

Golfers end season with mixed emotions

1999 NCAA Championship Team Results

Team	Score	Final Rank
Georgia	+22	+5
Okla. St.	+31	+13
Northwestern	+36	+6
Washington	+37	+2
ASU	+40	+4
UNLV	+43	+8
BYU	+44	+15
Houston	+47	+12
Clemson	+47	+18
N Carolina	+49	+14
Minnesota	+56	+9
Florida	+64	+22
E Tenn. St.	+65	+8
Nebraska	+66	+20
Illinois	+67	+19

1999 NCAA Championship Individual Results by Team

Player	Team	Score	Final Rank
Jamie Rogers	Nebraska	+10	+3
Steve Friesen	Nebraska	+17	+8
Scott Gutschewski	Nebraska	+19	+5
Josh Madden	Nebraska	+26	+4
Seth Porter	Nebraska	+37	+9

MATT HANEY/DN

BY JOHN GASKINS
Staff writer

It wasn't a perfect finish for the Nebraska men's golf team, but it's hard to argue with the best team the Cornhuskers have ever fielded.

NU finished its record-setting season with a 14th place finish at the NCAA Championships at Hazeltine National G.C. in Chaska, Minn. Last weekend.

No. 12 Nebraska was as high as fifth at one time in the tournament. The team went into the final day in 12th place before dropping to 14th after shooting the second worst round out of the final 15 teams.

Nebraska finished at 66-over par for the tournament, only 10 strokes behind the 12th place team, Minnesota.

Georgia, the top ranked team in the country, won the overall title, coming from behind to defeat Oklahoma State, which had led each of the first three rounds.

"We were certainly going in there knowing and expecting to crack the top 10," Head Coach Larry Romjue said, "but you really can't complain with being one of the top 15 teams in the country."

"We were right up there, as high as fifth, but we slipped on the back nine of the third day and didn't perform as well as we would have liked in the final round. But I think you can attribute a lot of that to the difficulty of the golf course."

The demanding par-72, 7,196-yard Hazeltine layout has hosted two U.S. Open Championships,

most recently in 1991. Both Romjue and the players insisted that Hazeltine's narrow fairways, near-knee-high rough and slick greens, not to mention the rainy and windy conditions of the last three rounds, made low scores tough for every team.

"If your game wasn't on, you were screwed on that course," Nebraska senior Josh Madden, who shot a brutal 87 in the second round, said.

Only three players were under par after four rounds and NU's highest finisher, Jaime Rogers, was 10-over par for the tournament. He tied for 12th place.

"I'm pleased with the fact that I finished 12th, because I never really thought I was one of the top 30 or 40 players in the nation," said Rogers, who was ranked No. 43 going into the event.

"But I'm not pleased with the way that I played. I dogged it the second day, just got negative and down on myself. It's funny how golf can do that to you."

Rogers opened the eyes of college golf spectators and especially Nebraskans everywhere when he put himself near the top of the leaderboard in the first round by virtue of a two-under-par 70. Sitting in second place, he came back with a 78 in round two that shot his chances at an individual title. He finished with a pair of 75s.

Steve Friesen was next in line for Nebraska, shooting 305 for 17-over par and a 51st-place finish. Friesen shot an 80 in the final round of the tournament.

Scott Gutschewski tied for 62nd with a 307, Josh Madden tied for 71st with a 314 and Seth Porter was 82nd with a 325.

Luke Donald of Northwestern won the overall title with a four-round total of 284, four under par.

Nebraska's previous best finish in the NCAA

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LARRY ROMJUE
NU head coach

Championships was 21st at the 1973 and 1978 tournaments.

The Championships were the icing on the cake of the most dominant era in NU's golfing history and Romjue's 30-year career. Nebraska came within two shots of winning the Big 12 Championship, finished third at the Central Regional, and in both tournaments beat out traditional Big 12 and southern powerhouses Oklahoma State and Texas.

"It gave us a lot of pride being from the north and being in the top three or four in almost every tournament," Romjue said.

"You have to give the golfers a lot of credit for that. They were a talented bunch, they had a lot of experience, and they were committed to achieving high. I can't say I was surprised or that we did all we could do - we thought we were a top 10-caliber team. But it was certainly an enjoyable year from a coaching standpoint."

In other news, Rogers and Friesen were both named All-Americans by the Golf Coaches Association on Monday. Rogers is a repeat selection while Friesen is receiving his first honor.

The awards were a huge boost for the Nebraska program, which Romjue now has to practically rebuild thanks to the departure of the team's top four golfers due to seniority. Only Porter will return next year.

"You can't replace four seniors with four freshman and expect as strong of a team," Romjue said.

"But this group of guys and our future teams is what makes coaching fun - watching people get better. This team laid the ground for our future teams to build on.

"We want this season's success to become a tradition for Nebraska golf."

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