

## **How FSU Women's Golf Became One Of The Nation's Best**

By Corey Clark  
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After her team won a tournament in Texas in late February a fellow coach came up to Florida State's Amy Bond to deliver a simple message.

"Enjoy this," he told her. "It doesn't come along very often."

What he meant by this is her 2017 women's golf team, which is already the winningest in program history. The Seminoles, seemingly out of nowhere, are ranked No. 4 in the nation. They have won a staggering six tournaments (out of nine they have entered) and have five of the Top 100 players in the country.

It's been a remarkable season already for the FSU women's golf team, which plays No. 7 Florida today in a 36-hole dual match at Southwood Golf Club.

But that's obvious. The numbers tell us that.

What I wanted to know is how this happened. How did Bond, in her seventh year as the FSU head coach, put together a lineup like this? One that consists of three Europeans, including two sisters from Switzerland, and a couple of under-the-radar recruits from the South?

Clark: Seminoles end losing streak with walk-off win

How did Florida State, which has finished in the Top 10 at the NCAA Tournament just once, turn into a juggernaut in women's golf?

Well, as Bond explains, it took some hard work on the recruiting trail along with a little bit of luck. We'll get to the luck later.

First, here's the FSU head coach on how senior Matilda Castren, who has won a school-record seven individual titles in her career and is currently ranked No. 6 in the nation, got to Tallahassee.

"Matilda is from Finland," Bond said. "I actually started watching her my first year here. My very first trip overseas, in fact. It was literally within my first four days on the job I flew to Denmark to watch the European Girls (Tournament). And that's when I first saw her.

"The funny thing about her was that she was sick as a dog on her visit. She got food poisoning or the flu on the flight over. ... But somehow, somehow she had a good time and decided a few months later that Florida State was where she wanted to go."

Then there's the Metraux sisters, Kim and Morgane, who were discovered by assistant coach Robert Duck during another trip across the pond.

“He had seen Morgane play at the British Girls,” Bond said. “He actually didn’t know there were two of them. He watched Morgane and got intrigued. As he did more research he found out there were two of them. And one of them is a righty and one of them is a lefty, which is all very cool.”

The Switzerland natives were also being recruited by Kent State and Kentucky. But like Castren they fell in love with FSU on their official visit and committed shortly thereafter.

“They were a package deal,” Bond said.

Pretty nice package it turns out.

Morgane, the younger of the two, is currently ranked No. 10 in the country. Kim is ranked 81st. Then there are the two domestic products, Lydia Gumm from Radcliff, Kentucky and Amanda Doherty from Atlanta.

Bond first heard of Gumm, a senior, from former FSU player and assistant coach Matt Savage.

“Matt is also from Kentucky and he kind of gave me the heads-up on Lydia,” Bond said. “He told me she was really under the radar. And then I found out she shot a 61 in a match. Anyone that can shoot a 61 is a player that we need to look at. So she came down for a visit and basically said this is where I want to be.”

Gumm is currently ranked 52nd in the nation.

As for Doherty, well, Bond still can’t quite believe how the freshman wound up on campus. This is where the luck comes into play.

“In my entire career she’s the first player that cold-called me on my office phone that I recruited,” Bond said. “I had never heard of her before. It was one of those afternoons where I was in the office late. And she just happened to get me on the phone. She told me a little bit about herself and asked if she could send us some information.

“We went out and ended up watching her at the U.S. Junior in Flagstaff. And she got to the match-play portion. She played really well. And I said, ‘OK. This kid is scrappy. I really like her.’ But yeah, I knew nothing about her (before the phone call). I still have the sticky note I wrote her name on.”

Doherty, who is currently ranked No. 95 individually, wasn’t a hotshot recruit coming out of high school. None of them were, really (with the possible exception of Castren).

Yet here they are. Coming off their sixth tournament title of the year. Ranked No. 4 in the country. And looking to make even more history as the season continues. Florida State won the AIWA national title in 1981. But has never won the NCAA Championship. Or an ACC one for that matter.

Bond, a 1997 FSU graduate, knows her team has the ability to bring some more trophies back to Tallahassee. She knows the confluence of events that led to her having a loaded roster like this isn’t normal. But anytime she starts thinking too far ahead, anytime she starts envisioning what kind of championships this team can win, she goes back to the words that coach told her in Texas.

“I’m just enjoying it,” she said. “It’s so much fun. And this is such a special group. ... From the moment we won our tournament a year ago until now it’s just been an unbelievable ride. And I look forward to what the rest of the ride has in store for us.”