

Kellis graduate gets ready for shot at LPGA tour

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By DARRELL JACKSON, Staff Writer |

What a long strange trip it has been for Kellis graduate Mary Driscol.

After two years at Mesa Community College and another year at Arizona Christian University, Driscol just spent her final year in college playing golf for Western New Mexico, where she was named first-team, all Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.

“Having (Driscol) for only this year, she has made real progress in that she is a much better manager on the course than she was when she got here,” said Kent Beatty, head golf coach at Western New Mexico. “She is really long off the tee and playing most of her golf in Phoenix, with little or no rough, it was a transition for her, both weather-wise and in terms of accuracy.”

Beatty said Driscol’s leadership on the team was amazing, considering she was only here for one season.

“She has been a terrific leader and as the oldest and most accomplished team, the younger girls have looked to (Driscol) in terms of golf and where they want to be, plus she is a hoot to be around,” Beatty said.

Driscol said being out of Arizona for the first time was also a huge plus for her.

“This was my first time out of state and away from friends and family,” she said in a recent phone interview. “I was able to work harder on school and golf and that was what I needed. I spent a lot of time on the golf course and trying to figure out my game.”

Driscol graduated from Kellis High School in 2011 and spent two years at Mesa Community College before spending one year at Arizona Christian University (ACU).

At Mesa CC, she was named all National Junior College Athletic Association All-Academic team after finishing with a 3.66 grade point average and led the team to a regional title in 2013. At ACU, she led the team to a third-place regional finish in 2013-14 in her only year with the Firestorm.

“I moved to Western New Mexico only because ACU is (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) and I figured moving to NCAA Division II would get me better competition,” Driscol said. “The coaches at ACU were excellent and I loved it there; I just wanted better competition.”

Driscol averaged 79.05 during her senior year and helped lead the Mustangs in almost every tournament. She finished with two top 10 finishes and a top five, playing 22 rounds and having a team-best 658-194 (.772) win-loss record.

The team also finished third in the conference tournament.

“We had a good run as a team and I think this past year really helped me improve my short game, which has always been a struggle for me,” Driscol said. “I think this year helped me improve my chipping, as well as my play inside 120 yards left to the hole.”

Driscol said her time in college has helped her numerous ways on and off the course, with her play improving at every stop she has made.

“No matter where I have played, it has taught me a lot about life and helped me become more patient,” she said.

As she heads off to law school, Driscoll is also focused on continuing her golf career by playing on The Cactus Tour this year before attempting to qualify for the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) within the next couple years.

“I am going to continue playing and will be on The Cactus Tour next year,” Driscoll said. “I want to improve my play and work on some things, and then make an attempt at the LPGA.”

Driscoll said she has always wanted to qualify for the LPGA and really began the process during her final two years of college.

“It has always been a goal of mine and college was another stepping stone to get where I want to be,” Driscoll said. “I am surrounded by people who believe in me and I love the game.”

Beatty agrees that she has what it takes to advance to the next level.

“She certainly has the desire and the length to do it,” Beatty said. “She will need some good backing, a good teacher and some breaks, but she has the tools to make it.”

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