

SPORTS

Duck golfers miss NCAA tourney

By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Sports Editor

The Oregon men's golf team fell short of making the NCAA Tournament as the Ducks finished 12th at the NCAA Western Regionals in Albuquerque, N.M. over the weekend.

The Ducks had to finish in the top nine to earn a return trip to the NCAA Tournament, but were nine strokes short.

Oregon carded an 888 over the three-day, 54-hole tournament. Brigham Young and USC tied for eighth in the tournament with scores of 879, earning the last two team bids for the NCAAAs.

"It's always a disappointment not to make the NCAAAs because that's what we go down there to play for," Oregon Coach Scott Krieger said. "I felt we were playing really well coming in, but we didn't get a very good first round and that's why we came up short."

Oregon had finished sixth at the Pacific-10 Conference tournament earlier in the month and based on that, Krieger thought the Ducks would be ready at regionals.

But the Ducks shot a horrible 302 on the first day Thursday, which left them in 16th place. Oregon moved up to 13th on Friday after firing a 290 and still had a chance to make the NCAA field.

"Even after the first two days, if we played under par, we still had a chance to make it to the NCAAAs," Krieger said. "With four or five holes left, we still had a chance but had some bad holes."

"We needed to make birdies and instead we had silly little bogies. It was just too many mental mistakes. We've got to get a little smarter."

Despite being out of the team race for an NCAA bid, Oregon's Troy Tamiya almost qualified for the NCAA Tournament as one of two individual

qualifiers. Tamiya birdied the last five holes on Saturday to finish tied for fourth at 215.

Tamiya and San Diego State's Tim Todd then met in a playoff to determine who the second NCAA individual qualifier would be, as Washington's Mike Swingle was already in as the top individual qualifier.

Tamiya, however, lost on the third playoff hole to Todd.

"I didn't play the course for two years so I expected the rough to be tougher," Tamiya said. "I thought the scores would be a lot higher than they were."

"I didn't expect to play that well," he said. Krieger said he thought Tamiya had an excellent chance of qualifying going into the final nine holes.

"I talked to him at the turn and told him if he shot a 34 then he had a chance," Krieger said. "He shot 32 and I thought when he got done he would make it. Unfortunately, one other kid (Todd) shot well and forced a playoff."

Krieger said that he believes the Pac-10 has been the strongest conference in the country the past five years and the Western Regionals proved that point.

Five of the nine teams that made the NCAAAs were from the Pac-10 and two other schools, Washington and Oregon, finished 11th and 12th, respectively.

Arizona and Arizona State finished in a tie for first at 868 and are the two favorites at the NCAA Tournament June 5-8, Krieger said.

Krieger is already looking to next year when all five golfers at regionals — Tamiya, Mark Aldrich, Doug DuChateau, Cam Martin and Jeff Lyons — will be back. Also returning is Bob Rannow who redshirted this season.

"We're excited about next year," Tamiya said. "We think we can be a Top 10 team. We just need to put it all together."

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