

Amy Bond: Finding A New Normal

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In the incredibly fast-paced world of college athletics, Amy Bond has figured out a way to make the world slow down. She's found ways to spend time with her friends, to take her dog for long walks around her neighborhood, to listen to the stories her incredible student-athletes tell and to walk down the hallway in the Seminole Golf Team House to collaborate with her staff.

That's why the abrupt end to the nationally ranked Florida State Women's Golf team's already-successful season on March 12 upset her so much.

Normal everyday activities such as going to the office, preparing a daily practice plan, making sure flights for upcoming tournaments are in order, ensuring that each member of her team is handling their academic responsibilities and making recruiting calls – just to name a few – are now not so normal as the world works through the Coronavirus pandemic.

"The most challenging part of this situation for me is being away from people," said Bond. "Not just being away from my players or my fellow coaches, but people in general. I like being around people and that is what I miss the most."

Florida State, which was ranked 22nd nationally by Golfstat when the season was cancelled, had gotten off to a good start to the spring season. The Seminoles finished in second place in the team standings at the Florida State Match-Up and in fifth place at the IJGA Guadalajara Collegiate Invitational. In the coming months, the Seminoles would have competed for the first ACC Championship in school history and certainly would have been selected to play in the NCAA Regional Championships for a school-record 15th consecutive season. From there, the Seminoles' chances on advancing to the NCAA Championship Finals for the school-record fifth consecutive season would have looked pretty good.

Individually, the Seminoles were earning fabulous results across the board. Senior Amanda Doherty won the individual championship at the Guadalajara Invitational and sophomore Beatrice Wallin had earned three top-10 finishes, including earning the runner-up position at the Florida State Match-Up.

But as the Seminoles packed their van and headed for the Valspar Invitational in Augusta, Ga., Bond had a feeling there was going to be no golf played that weekend.

"We stopped in Thomasville and waited for a word from our administration," Bond said. "I figured it would be for a few weeks. I did not see our season being canceled."

Since that day, Bond has challenged herself to thrive as a person and Florida State's head coach, in what might now be considered the new normal.

"I have had to adapt to not being outside every day and spending more time at my house than I ever have," said Bond. "It has been a big adjustment. But it is something important that I must do. I do miss being around the girls every day and watching them compete."

The new normal has allowed Bond to focus on many things, including one the biggest happenings in the history of the Florida State golf programs: the opening of the Seminole Legacy Golf Course. The new course is a masterpiece designed by the legendary Jack Nicklaus.

The incredible multi-million-dollar course redesign, led by the Nicklaus Design Group, sits on 174 acres, is 7,800 yards and a scores on a par-72. It includes two ranges and a new 12-hole par-three course designed exclusively

for the Seminole Men's and Women's golf teams. The course offers surprising elevation changes of up to 50 feet while offering stunning visuals highlighted by 100-year old live oaks and stately pine trees.

Once complete, the renovation project will give Bond and her Seminoles one of the top collegiate golf clubs in the nation.

"I am so excited about the Seminole Legacy Golf Course," said Bond. "We are so blessed to have the course and its amenities as part of our golf program. The course is beautiful and unique though it is very different from the Seminole (golf course) of old. Our players enjoyed witnessing the redesign and now have the opportunity to play this very special, championship course."

Among Bond's favorite characteristics of the new course are that all the holes face different directions than on the previous course, and as she says 'there are some great par 4's, challenging par 5's and beautiful par 3's.'

"I am excited to watch it get a few seasons under its belt to truly see how spectacular this course really is."

Bond is also excited for the return of the Florida State Match-Up to Tallahassee, as the event will be played on the Seminole Legacy Course for the first time in February of 2021.

"I can't tell you how excited I am to host the Match-Up at the Seminole Legacy," said Bond. "I am thrilled to show off the course to my colleagues and the rest of the golf world. I simply cannot wait for them to see the course and hear their thoughts on the redesign."

Bond has already assembled one of the top fields in the history of the tournament, including Alabama, Clemson, Charlotte, Mississippi State, Kansas State, Missouri, Coastal Carolina and the U.S. Naval Academy as a first-time participant in the event. The Midshipmen are coached by All-American and FSU Athletics Hall of Famer Nadia Ste-Marie. Seminole great Katie Quinney is the Head Coach at Coastal Carolina.

With one eye on the future, Bond also has found a way to keep both eyes on her current players, all of who scattered across the United States and globe when the season was cancelled.

"As a staff, we keep in constant contact with our players," said Bond. "We have a team Zoom call and speak with them all individually throughout each week. We are also actively recruiting, which has allowed us to become very creative in how we talk to future Seminoles. We call or video call our recruits on a weekly basis."

Known as an optimist, Bond sees many positives coming from this extremely difficult situation.

"There are a lot of positives that will come out of this pandemic if we look for them," said Bond. "One thing is that it has forced all of us to slow down and not take so many things for granted. We need to appreciate each day as it comes, because tomorrow is not promised."

"I hope our players learn that wearing the garnet and gold is a privilege and at any moment it can be taken away" Bond continued. "I hope they realize how precious every day is and that it's important to appreciate the opportunities we all have on a daily basis. I hope they take the time to say 'I love you' or 'thank you' to those around them. I also hope they learn that they can deal with anything that is thrown at them if they keep the right perspective and attitude."