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Amherst Women's Golf Report

Fall 2008 Season Recap

By Michelle Morgan

The 2008 fall golf season has proved to be one of the most successful in recent years. The first challenge; facing a very young Amherst team, was the traditional opening tournament on the often grueling Dartmouth course. Site unseen by three first year players seemed unimportant as the team tallied its best ever total of 322-319 (641), earning us fifth place of seventeen teams. Solid contribution by all five players, particularly three who posted scores in the 70's, helped to propel the team well ahead of its Division III rivals and many Division I scholarship teams. With high expectations, Amherst entered the Mount Holyoke Invitational following one

of the best performances in program history. The team led after the first round and fought off thirteen other teams to win their first invitational since 2003 by six strokes. Once again, a balanced and shared effort by the entire team proved to be the difference. The weather shortened the next match at Wellesley to one day on what was a rain soaked Nehoiden course. The competitive intensity over a single round of eighteen holes and the long wet rough made it a challenge for the entire field. In the end, Middlebury held the trophy with Amherst five strokes behind with runner-up honors. The team was paced by

Kinne Schwartz '10 and first year Elaine Lin '12 who shared individual honors with rounds of 82. Hayley Milbourn '11 led the team which posted a thirteen stroke comeback at the Middlebury Invitational to climb from fourth place to second, finishing behind the host team. Milbourn rebounded from an 82 to shoot the low round of 75 on Sunday and stole the medalist honors from the top two Middlebury players who were waiting for a play-off on the first tee! The team's post tournament evaluation was simply "second was

Important Friends of Amherst Athletics Information:

- Friends of Amherst Athletics Golf and Tennis Outing—Friday, May 29th, 2009 @ 1pm
- Visit the new Friends of Amherst Athletics website: <https://www.amherst.edu/athletics/friends>

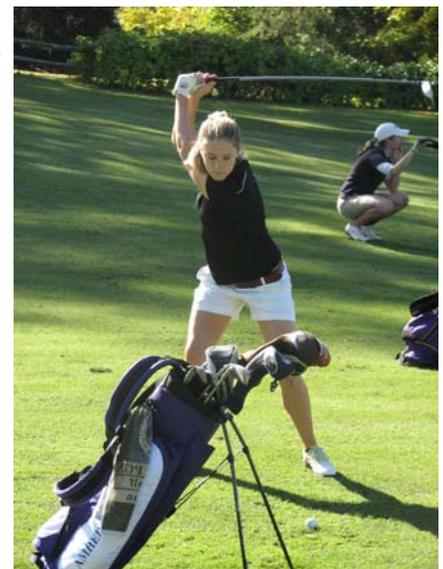
Captain's Letter

By Kinne Schwartz '10

This fall was the opening of a fantastic season with more to come over the next couple of years. I say this in regard to both how we scored and how we competed together as teammates and as friends. Although I am only a junior, I believe this is the best team Amherst has ever put together. Many of you alums may dis-

agree, but let me tell you about the amazing team I have had the opportunity to lead this semester. We welcomed three freshmen this year that have really contributed a lot to our team on and off the course. Elaine, Laura and Nina all brought enthusiasm and great games to Amherst as evidenced by their inclusion in the

five-man team in every tournament. Each posted a score in the 70's within our first three rounds and I'm confident that is just the beginning of what is to come. Our sophomores were Hayley and Jordan. It was wonderful to have Jordan rejoin us after a -continued on page 2 -



Laura Monty '12

2008-09 Schedule & Results

I am very excited about how this fall season turned out. Winning the Mt. Holyoke tournament showed that Amherst can compete for the title each tournament and it gave us more drive to have the same outcome each weekend. I'm thrilled to be on a team with such a great group of girls and I know that as we enter the spring season, we will do so with the intent to make it to Nationals.

Laura Monty '12

Date	Opponent	Time/Result
Sat.-Sun. Sept. 13-14	@ Dartmouth	5th of 17
Sat.-Sun. Sept. 20-21	@ Mt. Holyoke	1st Of 13
Sat.-Sun. Sept. 27-28	@ Wellesley	2nd Of 7
Sat.-Sun. Oct. 4-5	@ Middlebury	2nd Of 7
Sat.-Sun. Oct. 11-12	@Williams	5th of 14
Fri.-Sun. Mar. 20-22	Jekyll Island Invitational	TBD
Sat.-Sun. April 4-5	@Vassar	TBD
Fri. April 17	Mass. State Championship	TBD
Sat.-Sun. Apr. 18-19	@Mt. Holyoke Jack Leaman Championship	TBD
Sat.-Sun. Apr. 25-26	@ Williams	TBD
Sat.- Sun. May 2 -3	@Wellesley	TBD
Tue.-Fri. May 12-15	NCAA Golf Championship PGA Golf Course Port St. Lucie, FL	TBD

Captain's Letter cont'd from page 1

By Kinne Schwartz '10

year off. She posted some really good rounds and brought back her lightheartedness to the team. Hayley had another incredible season with more individual awards than I can recollect and provided us quite a few laughs. A great example was when two Middlebury girls were prepping for a playoff to take the individual title before all scores were in. Then Hayley came in with an awesome round and snatched the win. Needless to say, it was hilarious. The final anchor for our team was Alex.

She and I have grown very close over the past few years. She shot her best competitive rounds this season which was incredibly exciting. To sum things up, I feel so lucky to have led the team this fall and will really miss them while abroad in the spring. Admittedly, there is great golf to be had at St. Andrew's, but it can't replace the season with this team. It has been an amazing fall, so keep your eyes on these women in the spring and hopefully next year I can relate even more about Amherst's best team ever.

Fall Recap—continued from Page 1

was not good enough" and so they set their sights on the final fall tournament at Williams. On a spectacular fall foliage weekend at Taconic, the team found itself in good position, only one stroke off the lead after round one. Although the players posted respectable scores on Sunday, it was not enough to catch Middlebury who ran away with the tournament. They won it, we did not lose it! However, the team's disappointment was directed at its inconsistent performance which allowed three other teams to finish ahead of them. On a brighter note, a highlight of the weekend was the im-

pressive performance of Alex Chang-Graham '10 who posted her career best tournament scores of 85-81. The team has settled down for the winter and the women are thinking about the future possibilities which include a NCAA National Championship invitation. The team will have a different look in the spring as Kinne Schwartz is off to study at St. Andrew's, Jordan Chafetz is traveling to Spain and Alex Chang-Graham returns to the softball mound. To complete the spring roster, Amanda Otieno '09 will join her fellow teammates following the basketball season.

Coach's Report—Michelle Morgan

For thirty two years Amherst College, along with neighboring Mount Holyoke have been role models in the world of intercollegiate golf for women in the northeast. We are two of the oldest intercollegiate golf programs in New England and have served as leaders in providing competitive intercollegiate golf experiences for our student-athletes. In the 1980's varsity golf programs for women in the northeast were scarce. Many schools, including the Ivies, either did not sponsor women's golf or had

teams with club status. Team tournament scores were in the 350's and 360's or higher, were the norm rather than the exception. Amherst frequently won many of the events posting team scores in the 330's and 340's against primarily a Division I field of competitors. Amherst's history, longevity, and success have helped to stimulate the growth of college golf for women across divisions. Division I programs began to emerge in the 90's, however Division III was slow to follow. It was not until the

early 2000's that Amherst's Division III counterparts began to develop women's golf programs. We are now in 2008 and Division III golf has arrived! Tournaments are being decided by a stroke or two. Individual rounds in the 70's are posted on the scoreboard with more frequency. Number five players are contributing their scores to team totals. The excitement of competition on day two abounds as multiple teams vie for the trophy. It is with great pride that Amherst's involvement in the



promotion of women's intercollegiate golf has been so successful. It is a quiet story we tell and it is with great thanks to our alumnae for all the many contributions to the golf program over the years because *you are the history.* *You are the legacy!*

Meet the First Years



Elaine Lin
Clarksville, MD
Milton Academy



Laura Monty
N. Granby, CT
Suffield Academy



Nina Yoo
Duluth, GA
Northview H.S.

Friends of Amherst Women's Golf continues to grow in its support of the golf program. Our student-athletes work hard in their efforts to fundraise for the annual spring trip and other special needs that arise throughout the year. We are very grateful for the support we have received and we reach out to our other friends in hopes that you might consider making a contribution to our program to further enhance the athletes' experience. Your monetary contributions are vital to the continued success of our program.

Friends of Amherst Athletics \$ _____
Amherst Women's Golf \$ _____

Please send your contribution to:
Friends of Amherst Athletics
Alumni Gym
P. O. Box 5000
Amherst, MA 01002-5000
Or on-line at:
<http://www.amherst.edu/athletics/friends>

Spotlight: Alex Chang-Graham

Alex Chang-Graham '10 is a dedicated student and multi-talented athlete. She is not only a member of the women's golf team, but she changes hats in the spring, puts on her softball mitt and hurls the softball from the mound. Alex the golfer has progressively improved her scoring ability since her first season completing the 2008 fall season with her career low scores in the final fall tournament at William's Taconic Golf Club (85-81). Alex represents the true definition of student-athlete. She is a chemistry major and has spent many an afternoon in the lab, having to miss practice. When on the course her work ethic is second to none, a role model for all to emulate.



Alumnae Letter: Mary Locke Snow '86

The timing of writing this article is quite appropriate...it is Thanksgiving week, a time when we all take a moment or two to reflect upon that for which we are truly thankful. Had I been asked to write this piece a year ago it would have been a completely different article. I would have written about the enduring friendships that I made with my teammates, or too many to mention funny stories from Myrtle Beach, 6 hour van rides to Penn State, breakfasts in diners, or lest we forget what has brought us all together...our successes and our mishaps on the green expanse we fondly know as the golf course. I would have written about how gratifying it is to have been part of something in its formative years. I also would have written about how appreciative I am that Coach Mehr introduced me to Amherst. My friends who were on other sports teams were accomplished and committed but the golf team required more...in the spring we would travel every weekend for 3-5 days at a time. We practiced for hours every day not just the 2 that most teams scheduled. In my senior year my roommates wondered whether Amherst had a residence requirement for graduation...a requirement they feared I wouldn't fulfill because I was on the road so much with the golf team! It was immensely gratifying to have the dual focus of academic and athletic goals at one of the top liberal arts schools in the country. I was on top of the world for good reason! One moment in particular, for which I will forever keep a clear picture in my mind, is of the 2nd hole at the Dartmouth Invitational my senior year. I was determined that year to pull the years of training under Coach Mehr together and find success. My opponent was a life-long childhood friend and I was facing a 20 foot downhill-side hill putt on the 2nd extra hole to determine a champion of the tournament...and, oh yes, it was late in the day and the shadows were being swallowed by the creeping darkness. It had been a long weekend of frost delays and lost balls in the leaves...but I think I've gotten ahead of myself...Alas, I am not writing this article a year ago, I am writing it now, 2 months after my final

radiation treatment for Stage 1 breast cancer. It's been a long road which started with a routine mammogram identifying a Stage 0 tumor of my left breast. My Mother had just recently survived 2 bouts of breast cancer, both early stages, but the second necessitated a single mastectomy. She was 80, I was 43. Given my risk-averse nature I opted, after much research, thought and prayer to undergo a double mastectomy. In the time it took me to make my decision, a second Stage 1 tumor was identified and like my mother before me, this 2nd tumor would have necessitated a mastectomy had I not already decided to have one. Wow! This was the most major event that had ever happened to me but I never questioned my decision. The surgery was successful and I was fortunate to have a smooth recovery. The pathology reports came back favorably with clean lymph nodes but my tumor cells were of the fast-growing variety, common with women at my "youthful" age of 43. My doctor recommended chemotherapy. Ok, this is where I put the brakes on...is this really happening to me? Hadn't I been courageous enough by choosing a double mastectomy? And now I was being told that I would need to undergo an accelerated program of 4 chemotherapy treatments over 8 weeks because I was young and could handle it??? And oh, by the way, yes, my hair would fall out. I was horrified. I didn't want to have cancer and I certainly didn't want to look like I had cancer. The double mastectomy was one thing, but chemo? It was here at this moment that I had to dig deep. I reached back to my competitive golfing days for mental fortitude. Like riding a bike, I guess mental fortitude is something you never forget you have. Somehow I pulled myself together. I asked to start the treatment as soon as possible. I spent a few days explaining to my friends and family what my treatment plan would entail, but then I shut down all communication with my friends and family...I mentally started preparing for the biggest competition of my life. It was like a pre-shot routine...visualize, calm yourself and step up and do it! My opponent was cancer and the grueling race I had to endure was chemotherapy. I knew I could endure the treatment if I relied on my inner strength, focus and determination, alongside an incredibly loving husband and 3

thoughtful boys. I desperately didn't want this experience to be one that my boys would always look back upon as unfavorable. I didn't want them "scarred forever" by this experience. I had been brought up to believe that being a good sport was equally if not more important than what you shot on the golf course. It was easy to shoot a good score but could you be a good sport about it? How about if you shot a lousy score, could you still be a good sport? That was the true measure. I wanted my boys to learn what good sportsmanship was in the face of adversity. My cancer treatment would put me to the test. I was determined to do my best and to be positive throughout. In my mind I had no other choice. The chemo was a challenging period. At the onset, I used golf as my visualization image, but by the 6th week the golf image was a bit tame....I switched over to visualizing a climber making the ascent to Mount Everest...each step forward requiring every ounce of courage and physical strength in your grasp. The 8 weeks passed, and now I am a survivor. The mantra of my college golf experience has never left me...turning adversity into advantage. In golf, the good player can make a good shot after an horrendous one, she can make a birdie after a bogey, she can finish strong after a poor start. Surviving breast cancer is no different. Every day was a new hole for me throughout the course of my treatment. Some days seemed interminably long as though playing from the back tees and some days delivered good bounces that steered me from more hazards. From my Amherst golf experience I was able to put each day behind me, like a bad golf shot, and focus on the next one ahead, hoping it would be better. The miracle of hope is that things do get better. By my senior year my game had improved, and 22 years later, by the miracle of hope and medicine and prayer my breast cancer got better. Throughout my years at Amherst I spent countless hours with a golf club in my hand...diligently listening to Coach Mehr's latest swing theory on how to rid myself of the dreaded inside-out swing motion. It took me 3 years to conquer that swing demon and in my senior year the ball was jumping off the clubface, just like T. Mehr said it would. He knew I was a stubborn student, and I knew he was a stubborn teacher...it was a match made in heaven and one for which I am forever grateful. And oh, by the way...that putt at the Dartmouth Invitational? It dropped, dead-center!