

## 'Birds fall to back of pack at Mobile Bay Intercollegiate

Written by Mike Stetzer, Daily Vidette Staff Writer  
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The Illinois State men's golf team finished 12th in a field of 15 at the par-72, 7,160 yard Magnolia Grove Crossings Golf Course in Mobile, Ala., Tuesday. The Redbirds finished play with a final score of 899.

ISU head men's golf coach Ray Kralis continues to see positives in his team's effort throughout the spring schedule.

"With such a strong field, I feel that it's important that we look at this event as an 'us versus us' situation, how we did compared to what we are capable of doing," Kralis said. "We left some shots out there, and we struggled mightily on the greens, but we stayed composed amongst the adversity and I liked the way we battled.

The team finished the first two rounds at the Mobile Bay Intercollegiate with a final tally of 600, and with one more round to be played on Tuesday, the Redbirds resided in 13th place.

"From a competitive standpoint, we were hoping to be sitting in a better spot," Kralis said. "That being said, this is an extremely competitive field, and I thought we moved in the right direction in the afternoon."

ISU junior golfer Ricky Hearden led the way for the Redbirds, finishing tied for 34th place. Hearden (75-74-73) posted a six-over-par score of 222.

Followed close behind was sophomore Wils Hawn (73-76-75), who concluded play in the tournament with an eight-over-par score of 224. ISU senior Eric Meier (77-74-77) carded a 12-over-par 228, while junior Matt Solis (80-75-74) ended his day with a 13-over-par 229.

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Junior Ryan Murphy (78-74-81) recorded a 17-over-par 233 and Matt Hageman (86-85) competed individually for the Redbirds, posting a final score of 171 on the par-71 course.

“We wanted to go into this tournament and make a statement that we’re a team that can compete with the best teams in the country,” Murphy said. “Even though our finish did not turn out where we would have liked, we know that we can play with those teams.”