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Time Out Session: Rivekka Jumagulova Takes Home WAC Golfer of the Year

Tyra Okuda, Copy Chief & Online Editor



Junior
Rivekka

Rivekka Jumagulova (she/her), junior golf team member pictured outside the Redhawks Center. (Jordie Simpson)



Jordie Simpson

Successful third-year golfer, Rivekka Jumagulova (she/her) pictured in the practice facility on campus.

Jumagulova returned to the Seattle University Women's Golf record book this season—a frequent occurrence for the Kazakhstani superstar who already has dozens of entries. She received medalist honors at the April 8-10 Bobcat Desert Classic, where she set a new program record for the lowest 54-hole total (66-67-71). Less than two weeks later, she remained a top contributor at the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) Championship, where the team captured the program's first WAC title after finishing as runners-up in 2023. Prior to the tournament, Jumagulova earned two consecutive WAC Golfer of the Week honors. The outstanding campaign culminated in a WAC Player of the Year award for Jumagulova.

TO: Your team just won the WAC Championship. How does this feel and what does this mean to the program?

RJ: It feels pretty good. It's our first one for the whole women's program, so we're really grateful for the opportunity that we were able to compete there and that we could win it. Honestly, it was a bit unexpected, but at the same time, we expected it. We really wanted to win it and we were preparing the entire year.

TO: The team has been continually improving throughout the season. What have you guys done to get to this point?

RJ: We just stayed in the present. We didn't really look at the past results, we just wanted to continue to be better. We supported each other, and no matter how we did, we still wanted to be proud.

TO: Can you talk about the team's hopes for the NCAA tournament?

RJ: We're really just excited to be there. Obviously, we're going to just do our best to continue our journey. We're just grateful to have this experience and to be the first ones to actually do it.

TO: You were the WAC Golfer of the Week two weeks in a row. What did you learn about yourself and the way you play?

RJ: It's been a while since I actually played well—since my freshman year. I had a lot of struggles for a year and a half. I really wanted to get back there, but I knew I just had to be patient. I guess I just found my game in the middle of my junior year and I started to feel more confident. I actually got back to how I was feeling in my freshman year.

TO: You mentioned struggling a bit during the past year. Can you talk about your journey to get to where you are now?

RJ: I just didn't push it because the more you want it, the harder it is to get it. I started to enjoy it more, since I know next year is going to be my last one. I just wanted to spend more time with my teammates and enjoy every tournament I had with them. I guess it kind of paid off.

TO: In terms of individual tournaments, what kind of changes do you make in between rounds?

RJ: I don't really do much. I know that my routine is good and I'm confident in it, so I don't make many changes. When we get together as a team, our coach tries to encourage us and tells us to 'go out there, have fun and do your best.'

TO: Looking in from the outside, golf seems like an individual sport. Can you talk about the role that your team plays in your performance?

RJ: I also thought that golf was an individual sport, it still kind of is. But in college golf, there's more than just ourselves. We have to be united in order to succeed. It's not only the work of one person, it's the work of everyone on the team. If one person is not doing well, we all have to be there to support one another. At the end of the day, everybody counts, not just ourselves.

TO: Where do you hope to go from here?

RJ: I just want to continue to go further with my results and win more tournaments. In the end, I am pretty happy with what I have right now. I'm just going to try to enjoy my last season. I'm really just grateful to be here and to be a part of this team. I love my teammates and I appreciate my coaches. I love them all.

TO: Is there a noteworthy memory from this season?

RJ: It actually happened yesterday [April 21]. I was the last one to finish at the WAC Championship and I was really nervous. I didn't know how we were doing, but my coach told me that if the live scoring was correct, our team won. I couldn't really believe it because I still had to sign my card and everything. My team hugged it out after, but I still didn't know if we won. As I turned my scorecard in, I zoned out a little bit and started running toward my team, because that was actually the moment that we won. It was pretty great.

Jumagulova will remain a key player as the team continues their season at the NCAA Regionals, which begins May 6.



Seattle University golfer, Rivekka Jumagulova (she/her), pictured at the indoor practice facility during her junior season. (Jordie Simpson)