Women's golf aims to get back on track at UALR Women's Classic

First round begins at 8:30 a.m. on Monday

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - At the halfway point of the Middle Tennessee women's spring golf schedule, coach Chris Adams will be focusing on the bottom of her lineup at the UALR Women's Classic on Monday and Tuesday in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Winning the tournament is, of course, the paramount priority, but Adams will be keeping an eye on the backend of her lineup as well because there is only one more tournament before the season's biggest prize, the Sun Belt Conference Championship in mid-April. "We will line up how we finished at Pinehurst, with Karisa Akin and Ashley Haggard in the top two spots, Allie Knight and Olivia Love in the next two spots, and Natalie Chrisopulos in the fifth slot. Haley Cothran will be playing as our individual. "Close tournaments are won on how well the fourth and fifth players play, and that is true for us. The bottom of our lineup is contributing, but we just need them contributing with lower scores. When they are posting 78s and 79s, that doesn't help us because it negates the low rounds that others are posting." But Adams said it isn't always on the lower end of the lineup. "Last week Ashley put up a 71 but also put up a 79. Karisa had a 72 and a 79, and we had to count both of them because no one picked up the slack. "On the plus side, any one of those five can put up a low number, but we need more consistency during a round. At Pinehurst, Ashley had three bogeys and a

double-bogey on her last four holes on the first day. We just have to eliminate those kinds of finishes. Natalie is capable of making a lot of birdies, she just has to eliminate that mental lapse in the middle of a round where she makes a triple bogey. “Right now, it’s a pretty good top five. We just have to eliminate those types of things.” The Blue Raiders have played well at this UALR tournament in the past. “We came close to winning this tournament one year, finishing third, and we have played well there the last three years”. Adams recalled. “Our juniors have played well there every time.” Adams pointed out that the strength of the field in Hot Springs is improved over years past, with both Tulsa and North Texas back in the mix again. There will be six Sun Belt teams in the 19-team field, plus half a dozen teams, including Middle Tennessee, that are ranked in the nation’s Top 100 women’s collegiate golf rankings. The Blue Raiders are 86th in this week’s rankings by GolfStat.com. Others are Tulsa (31st), North Texas (69th), Eastern Michigan (73rd), Missouri State (84th) and Samford (95th). MT and North Texas will be joined by SBC teams Arkansas State, ULM, host UALR and Troy, giving Adams a good look at what to expect in the Sun Belt Tournament. The UALR tournament will be played at the Diamonte Country Club in Hot Springs. Adams described the Par 72 course as a really good, lengthy golf course, with big, fast greens, lots of dog legs, and lots of up and down walking. “It is a championship course. They actually host a nation-wide tour event there.” said Adams. “Our girls like it.” The tournament format will be 36 holes on Monday, and the final 18 holes on Tuesday. Tournament results will be posted each day on GoBlueRaiders.com as they become available.

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