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Confidence boost

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Furman athletics

Confidence boost

Jackson hopes to make most of U.S. Amateur run

It is amazing what stepping onto a national stage and beating some of the world's best amateurs can do for a young woman's confidence.

Furman golfer Brandi Jackson did just that this summer when she traveled to Scarborough, N.Y., for the U.S. Women's Amateur and made it all the way to the championship match. Although she lost in the finals, 3 and 2, to Becky Lucidi of the University of Southern California, Jackson's performance gave her a great deal of confidence heading into her final collegiate season.

"I've always wanted to win a big college tournament, but I've never been able to put together three good days," says Jackson, a health and exercise science major from Belton, S.C. "Now I don't see why I can't do that. This summer was a good experience for me."

Although Jackson was one of the Lady Paladins' top players last year as a junior and won the Southern Conference title, she came in under the radar at the Amateur, which was televised on ESPN. The field was full of college All-Americans, Curtis Cup members and players from all over the world. But Jackson easily qualified for match play and breezed through the first three rounds.

In the quarterfinals, Jackson dispatched Mollie Frankhauser, a Curtis Cup member and perhaps the best-known name left in the field, in 20 holes. In the semifinals, she won the last three holes to force overtime, then defeated Maru Martinez of Venezuela on the 19th hole.

Things didn't go nearly as well in the 36-hole championship match against Lucidi, as Jackson fell behind by six holes after the first 18 and says she "wanted to crawl in a hole" after some of the shots she hit. But she collected herself at the break and closed within two before finally falling.

"I don't think it was nerves," Jackson says. "I just couldn't get anything going. But we took a break and I decided that if she could beat me by six in 18 holes, I could do the same thing to her. I played much better the last 18 holes."

One thing is certain: Jackson discovered there isn't anyone on the amateur level she needs to fear, which should give her the assurance to excel in her final year of college and perhaps become the latest in a long line of Lady Paladins to join the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour.

Her newfound confidence seemed evident in September when she finished second at the ACC/SEC Challenge and third at the Mason Rudolph Championships, both of which featured some of the nation's best teams. They were her two best finishes in major collegiate events.

"I can be a little bit lazy sometimes [when it comes to practicing]," Jackson



Brandi Jackson's showing in the Women's Amateur was the best by a Furman player since Beth Daniel won the event in 1977.

says, "especially if I'm not pointing toward a particular tournament. But I'm looking forward to working hard this year and seeing what I can accomplish."

— Vince Moore

Athletic Hall of Fame inducts five new members

Furman inducted five people into the university's Athletic Hall of Fame during ceremonies September 15.

Longtime university benefactor Lucius Weeks '54 joined football standouts Ray Siminski '59 and Eric Walter '91, cross country star Cate Pichon '93 and softball catcher Julie Glasser-Stebbins '97 in becoming the latest alumni to join the shrine.

Weeks, who received the Distinguished Alumni Award during Homecoming ceremonies in October, is founder of the Order of the Paladin, which encourages individuals to become major scholarship donors to the Paladin Club. He also helped to establish the Selvy-Floyd Basketball Scholarship.

Siminski was a three-year football letterman who earned all-Southern Conference and all-South Carolina honors in 1958 after leading the league in receiving, with 35 catches for 568 yards and five touchdowns. He played for two years with the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League.

Walter was a three-year starter at offensive guard and a two-time all-league performer. He made the Kodak Division I-AA All-America first team and the Associated Press second team in 1991, was a two-time GTE Academic All-American, and received an NCAA postgraduate scholarship.

Pichon was the 1991 Furman Female Athlete of the Year. She won the conference cross country titles in 1990 and 1991, when she became the first Furman woman to qualify for the NCAA championships. She was the Most Outstanding Performer at the league's 1991 indoor championships and at the 1990 cross country meet.

Glasser-Stebbins was league player of the year three times and was twice a National Fastpitch Coaches Association Academic Scholar Athlete. Twice named to the GTE Academic All-District and All-American teams, she was the 1997 Edna Hartness Female Athlete of the Year at Furman.