Women's golfers open with one of best tourney totals in school history

Freshmen lead way as Blue Raiders finish second

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GLENCOE, Ala. - Two freshmen making their college debut led Middle Tennessee to a second-place finish with one of the top three-round totals in school history at the Chris Banister Gamecock Classic at Silver Lakes Golf Course this weekend. Karisa Akin and Steph Gough carded Top 10 finishes in their debut to help lead the Blue Raiders to their highest finish under second-year coach Chris Adams. Akin closed at 4-over 220 to tie for fourth and Gough shot 7-over 223 for seventh. Akin improved her score in each round and finished with a 1-under 71 Sunday. Gough led the tournament entering the final round after shooting 2-under in Saturday's second round but she slipped on the leader board with a 79 Sunday. "If you would have me the two freshmen would do what they did I may have been a little surprised," Adams said. "Not that I don't have confidence in them because they are talented but with it being their first tournament and the nerves and pressure, they did a great job. Now the first-tournament jitters are behind us and I think the expectation bar is a little higher." The three-round 905 team total is the lowest for the Blue Raiders under Adams by 10 strokes and all six players were among the top 30 in the field. The 905 total is the sixth-best three-round total in school history. "Going in I knew any one of them could be contending for No. 1 on this team and in the tournament and it prove to be true in this case," Adams said. "Everybody hung in there day-to-day and we eliminated numbers that really kept us low. There is room for improvement but we are headed in the right direction." Seniors Leigh Wilkins and Mallory

Bishop tied for 11th at 13-over, Clara Leathers was 26th with a 235 and Morgan Hale tied for 29th with a 237. Middle Tennessee was 13 shots behind winner Chattanooga and finished eight shots better than third-place Southern Miss. The Blue Raiders may have had a better shot of pressuring Chattanooga for the lead if not for some missed opportunities down the stretch in Friday's first round, however; they bounced back and took advantage by eliminating slip-ups. The Blue Raiders led the tournament with 177 pars. Akin's 40 pars in 54 holes were tops in the tournament, Gough was second with 37 and Wilkins tied for fifth with 35. **Chris Banister Gamecock Classic**

Silver Lakes Golf Course, Glencoe, Ala.

Final Team Scores

1 Chattanooga 288-299-291 878 +14

2 Middle Tennessee 303-299-303 905 +27

3 Southern Miss 309-310-294 913 +35

4 Jacksonville State 310-306-301 917 +39

5 Murray State 308-304-310 922 +44

6 Eastern Kentucky 314-314-315 943 +65

7 Western Kentucky 309-310-325 944 +66

8 Florida Gulf Coast 315-315-320 950 +72

9 Austin Peay 322-315-316 953 +75

10 Northeastern State 321-347-316 984 +106

2 MT Scores 905

T4 Karisa Akin 75-74-71 220 +4

7 Steph Gough 74-70-79 223 +7

T11 Leigh Wilkins 75-77-77 229 +13

26 Clara Leathers 80-78-77 235 +19

T29 Morgan Hale 79-80-78 237 +21

T11 Mallory Bishop 78-75-76 229 +13 *

* played as individual

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