

sports

Eagle men’s golf team ready to prove themselves in spring season

NATE POWALIE
Reporter

While some high schools and PGA golfers have returned to the links, the Ashland University men’s team is still waiting to get themselves on the course. Due to the pandemic, all GLIAC sports were suspended until Jan. 2021, but that has not held AU back from practicing. In a “normal” season, how a golfer does in the fall determines how the spring roster will shake out. After ending last fall with a win at the Davenport Invita-

tional, the spring got cut short due to COVID-19, with the Eagles taking a third-place finish at the Saddlebrook Spring Kickoff in Wesley Chapel, Florida. This was the first event after current coach Dennis North was also named the Director of Operations for the team. While the team may not have former senior Patrick Steffen, the Eagles return almost all of their roster from the previous season, including all-GLIAC representative Ben Jones and Andrew Kolar. As AU is getting ready for a new season to start, Coach

North is excited to get his team ready for the road ahead. “The biggest thing I’m looking for is just to get the guys on the road, we have a lot of depth on this team. Our main goal this year is to get to the NCAA regional,” he said. Along with Jones, the Eagles will have two expected seniors on their roster, with the second being Hunter Lowder. A majority of the young core also returns, with familiar faces such as Brent Dillon, Andrew Kolar, Logan Thomas, Nick Stehle, and Caden Gallagher. AU also had 119 student-

athletes rack up D-II ADA (Division Two Athletics Directors Association) Academic Achievement Awards, two in the men’s golf category going to Dillon and Jones. As the team is preparing themselves for the spring season, there are weekly competitions that will be held to determine who plays in the spring, according to Coach North. “We are competing amongst ourselves in fall qualifiers, held mainly every Sunday. Those qualifiers will help us to determine who will travel with us on the roster in the spring,” he

said. As Coach North prepares to begin his third season at the helm of the AU men’s golf team, he feels a little extra pressure to bring himself and his team back to the success they had in the 2018-19 season, when they finished runner-up in the GLIAC championship to Ferris State. While the pandemic may have hit college sports the hardest, there is extra motivation to perform well come spring semester. For the AU Men’s Golf Team, the pressure to succeed is nothing new, but they have shown that they are ready.



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Brenner talks motivation and waiting for next opportunity to play

DEAN PAOLUCCI
Reporter

Though the Ashland University football team will not be playing any competition this year in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, practice and workouts have still been underway for the Eagles. The Eagles are coming off of a 7-4 season last year with a 6-2 record against conference foes in 2019. The Eagles remain led by head coach Lee Owens who enters his

fense goes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with them doing the same.” Brenner continued to state that it would not only require the quarterback to lead the team, but everyone on the team to push one another for a potential spring season or a fall 2021 season. “It’s very easy to get to a point where you are going through the motions if the leaders are not leading and collectively pushing one another,” Brenner said. “It’s great that we are around each other and able to lift and practice because it



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- Austin Brenner, Junior Quarterback

17th season at Ashland with a 122-54 combined record. The announcement of the suspension of the 2020 fall sports season was one that was emotional for redshirt junior quarterback Austin Brenner. “It was tough,” Brenner said. “No one wants to wake up and hear that your season got suspended. Obviously, you are gonna be upset you are gonna be emotional.” Brenner comes off a season last year where the quarterback threw for 2,121 yards and 12 touchdowns while throwing a 54% completion percentage. Brenner was also able to run for 746 rushing yards and 4 touchdowns. Though the team is allowed to practice and train with each other, the Eagles are taking precautions and safety into account in multiple different ways. “The NCAA is giving us eight hours a week, I believe,” Brenner said. “We do lifting in a couple of different groups. On the field, the offense goes on Tuesdays and Thursdays just doing individual work and installing plays. The de-

gives us that opportunity to push one another.” While there will be some Eagles that will be returning to Ashland to play in the potential spring season or the fall season in 2021, there are some seniors that have decided to forgo the season and graduate from the university. “It’s tough for those guys, getting the season taken away from those seniors”, Brenner said. “Some of them are ready to go out there and graduate and get a job or have a job lined up, so it put them in a very tough situation to think about.” Though the team will not be playing in the 2020 season, Brenner finished by saying that the team will be ready to play regardless of the timetable. “We are so excited for the next opportunity, no matter when that opportunity is going to be,” Brenner said. “We are gonna prepare this fall as if we are going to play in the spring, and if not then we will look forward to the fall and be extra prepared to put on the pads again.”



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