

Amy Bond's Birdies for Bucks

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Nobody expects it.

Whether it's a category-five hurricane, blizzard or tornado, a natural disaster is always unexpected. Ensuing relief efforts after a disaster are unpredictable too. The hope that people will rally together to help their fellow citizens in need always exists, but whether or not it actually happens is a different story.

Head coach Amy Bond and the Florida State women's golf team have set a different standard.

"We're blessed in what we do," Bond says. "Sometimes we get so many special things that we don't realize that there are bigger things out there."

As Hurricane Harvey swept through Texas, the country knew of the imminent danger to the lone star state. Hundreds of miles away, Bond was thinking of possible ways to help those devastated.

Just ten days later, as Hurricane Irma circled through Florida, Bond's family in central Florida circled through her mind. Some of her players had family in the southern parts of the State as well. With eyes fixated on the television, realization of the damage done began to settle in.

Something had to be done.

"People were devastated by Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma. People lost their houses and people lost their lives," Bond says. "I wanted to find a way to give back to them."

The answer was a lot closer to home than they might have thought.

The Seminoles led the nation in birdies last season. Little did they know that one of their best statistics on the course would lead to one of their best efforts off the course too.

It's simple. For every birdie, \$10 of Bond's own money donated. For each eagle, \$20. For a hole-in-one, \$25. The funds go directly to hurricane relief efforts. For a state that's losses total over two billion dollars, every bit of fundraising helps.

"I wanted to bless other people through the success that our players were having."

Bond had a feeling it was a good idea; she just didn't expect it to go as far as it has.

"I'm in awe over how it's caught on. My intention was to help people and motivate my players, but recently other Florida State coaches asked me about it and may do something very similar. It's great. It's people helping people. There's a lot of good in this world."

Knowing that her team was already motivated for the season, Bond didn't tell her players right away. They actually found out on Twitter before she told them.

Now equipped with a new platform to help people in need, members of the Florida State women's Golf team have a unique incentive. The better they play, the more money raised.

Maybe Bond should keep the fundraising efforts going. Since this effort started, her team has already helped raise over \$1300.

“They’ve kind of gotten wrapped up in it,” Bond says. “They’re like ‘okay we’ve got \$20 more today or \$30 more today!’ So it’s good for everybody.”

FSU Women’s Golf has shot under 600 as a team five times already this season, and they show no signs of slowing down. The team finished fifth in the standings in the Oklahoma Schooner Fall Classic.

As long as her players are finding the whole in three or less shots, Bond will keep giving. The fundraising effort will continue through this Fall season. It’s already contributed greatly to a cause that hits close to home for everyone involved.

“You can replace things. You can’t replace people,” Bond concludes. “I want to make sure everyone on my team leaves as a better person than when they came in. We can all get in our little world sometimes. What matters is getting out of that little world. Anything we can do to help, we’ll do.”

The Seminoles will look to continue contributing to hurricane relief efforts when they head to the Stanford Invitational on October 16th.