

BC3 places 7th in national golf championships; Pioneers' Morgan 1 stroke short of All- American

June 8, 2019



The Butler County Community College golf team finished seventh on Friday, June 7, 2019, in the 72-hole National Junior College Athletic Association Division III national championships at Chautauqua Golf Club. Shown on the driving range before teeing off at Chautauqua's Lake Course on Friday morning are, from left, Noah Morgan, Tucker Skerbetz, Tyler Johnson, Luke Ostermeyer and Carmen Oliva.

(Chautauqua, N.Y.) For the second consecutive year, a Butler County Community College golfer fell just short of All-American status at the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III national championships at Chautauqua Golf Club.

Noah Morgan, a sophomore and graduate of Allegheny-Clarion Valley High School in Foxburg, finished the four-round tournament with a 318 and 1 stroke behind a Georgia golfer who placed 18th. All-American status is awarded to the Top 18 golfers.

Morgan shot a 10-over-par 82 Friday and ended in a four-way tie for 20th place. Austin Quillian, Georgia Military College, Milledgeville, Ga., finished with a 317 and placed 18th after shooting a 75 on Friday to edge Cameron Mendoza, of Rowan College, Sewell, N.J., who also ended with a 317 but by shooting a final-round 79 was placed 19th.

The Pioneers' Michael Rozzi, a Neshannock High graduate, finished tied for 21st place in 2018 and fell 2 strokes shy of becoming BC3's fifth different All-American in golf.

"You could say I was kind of in Michael's shoes this year," Morgan said. "It was close. It was fun, though."

Morgan, the only of BC3's five 2019 golfers to play for a second consecutive year in the national championships, ended 26 strokes behind tournament winner Trey Capps, of Sandhills Community College, Pinehurst, N.C.

Morgan tied with Nick Agapion, of Sandhills; Carter Justesen, of Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Fergus Falls, Minn.; and Trevor Buss, of Northampton Community College, Bethlehem, Pa.

His tee shots were costly on Friday, said Morgan, who had a 7-over 44 on the front nine and a 3-over 38 on the back.

"I could not find the fairway at all with my driver," Morgan said. "It was going good on the range Friday morning when I went out. But I don't know what happened. My swing felt the same. I don't think anything changed. Finding the fairway was the biggest problem today."

Morgan improved his performance following a 2018 national tournament in which he placed 59th, Pioneers coach Bill Miller said, adding that on Friday there were a couple of holes that "jumped up and got (Morgan) where he took double bogeys where normally he wouldn't."

Like Morgan, BC3 sophomore Tucker Skerbetz, a Laurel High School graduate; Carmen Oliva, a Neshannock High graduate; and Luke Ostermeyer, a sophomore and Laurel High graduate; all shot 82s on Friday. Tyler Johnson, a sophomore and graduate of Armstrong High, had a 91.

As a freshman, Oliva will be the only of BC3's spring 2019 golfers eligible return to the 2020 championships.

"I think it will help me a lot," Oliva said of his national tournament experience, in which he finished 10 strokes behind Morgan and tied for 42nd with four others. "I learned the course pretty well. I think for next year it will be a lot easier for me."

The Pioneers placed seventh among 11 teams with a four-day 1,320. Georgia Military College won the team title with a 1,235, which was 1 stroke ahead of Sandhills.

BC3 has been awarded five All-American honors in golf to four different players, to Stefan Carlsson, of Knoch, in 2014 and 2015; Thomas Dimun, of Butler, in 2015; Michael Cuscino, of Shenango, in 2008; and Matthew Heighes, of Titusville, in 1996.