2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships News Releases

Armstrong State University

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SAVANNAH, Ga. (May 20, 2005) - As Friday dawned on the Club at Savannah Harbor, the USC Aiken Pacers were 18 holes away from their second straight NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships. With the threat of afternoon rain, players began the final round early with a 7:00 a.m. starting time and when the midday sun climbed over Hutchinson Island, the Pacers had held on for a five-stroke win over host Armstrong Atlantic, their second straight national championship.

USC Aiken began the day with a four-stroke lead and stretched that lead to as many as nine on the front nine, but the race tightened up on the back nine as the Pirates closed to within two strokes when senior Ashley Loyd carded an eagle-two on the par-4, hole 14. With eight holes to play, that two-stroke edge continued to separate the two Peach Belt Conference schools, but the Pirates gave back three strokes over the next three holes, securing the Pacers to win.

The Pacers shot a final-round 293 to finish the tournament with an 1158 total, 22-over-par. Armstrong Atlantic fired a final-round 294 and finished the tournament with a 27-over-par 1163 total, their best finish nationally in the five years since reinstating the program in 2000-01. St. Edward's (Texas), making its first foray into the 2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf Championship finals, finished third after a final-round 290 to total 1169, 33-over-par. Cal State Bakersfield (1170, +34) and Hawaii Hilo (1173, +37) rounded out the top five schools. Rollins College shot the day's best round on Friday with a two-over-par 286 and vaulted to sixth.

The individual race was just as close as the team race was down the stretch. Burkhart began the day with a three-stroke advantage over Nick Mason of Hawaii Hilo, but Mason tied Burkhart on the back nine and it took a birdie by Burkhart on the par-3 hole No. 17 to clip Mason by one stroke. Burkhart shot a one-over-par 72 on Friday and finished the tournament with a five-under-par 279 total, while Mason carded a one-under-par 70 to finish the tournament with a four-under-par 280 total. Todd Dayton of Central Oklahoma had the day's best round on Friday with a four-under-par 67 and moved up to third individually, finishing the tournament with an even-par 284. Brice Garnett of Missouri Western State finished fourth after a final-round 73 to finish the tournament with a one-over-par 285 total. Jonathan Cox (AASU), Marc Peterson (Cal State Chico) and Blake Slaughter (St. Edward's) each finished tied for fifth individually with two-over-par 286 totals.

The win by the Pacers is the second straight and USC Aiken joins a list of eight other schools now as winners of two or more DII men's golf titles. The last school to win back-to-back titles was Florida Southern, who won three straight from 1998-2000. Burkhart is the first Pacer to earn medalist honors as well.
Round duel between the two Peach Belt Conference schools for the National Championship. USC Aiken shot a one-under-par 283 and the Pacers ahead of the Pirates by four strokes.

The second round, halted by darkness, was completed on early Thursday morning with USC Aiken holding a two-stroke lead over Northern Kentucky and Cal State Bakersfield. But only 10 strokes separated 11 schools when round three began at 9:30 a.m. under blue skies, and for the first time in this championship, a round was able to be completed in one day.

It didn't take long for the Pacers to extend their second-round lead with the one-under-par round, which featured a three-under-par 68 from junior Dane Burkhart and a one-under-par 70 from Casey Thompson. USC Aiken is gunning to become the first back-to-back NCAA DII Men's Golf champion since Florida Southern won three straight titles from 1998-2000 and also become just the ninth school to win multiple titles.

The upstart Pirates - in just their fifth season of DII competition since reinstating the sport in 2000-01 - leapt two spots in the team standings by firing an even-par 284, featuring a four-under-par round from senior and Savannah native Chris Epperson. Epperson had six birdies in his round and a triple bogey on the par-4 10th hole prevented him from tying the NCAA Championships low round of 64, set in 1992 by Martin Lonardi of Columbus State. The situation is familiar to both schools as the teams finished 1-2 in their last two tournaments - the 2005 Peach Belt Conference Championships, which the Pacers won by eight strokes over the Pirates, and the 2005 NCAA Southeast Regional, which USC Aiken won by four strokes over AASU.

St. Edward's (292) and Hawaii Hilo (289) are tied for third in the team competition, 27-over-par and 14 strokes out of the lead. Cal State Bakersfield is 28-over-par in fifth place. Delta State carded the team round of the day with a five-under-par 279 and jumped seven places, moving up from 17th to 10th.

Burkhart maintained his individual lead with his round of 68 and the junior holds a three-stroke lead over Nick Mason of Hawaii Hilo, who fired a four-under-par 67 to tie Epperson for the day's low round. Brice Garnett, the first-round leader, fired an even-par 71 and is in third, four strokes behind at one-under-par and the trio are the only golfers in the field with a par score or better.

In an effort to complete all 72 holes in the championship, the NCAA Committee has decided to start Friday's final round at 7:00 a.m. with a shotgun start, meaning all 105 players will play the course at the same time. The committee looked at all available options with the proposed weather forecast for the Savannah area and decided this was the most prudent course of action heading into the final round.

2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships Round Two Completed On Thursday Morning Top 11 Teams Separated By Only 10 Strokes Halfway Through Tournament

SAVANNAH, Ga. (May 19, 2005) - Halfway through the 2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships, defending DII national champion USC Aiken holds a two-stroke lead over first-round leader Northern Kentucky and Cal State Bakersfield, but the real story is that no less than 11 teams are just separated by 10 strokes after two rounds of play at the Club at Savannah Harbor in Savannah.

USC Aiken completed their second round on Wednesday before darkness halted play, firing a four-over-par 288 and compiling a two-day 582 total, 14-over-par. Twelve teams were left out on the course, however, when play was suspended at 8:11 p.m. on Wednesday. Each one of those teams teed off at 6:40 a.m. on Thursday and completed play by 9:00 a.m. First-round leader Northern Kentucky shot a 297 in its second round, while Cal State Bakersfield fired a 294 and both sit at 16-over-par with 584 totals, two strokes off the pace. Host Armstrong Atlantic fired a second-round 296 and is alone in fourth place, just three shots behind with a 17-over-par 585 total.

With two rounds left to play, however, everyone in the afternoon groupings of the third round is conceivably
still in the hunt. St. Edward's and Cal State Chico are each just five strokes back, tied for fifth place with 19-over-par 587 totals. Washburn is in seventh place, six strokes behind with a 20-over-par 588 total, while Lynn University is in eighth place, just seven strokes behind with a 21-over-par 589 total.

Individually, Dane Burkhart of USC Aiken's three-under-par 139 score held up during the morning rounds and the co-PBC Player of the Year holds a two-stroke lead over a trio of players - first-round leader Brice Garnett of Missouri Western State, Jeremiah Nelson of Washburn and Marc Peterson of Cal State Chico. Each golfer is in at the halfway point with one-under-par 141 totals and the quartet of players are the only ones in the field even-par or better.

Round three quickly got underway under blue skies at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday morning.

SAVANNAH, Ga. (May 18, 2005) - A two and a half-hour rain delay in the midday kept the 2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships backed up after the second day of competition. Players completed the rain-delayed first round early Wednesday morning, the second round saw only eight schools complete rounds before darkness halted play at 8:11 p.m. St. Edward's and Cal State Bakersfield, still out on the course as the sun set on Wednesday, are tied for the lead at 12-over-par, while Northern Kentucky is also still out on the course at 13-over-par. USC Aiken is in the clubhouse after a second-round 288 and is 14-over-par with a 582 total.

When the final round one scores were counted in the morning, Northern Kentucky held onto its one-shot lead over St. Edward's with a three-over-par 287. But the second day belonged to top-ranked and defending DII national champion USC Aiken, who carded the day's best finished round on Wednesday. The leaderboard is a tightly-packed affair with only 10 strokes separating 12 teams and many are still in the hunt with more than two holes to play.

Dane Burkhart led the Pacers and all golfers on Wednesday with a three-under-par 68 and is the clubhouse and overall leader with a three-under-par 139 total. Jeremiah Nelson was left out on the course on Wednesday with a two-under-par score through 16 holes, while first-round leader Brice Garnett of Missouri Western State is tied with two other players at one-under-par after shooting a 75 on Wednesday. Mark Baker of Cal State Bakersfield and Pablo Rosas of St. Edward's are both still out on the course at one-under-par as well.

Brad Conner of North Alabama, playing as an individual, had the best recovery of the day as he rebounded from a 14 on the par-five seventh hole to record a five-over-par 76 on the day - meaning he played the other 17 holes at a four-under-par clip.

Resumption of round two will begin at 6:45 a.m. eastern on Thursday morning, with the projected tee times for round three beginning at 9:30 a.m. after re-pairing of teams is completed. --

SAVANNAH, Ga. (May 18, 2005) - Eight teams finished their first rounds of the 2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships on Wednesday morning at the Club at Savannah Harbor and Northern Kentucky remained in the lead after all 20 teams' scorecards were counted. The Norse hold a one-stroke lead over St. Edward's and a two-stroke lead over host Armstrong Atlantic. Cal State Bakersfield and Washburn are three strokes behind, tied for fifth.

Missouri Western State's Brice Garnett completed his first round on Wednesday morning and fired a five-under-par 66 to take a two-stroke lead over three players. Garnett carded five...
birdies, two bogeys and an eagle-two on hole No. 14. Andy Moren (Cal State Stanislaus), Jeremiah Nelson (Washburn) and Blake Slaughter (St. Edward's) each shot three-over-par 68s to tie for second. In all, nine players broke par and seven others shot even-par 71 on the 7,026-yard course for round 1.

Round two tee times, which were pushed back by an hour and 45 minutes from their scheduled start time by the completion, began at 9:15 a.m.

Rain Halts First Day Of Play On Tuesday
Northern Kentucky Leader In Clubhouse With Eight Schools Still Out On Course

SAVANNAH, Ga. (May 17, 2005) - Inclement weather halted first round of the 2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships on Tuesday at the Club at Savannah Harbor in Savannah, Ga., with eight schools still out on the course. Northern Kentucky made it into the clubhouse with a three-over-par 287 on the par-71, 7,026-yard course, tied with Columbus State, who sits at three over par as well but was left out on the course when play was suspended. St. Edward's shot a 288 on Tuesday and is one shot behind, while host Armstrong Atlantic is tied for third at five-over-par after firing a 289 score, with St. Martin's left out on the course as well at five over.

Lightning halted play at 3:26 p.m. eastern time and rainshowers moved in quickly, hovering over the area afterwards. Play was officially suspended for the day at 6:30 p.m. with resumption of round one to take place at 6:45 a.m. on Wednesday morning.

Round two will be played on Wednesday as well with tee times pushed back one hour and 45 minutes. The first groups in round two will now tee off at 9:15 a.m.

With the stoppage of play and calm course conditions on Tuesday morning, teams scored well as eight schools that finished round one are within six strokes of the lead. Cal State Bakersfield and Washburn finished with 290 scores and are tied for sixth, while defending champion USC Aiken was one of the schools that did not complete its first round, sitting at nine-over-par with some players through 15 holes.

Individually, Brice Garnett of Missouri Western State went four-under-par through his first six holes, including an eagle-two on par-4 hole number 13 to lead, while Jeremiah Nelson of Washburn and Blake Slaughter of St. Edward's each shot three-under-par 68 scores to complete the first round as clubhouse leaders.

NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships Tee Off Tuesday
Club At Savannah Harbor Entertains Future "Legends" Of Golf!

SAVANNAH, Ga. (May 13, 2005) - The nation's best Division II men's golf squads descend upon Savannah next week for the NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships, hosted by the Westin Savannah Golf Resort and Spa and the Club at Savannah Harbor golf course, site of the CHAMPIONS Tour's Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf tournament. With four days of high-caliber golf action on tap from Tuesday, May 17 through Friday, May 20, fans in the Coastal Empire area can catch a glimpse of possible future "Legends" of golf and watch as history is made with the awarding of the first NCAA National Championship ever decided in the city of Savannah.

Twenty teams and five individuals comprise the field for the 2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships, including host Armstrong Atlantic State. The Savannah school is hosting a National Championship for the first time in its history – and doing so in just the fifth year of competition after reinstating the sport of men's golf in 2000.

The prohibitive favorite is the defending champion USC Aiken Pacers, who earned the program's first title in 2004 after a decade of near
misses. This season, USC Aiken has been wire-to-wire the top-ranked DII men's golf club, according to the GCAA/Bridgestone Top 25 Coaches' Poll, and the Pacers have been dominant, winning 10 of the 12 tournaments they have entered in 2004-05. Two other schools that have held the hardware are also in the field - six-time champion Columbus State, whose last title came in 1997, and Rollins, who captured team titles in 1970 and 2002.

Four schools make their debut in the DII Men's Golf Championships, advancing out of the regionals for the first time – Hawaii Hilo, St. Martin's, Lynn and St. Edward's, all through at-large berths from their respective regions. Other than Rollins (South) and USC Aiken (Southeast), the other teams that advanced by winning their region championships are Bryant (Northeast), Indiana (Pa.) (East), Washburn (Central), Central Oklahoma (South Central), Northern Kentucky (Great Lakes), Pfeiffer (Atlantic), Minnesota State Mankato (Northwest) and Western Washington (West).

The other teams in the field include Cal State Chico and Cal State Bakersfield from the West Region, Delta State from the South and GC&SU from the Southeast.

Five individual golfers also advanced out of the five super regionals – Brad Conner of North Alabama, Greg Dobbins of UNC Pembroke, Brice Garnett of Missouri Western State, Andy Moren of Cal State Stanislaus and Matt Hicks of West Liberty State.

The jam-packed field features the top six-ranked teams as of the latest GCAA/Bridgestone DII Top 25 Coaches' Poll – along with top-ranked USC Aiken, No. 2-ranked Cal State Bakersfield, No. 3-ranked AASU, Rollins and Western Washington along with No. 6-ranked Central Oklahoma all have to be considered strong contenders for the title.

A new individual champion is guaranteed in 2005 after the graduation of J.J. Jakovac of Cal State Chico, winner of the 2003 and 2004 titles. Three of the leading contenders are St. Martin's junior Shane Prante, one of 20 golfers to be named to the Ben Hogan Award's "watch-list" of top collegiate golfers, along with the dynamic duo of juniors Dane Burkhart and Scott Brown of USC Aiken, the co-Peach Belt Conference Players of the Year. All three are ranked in the top 25 of the Golfstat Cup's individual rankings of all collegiate golfers, regardless of division. Eight of the top 10-ranked DII golfers are in the field as well.

Several head coaches for teams in the field are no strangers to the DII Men's Golf Championships. Central Oklahoma's Dax Johnston, in his fourth season as head coach of the No. 6-ranked Bronchos, won the 1996 individual championship and was the DII Player of the Year at UCO. Columbus State's Mark Immelman was a member of two of the Cougars' national championship squads, in 1992 and 1994, while Armstrong Atlantic's Michael Butler competed in the 1991 and 1992 DII Men's Golf Championships for Jacksonville State.

The par-71, 7,026-yard Club at Savannah Harbor course has been rated one of the top 100 of America's golf courses by Conde Nast Traveler and the Robert Cupp/Sam Snead-designed layout has been honored as Savannah's Golf Centerpiece by Golf Magazine and Golf Digest gave it a four-star rating for highly recommended places to play.

Practice rounds take place on Sunday, May 15 and Monday, May 16 at the Club at Savannah Harbor, while play begins with the first of four rounds on Tuesday, May 17.

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THE FIELD IS SET!

SAVANNAH, Ga. (May 4, 2005) - The field is set for the 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships as the region field of 80 has been pared down to 20 teams and five individuals. Here are the teams and regions that they've qualified from, and for a little more on each of the teams, visit the Participating Schools link to the left side of the page.

East Region Champion: Indiana (Pa.)
Northeast Region Champion: Bryant
South Region Champion: Rollins
South Central Region Champion: Central Oklahoma
Southeast Region Champion: USC Aiken

http://www.athletics.armstrong.edu/golf2005ncaareleases.html
Atlantic Region Champion: Pfeiffer
Central Region Champion: Washburn
Great Lakes Region Champion: Northern Kentucky
West Region Champion: Western Washington
Northwest Region Champion: Minnesota State Mankato
South/South Central At-Larges: Delta State, Lynn, St. Edward's
Southeast/Atlantic At-Larges: Armstrong Atlantic, GC&SU, Columbus State
West/Northwest At-Larges: Cal State Chico, Cal State Bakersfield, Hawaii Hilo, St. Martin's

Golfstat has posted the final results from each of the 10 regionals, and you can find complete team and individual results from those regionals at the following links:

- East
- Northeast
- Central
- South
- Southeast
- South Central
- Great Lakes
- West
- Northwest
- Atlantic

Congratulations to all of the qualifiers for the 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships!

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IT'S REGIONAL TIME!

SAVANNAH, Ga. (April 29, 2005) - This weekend, 450 golfers begin the trek towards Savannah, competing in five NCAA Division II Men's Golf Super Regionals from Monday, May 2 through Wednesday, May 4. Practice rounds begin on Sunday, May 1, and every golfer has the same goal - advance to the 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships.

20 Teams and five individuals will emerge from the upcoming Super Regionals and advance to the National Championships. Results from the Super Regionals can be accessed one of two ways:

http://www.ncaasports.com, the official website for NCAA Championships, will provide daily results from all regionals as well as photographs and stories from the five Super Regional sites.

http://www.golfstatresults.com is the address for Golfstat's Live Internet Scoring, which is scheduled to be a feature at all five Super Regional sites. Specific links for the Super Regionals are as follows:

- East/Northeast Regional (Pine Barrens Golf Club, Jackson, N.J.)
- South/South Central Regional (Kinderou Forest Golf Club, Valdosta, Ga.)
- Southeast/Mid Atlantic Regional (Bull Creek Golf Club, Columbus, Ga.)
- West/Northwest Regional (Dakota Dunes Country Club, Dakota Dunes, S.D.)
- Central/Great Lakes Regional (St. Joseph Country Club, St. Joseph, Mo.)

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NCAA Regional Bids Handed Out - 80 Teams Vie For 20 Spots

SAVANNAH, Ga. (April 22, 2005) - The NCAA has announced the 80 teams that will compete in the 2005 NCAA DII Men's Golf regionals. Eight teams in 10 regionals will travel to five sites for five Super Regionals on May 2-4 for three rounds of action that will determine which 20 teams will come to Savannah for the 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf National Championships.

Host Armstrong Atlantic State is one of eight teams that will take part in the NCAA Southeast Regional and is trying to make its second straight appearance in the DII National Championships. The Southeast Regional field may be one of the strongest in the nation, however, as defending 2004 NCAA DII National Champion USC Aiken is in the field, as well as 2003 NCAA DII National Champion Francis Marion.

For a complete list of who advanced to the NCAA Regionals, click <here>. You can also follow along with the results from each of the five Super Regionals via NCAASports.com.

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Savannah Gears Up For Legends, NCAA Championships - First Region Rankings Released

SAVANNAH, Ga. (April 11, 2005) - The Westin Savannah Harbor Resort & Spa is gearing up for two major
events in a month with the upcoming Champions Tour's Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf as well as the NCAA DII National Championships. For coverage of this event and a preview of what the course has to offer, visit the Savannah Morning News' coverage of the tournament at http://www.savannahnow.com/legends.

Meanwhile, the first 2005 NCAA Regional Rankings have been released, giving a glimpse at the teams that will be in contention for the 2005 NCAA Division II National Championships. Eight teams will be picked from each region to compete in five super regions during the first week of May. Those super regions will then provide the 20 teams that will travel to Savannah on May 17-20 for the National Championships. You can glance at the first rankings by clicking on http://www.ncaasports.com/golf/mens/polls.

Finally, the outpouring of community support for the DII National Championships has been outstanding, but there is still room for volunteers who wish to become part of the NCAA experience and contribute to the first NCAA National Championship ever hosted in the Savannah area. If you are interested, please click <here> for a .pdf format volunteer form.

As always, check back here for more news leading up to the 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf National Championships!

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AASU, Westin Savannah Harbor Awarded 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships

SAVANNAH, Ga. (January 22, 2004) - The NCAA Division II Men's Golf Committee has chosen the Westin Savannah Harbor Resort & Spa as the site for the 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships, the first NCAA National Championship event ever to be hosted in the Coastal Empire area.

The Division II Men's Golf Championships will take place at The Club at Savannah Harbor, an 18-hole, 7,300-yard course, on May 17-20, 2005. Armstrong Atlantic State University will serve as the host institution for the event.

"This is another excellent opportunity to show that Savannah is a great golf destination," Mark Spadoni, Westin Savannah Harbor general manager, said. "We want the NCAA student-athletes to feel welcome both in our city and on the course. We are excited about this opportunity and we look forward to being the home of another quality tournament."

The proud home of the PGA TOUR Champions Tour Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf tournament, the Club at Savannah Harbor has quickly become a favorite of golfers in just five short years of operation. Opened in the fall of 1999, The Club at Savannah Harbor is a Robert Cupp and Sam Snead designed course, managed by Troon Golf.

The complex features a golf institute, a dual-ended practice facility and a 22,000 square foot Clubhouse, featuring The Greenbrier Spa. Located across the river from the world-famous historic district and River Street area of Savannah, the Club at Savannah Harbor’s design is reminiscent of the golden era of golf design in the 1930s and 1940s.

"We are absolutely thrilled to have been chosen to host the 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships," said AASU athletic director Dr. Eddie Aenchbacher. "To display the enthusiasm for the sport of golf that exists in the Savannah area to the entire country, as well as its rich tradition, represents an wonderful opportunity for our University and the Coastal Empire community."

The 2005 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships will bring 105 student-athletes to Savannah for the tournament. Currently, there are 192 schools nationwide that sponsor Division II men's golf programs.

Armstrong Atlantic State University is one of those schools, in just its fourth year of competition since reinstating the sport in 2000. "This is a great way to not only show off the area, but our fledgling program as well," Michael Butler, the head men's golf coach at AASU, said. "I credit Dr. Aenchbacher and everyone at The Westin Savannah Harbor for working with us to help make the challenge of hosting the NCAA DII Men's Golf Championships a reality."

A public institution of higher learning within the State University System of Georgia, Armstrong Atlantic State University was founded in 1935 and has grown to include a community of 6,500 students and more than 250
faculty members while offering more than seventy-five academic programs and majors.

The Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa is part of the Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., with more than 740 properties in more than 80 countries and 110,000 employees at its owned and managed properties. Starwood is a fully integrated owner, operator and franchiser of hotels and resorts which, in addition to the Westin, include St. Regis, The Luxury Collection, Sheraton, Four Points by Sheraton, W brands as well as Starwood Vacation Ownership, Inc., one of the world’s premier developers and operators of high quality vacation interval ownership resorts.

From l-r: AASU head men's golf coach Michael Butler, AASU University President Dr. Thomas Z. Jones, Westin Savannah Harbor GM Marc Spadoni, USC Aiken AD and NCAA Men's Golf Committee member Randy Warrick and AASU AD Dr. Eddie Aenchbacher.

The backdrop for the press conference is The Club at Savannah Harbor - home to the PGA TOUR Champions Tour Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf.

More than 30 people attended Thursday's press conference to announce Savannah's first-ever NCAA Championships event.