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Gordon’s 63 Sparks Vanderbilt to Schenkel Invitational Title

Auburn’s Michael Johnson takes medalist honors in a playoff.

Marc Gignac

 STATESBORO, Ga. – Will Gordon tied the tournament record with a 63, and Vanderbilt shot a 19-under-par 269 in the final round of the 37th Annual Schenkel Invitational to win the team title Sunday at Forest Heights Country Club.
The Commodores' team score tied the second-lowest for a round in Schenkel history, and their tournament score of 823 also tied for the second-lowest. Gordon rolled in nine birdies on the day to tie four others for the best round in tournament history. It was the lowest score since 1989, when Richie Bryant of Georgia Southern also fired a 63.

Gordon moved up 20 spots into a tie with Auburn's Michael Johnson at 13-under to force a playoff for medalist honors. After both players parred the par-4 1st hole, they moved on to the par-5 9th. Johnson's drive leaked to the left of the fairway and in the rough, but he smoked his approach to just in front of the middle of the green, which had a left front pin placement today.

Gordon's drive found the center of the fairway, but his approach went into the rough on the left side of the green. His chip rolled past the hole and down off the front of the green, leaving the door open for Johnson. The senior chipped up past the hole to within four feet and rolled it in for birdie to win the playoff.

Vanderbilt (-41) won the tournament by 10 strokes over Wake Forest (-31). NC State (-25) shot 16-under today and tied Kentucky for third. Auburn (-23) finished fifth, and Georgia State (-22) placed sixth. The top four teams in the event all posted three-round team scores in the top-10 lowest in tournament history.

Cameron Young (-12) of Wake Forest and J.J. Grey of Georgia State tied for third.

Georgia Southern shot 2-under-par today and fell to 10th place. Jake Storey led Georgia Southern with a 70, and Steven Fisk carded a 71. Henry Mabbett finished with a 72, Archer Price shot a 73 and Jonas Vaisanen carded a 74. Mabbett tied for 21st on the individual leaderboard, and Fisk tied for 25th.

Andrew Klasing shot a 73 to lead the Eagle individuals. Crawford Simmons shot 77, and Cody O'Toole carded a 78.

Annually one of the top collegiate golf tournaments in the country, this year's Schenkel Invitational field featured eight teams ranked in the top-50 and 13 out of 14 ranked in the top-100.

The story for Georgia Southern
Two double bogeys on hole 12 and another on 11 by the Eagle counters hurt the team score today. Storey notched three birdies on the front and went out in 33. The sophomore had three birdies on the back, including the 18th hole, and finished his final nine 1-over. Fisk tallied five birdies in the round and was 3-under through his first 11 holes. Price was 1-under through 11 holes before running into trouble on holes 12 and 13. The sophomore birdied 18 to finish 1-over for the day. Vaisanen rolled in two birdies and parred his last five holes. Klasing's round was sparked by an eagle on the par-5 7th hole.
Quotables from Georgia Southern head coach Carter Collins
"The par 5s really held us back this week. We were close to the top-5 in par-3 scoring and top-4 in par-4 scoring, but you have to play the par 5s well to play well out here. The teams that did well on the par 5s are all the teams at the top of the leaderboard. We didn’t do a very good job of that this week, and that’s what held us back in the event."

"I'm very proud of the consistency we had this week. We played it well, we handled all the local pressure and everything that comes with it well – we just missed a few holes that kept us from being up there in that next group of teams."

"We had three sophomores and a freshman in the lineup, and everybody contributed. I think they got a real good look at what it's going to take moving forward for us to compete at a national championship level, but hopefully they saw that we're not far off. We've progressed a lot this spring, and our best golf is right around the corner. We're looking forward to getting back on the road next week and proving that."

Next up for the Eagles
Georgia Southern travels to the FAU Slomin Autism Invitational in Lake Worth, Fla., March 25-27.

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