Raiders look for more improvement at Jerry Pate

Another strong field awaits

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MURFREESBORO - For the third consecutive fall golf tournament, Middle Tennessee will be in a field of national powers that will present the young Blue Raiders with another monumental challenge on Monday and Tuesday.

The Jerry Pate National Intercollegiate will consist of several teams that annually challenge for the NCAA title, and is also loaded with individual golfers with PGA potential. Former medalists include David Toms, Tiger Woods, and Rory Sabbatini.

Hosted by the University of Alabama and former Crimson Tide star Jerry Pate, the JPNI is played in Birmingham at the Old Overton Country Club in Vestavia Hills. It is a Par 71 course over 6,936 yards.
After a Sunday practice round, the format will be a tough 36 holes on Monday and an 18-hole finish on Tuesday.

Middle Tennessee will tee it up against Alabama, Auburn, Clemson, Florida, Minnesota, Mississippi State, Samford, South Alabama, UAB, UNLV and West Florida. 2011 team winner was National Champion Texas, by 20 strokes.

It has been three weeks since Coach Whit Turnbow has sent his underclassmen-laden Blue Raiders out to play. In the first two fall tournaments, Middle Tennessee finished 15th at the Carpet Capital Collegiate, then took 10th place in the Mason Rudolph Championship, hosted by Vanderbilt on Sept. 21-22-23.

Juniors Lucas Armstrong and Brett Patterson pace the team with stroke averages of 73.0 and 73.17, respectively. Sophomore Payne Denman (74.17) and sophomore Andrew Cho (75.0) fill out the top four, and will make the trip to Birmingham. Turnbow has designated Dane Voss as the fifth member of the Blue Raider team on Monday and Tuesday. This will be Voss' first tournament action of the fall.

"We have played some very tough teams on some of the hardest courses in the south, and we improved from the first tournament to the second," noted Turnbow. "As I have been saying all along, we need more consistency at the bottom of the lineup, and the Jerry Pate tournament will show us if we have improved in that area or not."

Middle Tennessee will have one more fall tournament the following week at Kennesaw, GA.
The progress of the Blue Raiders can be followed on both Monday and Tuesday on GolfStat.com with live updates, as well as individual and team scoring.

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