

October 27, 2008

Strong start puts men's golf in title contention

Blue Raiders tied for second at Sam Hall Intercollegiate

Athletic Communications

HATTIESBURG, Miss. - Middle Tennessee men's golf coach Whit Turnbow has warned of what could happen if his Blue Raiders ever got off to a good start in a fall tournament. The field at the Sam Hall Intercollegiate found out Monday.

For the first time in four fall events, Middle Tennessee got off to a strong start and is tied for second, five shots behind New Orleans, entering Tuesday's final round of 13-team field at the Hattiesburg Country Club. Tuesday's final round will mark the first time Middle Tennessee has played in the last tee group on closing day this fall.

The Blue Raiders have enjoyed strong rounds and reputable finishes this fall; however, slow first rounds have forced them to play from behind on each occasion, but not on this day. This was a day when Middle Tennessee's lineup started hot on a tough, windy, chilly afternoon, and remained in contention throughout.

Senior [Chas Narramore](#) led the Blue Raider scoring and is tied for fifth overall at 3-over 145, three shots off the individual lead. Sophomore [Jason Millard](#) and freshman [Brad Simons](#) enter the final round tied for eighth at 5-over, while [Rick Cochran](#) is tied for 27th at 7-over and [Craig Smith](#) shot 9-over.

"We finally got off to a good start and played ourselves into the last group with a chance to win," Turnbow said. "It is a tough course and the conditions were tough today but I believe I have a group of tough guys and they are excited to be back in the first group."

No team shot under par in either of the first two rounds as the elements were difficult with strong north winds that made the 50-degree temperature seem even cooler. It didn't faze the Blue Raiders, who came out with a 5-over 289 to lead the field after the first round.

Narramore's impressive start keyed the important opening round. His 2-under 69 in the opening round was one of just seven sub-par rounds turned in during either of Monday's first two rounds. He nailed four birdies on the back and closed with consecutive birdies on 16, 17 and 18 to play the back at 4-under in his opening round.

Simons also was one of the day's bright moments and big stories. The freshman from Mountain Home, Ark., had 11 birdies in his first two rounds, including seven in the first round when he turned in the Blue Raiders' other sub-par round with a career-best 1-under 70. He followed with a 77 in the second to tie for eighth after the first two rounds.

"To have Chas and Brad turn in rounds under par was great under these conditions today," Turnbow said. "There weren't too many players to do that. I'm really excited for (Simons). He played as well as he has since he's been here but it is his third tournament so it's time. Any round under par out here today was a strong round. For a freshman to turn that in was quite impressive."

Millard eagled No. 17 and followed with a birdie on 18 to play the back nine of his second round at 3-under and played the entire round at even to climb into a tie for eighth entering the final round.

The Blue Raiders will close out the fall campaign with Tuesday's final round.

The Sam Hall Intercollegiate

Hattiesburg Country Club, Par-71

Second round team scores

1 New Orleans 296-285 581 +13

T2 Middle Tennessee 289-297 586 +18

T2 Jacksonville State 295-291 586 +18

4 Southern Mississippi 292-296 588 +20

5 Illinois State 300-290 590 +22

6 Arkansas State 293-301 594 +26


7 Longwood Univ. 299-298-597 +29

8 Troy 300-299 599 +31

9 Austin Peay 298-302 600 +32

10 Murray State 298-303 601 +33



Chas Narramore's 69 in the first round was the second lowest by an individual at the Sam Hall Intercollegiate Monday. (MT) 

11 Jacksonville Univ. 300-302 602 +34
12 Texas Pan American 297-306 603 +35
13 Winthrop 301-303 604 +36

T2 MT Scores (586)

T5 [Chas Narramore](#) 69-76 145 +3

T8 [Brad Simons](#) 70-77 147 +5

T8 [Jason Millard](#) 76-71 147 +5

T27 [Rick Cochran](#) 75-74 149 +7

T42 [Craig Smith](#) 75-76 151 +9

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