster Course, Par 72

Final Team Scores

1 Denver 288-296-288 872 +8

2 UALR 309-305-300 914 +50

3 South Alabama 305-305-307 917 +53

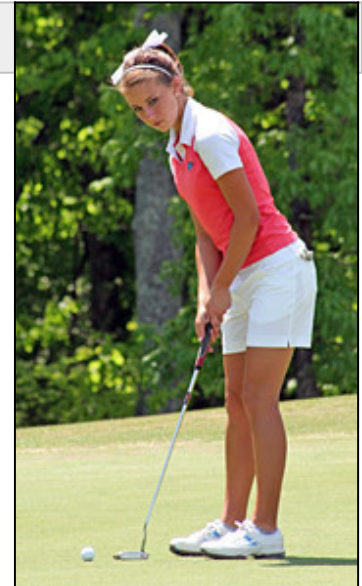
T4 Middle Tennessee 305-308-305 918 +54

T4 Florida International 305-311-302 918 +54

6 Florida Atlantic 314-312-303 929 +65

7 North Texas 322-308-306 936 +72

8 Arkansas State 317-305-317 939 +75



Junior Leigh Wilkins, who finished eighth at the SBC Championships, putts for par on No. 17. (B. Lambert)

9 Western Kentucky 328-303-312 943 +79
10 Louisiana-Monroe 316-317-321 954 +90
11 Troy 327-319-323 969 +105

T4 MT Scores (918)

8 [Leigh Wilkins](#) 77-73-76 226 +10
13 [Taryn Durham](#) 77-76-76 229 +13
T19 [Morgan Hale](#) 75-82-76 233 +17
T29 [Clara Leathers](#) 76-83-77 236 +20
31 [Jamey Dillard](#) 80-77-80 237 +21

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