

WESTERVILLE, OHIO—The Ohio Athletic Conference (OAC) Men's Golf Championship, a 36-hole tournament with the winning team receiving an automatic bid to the NCAA Division III Tournament, gets underway April 30 at the New Albany Country Club.

The tournament will be played on the east and north courses of this 27-hole championship course designed by Jack Nicklaus.

Although Mount Union comes in as two-time defending champion, John Carroll heads the list of contenders best situated to win the 2009 championship. The Blue Streaks captured the OAC regular-season title, which consisted of five rounds of golf played over the fall and spring seasons.

John Carroll, who won both the fall and spring tournaments, averaged a 296 over those five rounds, finishing at 1480. Otterbein, who finished second in the fall and third in the spring, took the second spot with a 1515. Baldwin-Wallace (1543), Heidelberg (1555) and Muskingum (1555) rounded out the top five in regular-season play.

Six of the top ten individual finishers from 2008, led by Heidelberg's Zack Koinis, return to this year's championship. Koinis, a junior, is defending medalist and leads the OAC with a 70.2-stroke average, according to statistics through April 20.

Other All-OAC performers back include David Lilly, a sophomore from Heidelberg; Ben Kretz, a senior from Ohio Northern; Mike Falk, a junior from Baldwin-Wallace; Lucas Murray, a sophomore from Mount Union; and Mike Ruffing, a senior from Otterbein.

Koinis, Murray and Blake Furgerson, a junior from John Carroll, are all averaging below a 72. Murray checks in at 71.4 while Furgerson is averaging 71.8. Furgerson took medalist honors at both the OAC fall and spring tournaments.

Rounding out the top ten list of individuals by stroke average, are Nick Bryan, a junior from Baldwin-Wallace (74.3); Heath Trabue, a senior from Otterbein (75.2); Kevin Bove, a senior from John Carroll (75.3); Dan Arison, a senior from John Carroll (75.3); A.J. Spaulding, a junior from John Carroll (75.4); Cory Muller, a sophomore from Mount Union (75.5); and Jeff Deal, a sophomore from John Carroll (75.6).