

WFU men's golf team finishes fourth at Intercollegiate event

Wanner, Wilfong tie for 11th with Deacs' best individual showings

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The Wake Forest men's golf team remained in fourth place after the final round of The Intercollegiate on Sunday. The two-day, 54-hole event featured 17 teams on the par-71, 6,782-yard layout at Raleigh Country Club.

As it did in the second round on Saturday, Wake Forest shot a 2-over 286 on the final 18, finishing the tournament with an even 852. The Deacs finished 9 strokes back of team champion SMU. The Mustangs, after opening with a 3-over 287, turned in subse-

quent rounds of 277 and 279 to finish 4 strokes ahead of both UNC and Tulsa, which tied for second at -5.

The Deacons have placed among the top four in six straight tournaments and in nine of 12 events so far this season.

Seniors Brent Wanner and Chad Wilfong posted WFU's best individual finishes, both tying for 11th with a 1-under 212. Wilfong, who opened with rounds of 70 and 74, vaulted from 27th place to 11th on the final 18 thanks to a 68 on Sunday. Wanner shot a 1-over 72 on Sunday to go with his earlier scores of 72-68.

The Deacons duo finished 5 strokes back of individual medalist Chris Noel of Tulsa, who won with a 6-under 207.

WFU senior Cortland Lowe recorded his third top-20 finish of the season, placing 14th with an even 213. Lowe entered the day in third place overall but turned in a 3-over 74 in the final round.

Freshman Kyle Reifers tied for 26th with a 3-over 216, carding rounds of 69-75-72. The struggles continued for senior Chris Yoder on Sunday, as he turned in a 78 to finish 62nd in the standings with a 12-over 225 (71-76-78).

Wake Forest will return to action for the third straight weekend when it competes in the ACC Championships at the Old North State Club in Uwharrie Point this weekend. The Deacs will look to capture their first conference title since 1989.

One-on-One

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Ron: Interacting with the people that I come in contact with, whether it be coaches or players. Those two groups are just wonderful people. I'm not just talking about the head coaches. I'm also talking about the assistant coaches too.

Anthony: Tell me who your favorite Demon Deacon athlete is.

Ron: There's so many. When you say that, I think of people who were here when I wasn't here. Ricky Proehl, who comes back for every basketball game, here he is, in the NFL, and as soon as the season's over, he's at all of our games. Of course, many of the athletes that have been here since I've come along have been very special to me and this university. If you're going on pure athletic accomplishments and achievements, you've got to put Tim Duncan up there. There hasn't been a more accomplished athlete during my tenure. He's as solid as a rock. Josh Howard is right there with him. It's impossible to name one.

Anthony: What about a favorite coach?

Ron: All of them. (Both laugh.) I would never go there. I told Skip that I feel really blessed because I don't dread seeing anyone in our department when I walk down the hall. In fact, I look forward to seeing everyone. It's a unique environment.

Anthony: Some people may not know this about you, but you're a former baseball player and coach. Most players that I've come in contact with have been superstitious.

Ron: (Laughs.)

Anthony: Are you superstitious?

Ron: I was a lot more superstitious when I coached. A lot of that left since I've been in administration. I was one of those guys who wouldn't step on the white lines, and all of those baseball traditions and superstitions. Since I've been away from it, I don't wear the same socks and I don't wear the same outfit if we win. My wife is probably more prone to do that than I am.

Anthony: Really?

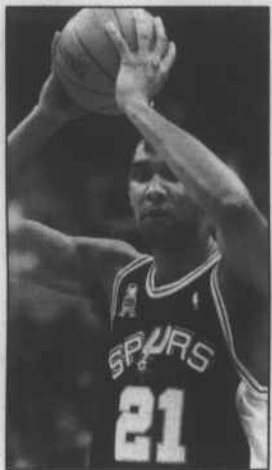
Ron: Yeah.

Anthony: Tell me what your most memorable moment is from your playing days.

Ron: In terms of accomplishments, they are so few. In terms of being taken out of games, there's so many. (Both laugh.) There are many fond memories, but when you look back on your career as an athlete, you don't really look back on what you've accomplished on the field. You tend to talk about things that happened off the field, and you'll do that as you get further from your sports career. You'll get back with your former teammates and you'll talk about relationships, what happened in the locker room and practice field. You might talk about what happened in a game in a humorous way, rather than, "Remember when we beat Georgia, 31-14." Those things will become less important as you move further from your career. And, as you move further from your career, you'll also become All-Americans. I'll tell people that I was an All-American. No one will know the differ-



Josh Howard



Tim Duncan

ence because it was so long ago. (Both laugh.)

Anthony: Did you watch the Masters this weekend?

Ron: Yeah, I did. I turned it on after I got in from a baseball game on Sunday. I got home about 4 o'clock. I turned it on and saw Len (Mattiace), who's one of ours, ahead. And then I couldn't move. I was simply glued to the TV from then on. In fact, I tried to call Len this morning and let him know how proud we are of him. He gave us all a thrill by the way he played and the way he conducted himself.

Anthony: Do you play any golf?

Ron: (Pause.) Well, I play, but you don't want to be around when I'm playing. (Both laugh.) It's an ugly sight.

Anthony: What other sports do you play from time to time?

Ron: I used to play tennis every day. In fact, I taught tennis in the '70s. I haven't played that in a long time. I also used to play racquetball every day. I really don't do that much competitively anymore. I work out regularly, but nothing competitive. My competitiveness is in pingpong and board games more than anything else.

Anthony: You've done a lot for Wake athletics so far. What's next on your plate?

Ron: I don't know. I really don't. I take it a day at a time. I've never been one to say that I'm here at this age and I want to be here at that age. I don't have 10-year goals. A lot of people do that and are successful, but I really enjoy living for the moment. And I know that's a cliché, but I try to get the most out of every day. I've just never been into the long-range goal. I guess that's because I view every position as if it's my last. When I was 22 years old, I

was the baseball coach at Elmhurst College. I thought I was going to retire there.

Anthony: Oh yeah?

Ron: Sure. That's how I view every position.

Anthony: I know that spare time is scarce for you, but what do you do when time becomes available?

Ron: Take walks with my wife. I try to spend as much time with my family as I can. This job does take a lot of time. Your family can also be a part of your job. When I'm at a game, oftentimes I'm with my family. It becomes a combination of a family outing and job. I really don't have any hobbies. I work out. I just try to enjoy my family and job. That's my life.

Anthony: If you weren't the AD at Wake, tell me what you might be doing right now.

Ron: I'd probably still be coaching. I probably went a little overboard with it.

Anthony: What do you mean?

Ron: Winning was far too important to me. I didn't really enjoy the wins, and the losses were too devastating. That's why I got out of it.

Anthony: Now Wake used to be considered as the school with the "big fence" around it, and not really perceived as Winston-Salem's team, especially in the black communities. Obviously, things are steadily getting (better). Times are changing. How do you feel about that?

Ron: I think it's wonderful. We're making every attempt to become not only Winston-Salem's team, but the Triad's ACC team. That's our marketing plan for the next few years. Our coaches are doing a great job with that. Recruiting Chris Paul was tremendous. What is he going to bring to the table as a local kid? Josh was another example of that. The black community is extremely important to us. We're going to do something in East Winston that we've never done this year. We want to have Wake Forest days. We'll bring out the inflatable for the kids. We'll take our program to that community and hope that they'll feel a lot more comfortable coming into our community.

Anthony: Let's conclude this interview with some free association. That's where I say one word and you simply tell me the first thing that comes to mind.

Ron: OK.

Anthony: Dean Buchan (WFU sports information director).

Ron: Perfect for us.

Anthony: Bowling Green University (Ron's alma mater).

Ron: (Laughs.) Ay Ziggy Zoomba.

Anthony: What is that?

Ron: (Laughs again.) It's a song that we sang. It's the fight song for Bowling Green.

Anthony: Oh, OK. Favorite song.

Ron: "Cherish."

Anthony: "Bull Durham."

Ron: Wonderful movie.

Anthony: Mrs. Linda Wellman (Ron's wife)

Ron: (Pause.) Couldn't ask for more.

Anthony: Josh Howard.

Ron: Have enjoyed watching him, as a player and a person.

Anthony: Celina, Ohio (Ron's hometown).

Ron: (Laughs.) Grandma.

Anthony: All right, we're done.

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