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Blue Raider golfers continue hot streak, earn program's highest ranking

Men's golf ranked No. 25 nationally

Athletic Communications

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - After a fall season that saw the Middle Tennessee men's golf team win two major tournaments in dramatic come-from-behind fashion, the Blue Raiders were rewarded this week with their first Top 25 national ranking in the Division I era. The poll, by GolfStat.com, was released Wednesday with the Blue Raiders coming in at No. 25.

The hits just keep coming for the Blue Raider golfers under third-year coach Whit Turnbow. During that span, the team has been ranked in the top 40 all three years, made two NCAA regionals and the NCAA National Championship, won a Sun Belt Conference Championship, and been victorious in nine overall tournaments. The team also carries an overall record of 299-112 the last two-and-a-half years, including a 54-7 mark this fall.

Senior [Kent Bulle](#), who has been a major contributor during this run by the Blue Raiders, was proud of his team's most recent recognition.

"It feels great to know how far the program has come over the last four years," said Bulle. "We are doing the same things we have done every year, just getting better and building off of that every year. It feels great."

Bulle credited the two wins this fall, and the teams that Middle Tennessee beat in the process, for the consideration that the voters gave the Blue Raiders.

"In the Vanderbilt tournament (Mason Rudolph Intercollegiate), we came from 12 strokes down on the last day to force a playoff with Georgia Tech and South Carolina. Tech was ranked No. 3 at the time, and South Carolina was tenth.

"We beat them in a head-to-head playoff, and that got us noticed," said Bulle. "Then we came from nine strokes down to beat Chattanooga, who was ranked 18th, on their home course, and that was big.

"We feel like we have earned and deserve this ranking," added Bulle. "We feel like no matter who we line up against, we have a pretty good chance of taking them down every week."

Turnbow was also understandably pleased with his team's initial appearance in the Top 25, but noted that there is still a lot of work to be done.

"Twenty-five is not what we are shooting for at Middle Tennessee. We want to move up, to get to 20, then to 10. This is not a point where we are going to be just trying to hang on, we are going to try and move on up the rankings and see how far we can go," declared Turnbow. "It's a nice ranking, and I know the guys have worked hard for it, and they deserve it."

Turnbow said that there were other benefits, in addition to the recognition, of being ranked in the Top 25.

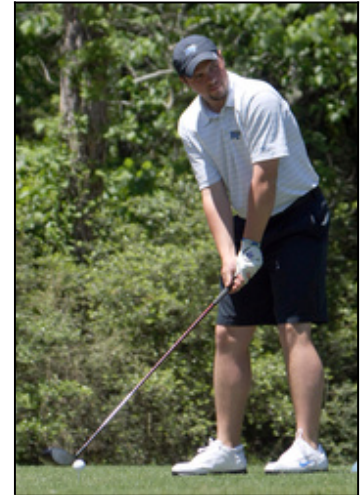
"Obviously, it will help in recruiting and also in scheduling. Our spring schedule is already set, but it should get us invited to bigger tournaments the following year."

Bulle joins [Craig Smith](#) as one of two seniors on the team. Other team members are junior [Jason Millard](#) and sophomores [Hunter Green](#) and [Brad Simons](#), and freshmen [Matt Emery](#), [Douglas Harris](#), and [Dane Voss](#).

Bulle leads the team in per stroke average with a 71.4. He tied for low medalist in the Chattanooga tournament with [Hunter Green](#) and Wichita State's Dustin Garza. It was his second career tournament win and Green's first.

Millard is second on the team with a 72.0 stroke average, while Green is third with 72.2, Smith is next with 73.3 and Simons is fifth with 73.6.

Middle Tennessee will open the spring schedule at the Jaguar Invitational in Mobile on February 21st.



Senior Kent Bulle led the Blue Raiders in the fall with a 71.4 stroke average. ()