BSC women’s golf team takes second place in Big South

The Birmingham-Southern women’s golf team completed one of the best seasons in school history this past spring with a runner-up finish at the Big South championship in 2005.

Under the direction of second-year head coach Michele Drinkard, the Panthers claimed the Southern Miss Lady Eagle Invitational, and had four more top three tournament finishes.

For the first time in school history, BSC placed three student athletes on the All-Big South squad. Earning all-league laurels were two-time recipient junior Shelley McGraw of The Woodlands, Texas; sophomore Lauren Dodge from Montgomery, Texas; and freshman Emily Klein of Brecksville, Ohio. Sophomore Jill Stupiansky of Lakewood, Ohio, made the Big South All-Academic team.

Men’s senior golfer John Quinn ended a stellar career on the Hilltop earning All-Big South honors for the second consecutive season, finishing eighth at the Big South championships. As a team, the Panthers placed sixth in the league tournament.

In the first tournament of the fall campaign, Quinn, a Memphis native, shot a school-record 62 en route to claiming individual medalist honors at the Gulf Coast Collegiate Classic. Quinn led the team with a 74.1 stroke average and five top-20 finishes. Junior Alex Krempa of Daphne was the men’s representative on the Big South All-Academic team.

Panthers’ softball first BSC team to face No. 1-ranked opponent

With five seniors and five juniors on the 16-player roster, the Birmingham-Southern softball team entered the spring 2005 season with the most experienced lineup in the history of the program.

To challenge her squad, head coach Tyra Perry set a schedule complete with the familiar in-state rivals, not to mention well-known national teams including four squads that finished the season in the national top 20.

The Panthers opened the year with four straight wins against Alabama A&M and Alabama State before launching into four straight regular season tournaments on the road. The team traveled to Auburn for the War Eagle Classic, and Waco, Texas, for the Baylor Invitational, where they faced opponents such as No. 1 Arizona and No. 11 Baylor. It was the first time that any BSC team in any sport took on a No. 1 nationally ranked team.

The Panthers won the Magic City Classic, hosted by Samford this year, going 3-1 with two victories over the Bulldogs and a split with cross-town rival UAB. Junior Kristina Villavicencio of Longmont, Colo., was voted Most Valuable Pitcher of the tournament.

BSC hosted the third annual Panther Spring Classic, featuring Louisiana Tech, Appalachian State, Mississippi Valley State, and Jackson State. The Panthers went 2-3 in the Classic with victories over Jackson State and Appalachian State.

The squad opened Big South Conference action on the road against two-time defending conference champion Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in Rock Hill, S.C. The regular season included sweeps of South Carolina State, conference rival Coastal Carolina, and Austin Peay.

The Panthers finished the regular season at 24-30 overall and 5-7 in the Big South, drawing the fifth seed for the 2005 conference tournament.