

May 31, 2008

## Golfers conclude memorable season 15th at National Championships

### Blue Raiders cap historical season in event's final round

MT Media Relations

**WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind.** - One of the most successful seasons for any Middle Tennessee team culminated when the Blue Raider men's golf team made the cut at the NCAA Division I Men's National Championship and eventually finished No. 15 after Saturday's final round.

The Blue Raiders, which won a school-record five tournaments in 2007-08, including four in succession, became the only team in program history (Division I era) to play on the final day of its respective sports' national championship. Middle Tennessee accomplished this feat after earning the program's first at-large berth in the NCAA East Region and subsequently reaching the Division I National Championships for the first time.

Once there, Middle Tennessee's players proved their worth among the nation's top 30 teams and made the cut to reach the final round.

"I knew this group was special at the beginning of the season and I knew they could do special things," first-year Head Coach Whit Turnbow said. "I really believed we could get into a regional this year and see what happens. Did I expect to be playing in the final round of the National Championships this year? We believed we could get here but to make the cut was even more special. Our kids proved they belonged and I am so proud of them and their accomplishments. They worked hard for it and they received the rewards that go along with sacrifice and commitment. This group is why you enjoy coaching young men. I have some of the best you could ask for and that's in all aspects of their lives."

The Blue Raiders had to sweat out their final destiny overnight and into the morning after play was suspended due to inclement weather during Friday's second round. When play resumed Saturday morning Auburn owned a four-stroke lead on Middle Tennessee but shot 5-over on the dreadful No. 18 to fall one shot back and off the cut line, moving the Blue Raiders into 15th.

The drama was not over. Texas had pulled to within one shot of Middle Tennessee on the front but the Longhorns ran into trouble on their closing holes and couldn't overtake the Blue Raiders. Next on the list was Indiana, which had also pulled to within one shot but the Hoosiers also were doomed on No. 18.

"The wait was tough and then being at the course this morning and seeing all of it unfold made for some nervous moments," said junior [Chas Narramore](#), who finished strong at 3-over on a day when the course was at its toughest due to extremely strong crosswinds. "Once we knew we had made the cut it was pretty exciting. To know you are playing on the final day of the National Championship is something you always will remember. We were standing with the nation's best on the final day, that's pretty good."

Freshman [Jason Millard](#) came up strong on the national stage, turning in a Top 20 finish with a 12-over 300 - tied for 18th individually. He had moved to as high as sixth during one point in the final round.

"I played pretty consistent this week but I think I could have finished a little stronger," Millard said. "This has been a great experience for all of us. We knew we were good enough to get to the National Championships and we hung in there well for the most part this week. We had a chance to finish higher but this is something we can build on for next year."

Rick Cochran finished at 22-over 310 for the tournament and amongst the top half of the field, tied for 55th. Narramore overcame a tough week with his strong final round and was 23-over for the tournament, good for a tie for 60th.

Sophomore Kent Bulle tied for 69th at 26-over, and senior Nick Bailes concluded his career in style with his 5-over 77 counting on the final day of the National Championships. He was 28-over for the tournament and tied for 71st. His even-par 72 in the second round tied for Middle Tennessee's low round of the tournament.



Junior Rick Cochran is interviewed by Channel 5's Brian McKeegan during a reception for the golf team upon its return from the National Championship Saturday night. The Blue Raiders made the cut and finished 15th. (MT)

#### NCAA Division I Men's Golf National Championships

##### Birck Boilermaker Golf Complex

##### Kampen Course, Par-72

##### Final team scores

- 1 UCLA 297-293-298-306 1194 +42
- 2 Stanford 309-288-296-302 1195 +43
- 3 USC 297-294-300-305 1200 +48
- 4 Oklahoma St. 298-296-301-305 1200 +48

5 Clemson 301-288-302-310 1201 +49  
6 Kent St. 301-297-302-304 1204 +52  
7 Washington 305-290-307-306 1208 +56  
T8 Charlotte 306-295-306-303 1210 +58  
T8 Georgia 303-293-305-309 1210 +58  
10 Louisville 311-296-300-306 1213 +61  
11 Florida 302-291-306-315 1214 +62  
12 Texas A&M 309-294-306-307 1216 +64  
13 Alabama 309-297-297-315 1218 +66  
14 San Diego St. 310-303-294-315 1222 +70  
**15 Middle Tennessee 309-293-311-312 1225 +73**

**Missed Cut**

Auburn 306-304-304 914 +50  
Arizona St. 311-293-312 916 +52  
Illinois 302-302-312-916 +52  
Texas 311-309-297 917 +53  
UC-Irvine 320-297-302 919  
Indiana 313-310-297 920 +56  
UAB 311-297-315 923 +59  
Wake Forest 314-304-305 923 +59  
East Tennessee 313-300-310 923  
Penn St. 315-297-313 926 +62  
Virginia 312-307-312 931 +67  
Mississippi St. 326-297-312 935 +71  
Oregon 315-304-316 935 +71  
Augusta St. 326-308-302 936 +72  
St. Mary's (CA) 333-309-307 949 +85

**15 MT Team Scores (1225)**

T18 [Jason Millard](#) 77-72-73-78 300 +12  
T55 Rick Cochran 75-73-80-82 310 +22  
T60 [Chas Narramore](#) 80-76-80-75 311 +23  
T69 Kent Bulle 77-77-78-82 314 +26  
T71 Nick Bailes 86-72-81-77 +28

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