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## GOLF

### Falcons fly to crown

By **JEFF JENKINS CHRONICLE CORRESPONDENT**  
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Andrew Winters may be one of the youngest players on the Kinkaid boys golf team, but he has quickly earned a reputation for his steely nerves.

Only a sophomore, the 16-year-old Winters was a clutch performer down the stretch for the Falcons, leading Kinkaid to the title at the Southwest Preparatory Conference Golf Championships last month at Woodforest Golf Club at Fish Creek in Montgomery.

After missing the green on the 17th hole, Winters demonstrated his creativity to get within five feet of the cup before draining a par putt.

"I landed it behind the cart path, and there was no way I was going to land it on the green," Winters said. "I hit a bank shot to within five feet and made my par. That's one of the biggest pressure shots I've ever made ... it was huge."

And Winters wasn't quite done. With Kinkaid clinging to a one-stroke lead over rival Episcopal heading to No. 18, Winters had to sink another long putt — this one around 4 ½ feet — for the win.

"If Andrew had missed that one, we would have lost the tournament. We would have been tied with Episcopal, and it would have come down to our fifth score," said Kinkaid senior Taylor Mattingly. "I don't know if Andrew was aware of how big that putt was because there was no leader board out there. He was just so calm."

But that changed after Winters' last dramatic shot as he was mobbed by his grateful teammates.

"All the seniors told me, 'Thank you so much for making that shot. We're so proud of you.' That felt really good," Winters said. "I was happy for myself, but I was more excited for them. I knew how bad they wanted to finish on top."

Kinkaid won its first SPC crown since back-to-back titles in 2001 and 2002 by shooting rounds of 315 and 318 for a two-day total of 633. The Falcons won by a single stroke over Episcopal (311-323), which fired a 634.

Rounding out the top five were Fort Worth Trinity Valley (314-325) at 639, Dallas St. Mark's (328-327) at 655 and Irving Cistercian (338-321) at 659. St. John's placed seventh (331-340) at 671, one stroke better than John Cooper (338-334) at 672.

Episcopal, the three-time defending SPC champs, entered the tourney as a slight favorite over Kinkaid. But many felt the Falcons were the team to beat after winning two events earlier this spring.

"Our top five guys were unbeaten this season," said Kinkaid head coach Garry McMillan. "They've been very consistent and shot some low scores. I knew what they were capable of doing."

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Mr. Clutch: Sophomore Andrew Winters sank a pair of crucial par putts on the final two holes to preserve the win. Winters turned in a pair of 72s to finish at even-par 144, two strokes behind winner Jordan Cowart of Austin St. Stephen's (72-70) at 142. He was Kinkaid's lone all-SPC performer.

Repeat winner: Senior Christina Cantu won her third straight SPC girls' crown with scores of 74 and 72 for a total of 146. Cantu, who led Kinkaid's girls to a sixth-place team finish, was 13 strokes better than runner-up Meredith Cook of Fort Worth Trinity Valley (78-81) at 159.

Winters, who emerged as Kinkaid's No. 1 golfer this season, led the way. At the SPC tourney, he finished at even-par with a pair of 72s to finish at 144, two shots behind top medalist Jordan Cowart of Austin St. Stephen's (72-70) at 142.

McMillan said Winters is an immensely talented player who reminds him of former Kinkaid standout Johnathan Schnitzer, a four-time all-conference selection who currently stars for the University of Texas.

"If Andrew keeps working on his game, he can be every bit as good as Johnathan was," McMillan said. "He has the potential to play Division I (college) golf, too."

Winters was Kinkaid's lone all-SPC performer, but several other Falcons came through on a demanding Woodforest course.

Taylor Mattingly turns in score of 78 and 83 for a 161, tied for 18th place. His younger brother, junior Ryan Mattingly, was six strokes back, shooting 88 and 78 for a 166. Meanwhile, senior Scooter Anderson fired consecutive 85s for a 170 total.

Kinkaid, though, overcame adversity when senior Preston Moore, playing on a sore ankle that was injured during a pick-up basketball game, shot an 80 during the opening round.

"The week before SPCs, I tore two ligaments in my right ankle," Moore said. "I was basically limping around the course the first day and it tightened up overnight."

Putting his teammates first, Moore sat out during the second day, with sophomore Edward Banner filling in

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admirably. Banner shot a 91, but the Falcons, thanks to Winters' heroics, didn't need to use his score.

"I can't say enough about our captains (Taylor Mattingly and Moore). They're both four-year players who paid their dues and provided great leadership," McMillan said. "Ryan (Mattingly) played very solid the second day and Scott did some good things for us."

But, in the end, Winters stole the show, not that the veterans minded one bit.

"If Andrew hadn't come through for us, we wouldn't be SPC champions," Moore said.

On the girls' side, Kinkaid senior Christina Cantu was the top medalist, turning in scores of 74 and 72 for a 146 to win her third consecutive title. Cantu blew away the field, winning by a whopping 13 strokes over Meredith Cook of Fort Worth Trinity Valley (78-81) at 159.

Kinkaid's girls were the low finisher among the Houston-area SPC schools, coming in sixth. Fort Worth Trinity Valley (271-268) set the pace at 539, followed by Fort Worth Country Day (270-294) at 564, San Antonio St. Mary's Hall (288-277) at 565, Austin St. Stephen's (282-294) at 576 and Dallas Hockaday (295-282) at 577. The Falcons (292-296) barely missed the top five, shooting a 588. The top three scores from each school counted toward the team total.

The rest of the Houston schools included St. John's (318-317) at 635, John Cooper (310-326) at 636 and Episcopal (316-325) at 641 in ninth through 11 place.

Aside from Cantu, other Kinkaid scores were junior Kathryn Younger (104-113) at 217, freshman Kate Bentsen (114-111) at 225, junior Avery Geisler (117-113) at 230 and senior Noureen Nanjee (121-116) at 237.

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