

MILLIGAN SPORTS

Lady Buffs stay alive in AAC tourney

FROM STAFF REPORTS

KINGSPORT — Chancli Connatser made sure Milligan College would keep playing in the Appalachian Athletic Conference softball tournament.

Connatser pitched a two-hit shutout and the Lady Buffs plated six runs in the fourth inning for an 8-0 win over Bryan College on Wednesday at Domtar Park. Connatser struck out three and walked one in 4 2/3 innings. Sidney Burns came on in the fifth to get the final out.

Camille Olvey drove in three runs on two hits to lead the Lady Buffs at the plate. Jessica Fix hit a two-run triple, while Connatser and Brittany DiRobbio each had two hits. DiRobbio and Emily Biggs each scored two runs.

The Lady Buffs improved to 29-18 and ended Bryan's season at 6-40.

Milligan, which lost to Union in Tuesday's first round, advanced to face Tennessee Wesleyan today at 1 p.m. The winner plays at 7 p.m. against either Virginia Intermont, Union or Montreat.

Union and Montreat's game on Wednesday was halted due to rain and will be made up today. The winner of that game will play Virginia Intermont at 3 p.m., with the winner advancing to face the Buffs.

In other games on Wednesday, Virginia Intermont eliminated Bluefield 13-4 and Reinhardt defeated Tennessee Wesleyan 4-0.

Men's golf

WINCHESTER — Milligan senior golfer Blake Howard was named the Appalachian Athletic Conference's player of the year on Wednesday, a day after the Buffs fell short of attaining an NAIA berth.

Howard finished in a tie for third and the Buffs were third on the team leaderboard at the NAIA/AAC Direct Qualifier at The Bear Trace Tims Ford Golf Resort.

Howard carded a three-day total of 217, shooting 72-75-70. Milligan finished five shots behind first-place Tennessee Wesleyan, and a stroke behind second-place Reinhardt.

"I'm very proud of our team for their outstanding effort and focus this week," Milligan head coach Tony Wallingford said. "It was classic 'so close, yet so far' for us this week. We knew we would have to get our final round in the 280s to have a chance, which we did. However, it simply was not enough."

Milligan's Ben Treadway and Kody Fawcett were named second-team All-AAC. Treadway had a three-day total of 220 (75-72-73) at Bear Trace. Fawcett tied for ninth at 223. Also for Milligan, Whit Brown shot 226 and Daniel Foster shot 228.

Tennessee Wesleyan's Michael Alread placed first, firing the only sub-70 score of the tournament with a 68 on the final day to finish at 214. Alread and teammate Casey Flenniken, along with Bryan's Dean Hoare and Reinhardt's Zach Lindsey joined Howard on the All-AAC first team. Eagles coach Mike Poe was named the coach of the year.

Wesleyan received the automatic bid with its victory, shooting a tournament best 287 on the final day. The NAIA National Championship will be held May 24-27 at TPC Deere Run in Silvis, Ill.