

## **Saints golf team boosters,**

With the conclusion of another school year at Saints, here is an update of the golf team's 2017 boys spring season:

### **Varsity golf:**

The varsity team ended up in 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Western League which, without a doubt, is the toughest league in San Diego County - four of the six Western League teams qualified for CIF - San Diego, which no other league in San Diego can match. While our overall team match record was 9 wins against 14 losses, the competitiveness of our team was still solid as evidenced by our overall ranking of 16<sup>th</sup> in the county. Our team again qualified for the full field San Diego CIF event held at Admiral Baker on May 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, continuing a streak of 27 consecutive years for the Saints golf program. While our team missed the cut after the 1<sup>st</sup> round at Admiral Baker, seniors Tyler Whittaker (finished in 55<sup>th</sup> place overall out of 206 golfers) and Haytham Yousif (41<sup>st</sup> out of 206) both made the cut for individuals and moved up on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day.

Earning varsity letters this year were the following six Saints golfers:

- Sophomore Alex Leon (1<sup>st</sup> varsity letter)
- Junior Garrett Whitton (1<sup>st</sup>)
- Senior Matthew Pins (2<sup>nd</sup>) – Matthew will attend Loyola Marymount University
- Senior Aidan Clement (4<sup>th</sup>) – Aidan will attend Sonoma State University
- Senior Tyler Whittaker (4<sup>th</sup>) – Tyler will continue his golf career on the club team at Grand Canyon University with the opportunity to move to GCU's NCAA D1 team if his scores on the club team warrant the move up.
- Senior Haytham Yousif (4<sup>th</sup>) – Haytham will take his golf game to California State – Stanislaus on a golf scholarship. Stanislaus is a perennial NCAA DII powerhouse in golf and earned another trip to the NCAA DII championship this year

### **Junior Varsity Golf:**

The junior varsity team ended with a match record of 7 wins against 11 losses in head-to-head matches. With four of our top six players on the varsity roster graduating as well as six of the top 10 overall, the progress by our younger players that was shown by our JV team this year will go a long way towards shaping our varsity team next year. We had many young players improve throughout the season and get valuable match experience on a wide range of courses throughout San Diego, both in head-to-head matches and in JV tournaments. Many of our JV players started in other sports at Saints and switched to golf in the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade years. The JV program allows them to get in a lot of rounds of golf in both practice and in matches to speed up their learning curve. We also get quite a few 9<sup>th</sup> graders who have not played formal golf prior to being on the team; the team ladder allows them to compete and move up as they improve. As a part of the JV program, we also have a Developmental Team, run by Coach Bill Davis and Tom Graciano, that teaches our newest golfers the fundamentals of golf, especially etiquette, while allowing players to move to the JV ladder as their play improves.

Highlights of the JV season would include the following:

- Matches at Riverwalk, Cottonwood, Miramar, Oaks North, Steele Canyon, and the Country Club of Rancho Bernardo
- Ryder Cup style matches at Steele Canyon and Cottonwood
- End of season tournaments at

- Oaks North GC – 9<sup>th</sup> grader Anthony Konja finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place out of 60 players
- Mission Trails GC – Saints finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place out of 15 teams
- National City GC – Saints finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place out of 15 teams and Anthony Konja again finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place

#### **Teamwide end-of-season awards:**

- **Player of the Year:** Senior Haytham Yousif with a scoring average of 1.0 strokes above course rating per 9 holes of tournament golf. Haytham earned 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Western League for his excellent season and made the 1<sup>st</sup> day cut at Admiral Baker. He finished his high school career with a solid 73 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of CIF at Admiral Baker. Haytham will continue his golfing career on a golf scholarship at California State University - Stanislaus
- **9<sup>th</sup> grader of the Year and Most Improved Golfer:** Anthony Konja, who came to the team with virtually no tournament golf experience and improved throughout the school year. Anthony finished as the #14 player on the team ladder by the end of the year and had impressive finishes in the end of season JV tournaments – 4<sup>th</sup> place at Oaks North out of 60 golfers and 4<sup>th</sup> place at National City out of 60 golfers. With continued hard work on his game and improvement over the next 9 months, Anthony should be in competition for a spot in the top 6 on next season's team
- **Newcomer of the Year:** Sophomore Liam Hudson joined the team this year after playing baseball in his freshman year. Finished as the #7 player on the team ladder and received valuable experience by playing in 14 varsity matches while nearly earning his varsity letter this year. With a strong work ethic and the type of attitude that made him a favorite for his teammates to be paired with, Liam should make a large leap in his game over the summer and come back ready to be a leader on next year's team
- **September Call Up:** In Major League Baseball, at the end of the season, highly thought of players are brought up from the minor leagues to get a taste of the big leagues so that they will get a feel for what the next level is like in preparation of the coming season. Freshman Andres Garza was brought up from the Developmental Team to play in JV events for the last three weeks of the season and far exceeded everyone's expectations with his strong results. Starting in the fall as a beginner in golf, Andres worked diligently with his instructor and at the driving range; the improved results steadily followed to the point that his scores in JV play at the end of the season would have put him solidly in the middle of the team. With another 9 months to work at his game prior to next season, it will be fun to follow his progress as he strives to move further up the team ladder and compete for a varsity letter.

**San Diego Union Tribune – Academic Letters:** These awards are given to student/athletes who are juniors or seniors, play in varsity matches and have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0

- Earning their first UT Academic Award were junior Garrett Whitton, and seniors Liam Maguirre and Jake Gammon
- Earning their 2<sup>nd</sup> UT Academic Awards are seniors Matthew Pins and Aidan Clement.

#### **Alumni golfers competing around the country (and the world):**

- Robert Case – will be a sophomore at the University of Redlands in the fall. Redlands is an NCAA Division III program and competes in the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
- Teddy Oitzman – will be a redshirt freshman at the University of Oregon. The Ducks are an NCAA Division I program and compete in the Pac 10 Conference; they were the 2016 NCAA Champions and runners up in 2017
- Luis Calderon – will be a redshirt junior at California State University, Northridge. CSUN is an NCAA Division I program and competes in the Big West Conference
- Tyler Torano – is a graduate of Loyola Marymount University and was a winner of multiple NCAA Division I tournaments and participated in the NCAA Championships twice as an individual. Now a professional golfer, Tyler has competed on the PGA Latino American Tour for the past two seasons and attempted the PGA Tour Qualification School here in the US. Tyler is based out of Chula Vista and practices at Salt Creek GC
- Armando Favela – is a graduate of Loyola of Chicago which is an NCAA Division I program. Armando was part of the Saints 2005 California State Championship team and is described by the Loyola athletic department as the best golfer to ever compete for the school. Armando has won two events on the PGA Latino American Tour and currently plays on both the Latino American Tour and on the PGA's Web.com Tour (which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest professional tour in the US). Armando had his best finish on the Web.com Tour in April with an 8<sup>th</sup> place finish, capped off by a great final round 68, which earned him nearly \$18,000 for the week.

**Saints alumnus continues education towards a career in golf:** Kyle Sidlo (Saints 2014), a member of the Saints golf team in 2013 and 2014, just finished his 3<sup>rd</sup> year of college at New Mexico State University. Kyle's love for golf has led him to NMSU because of their Professional Golf Management program which teaches students all aspects revolving around a career in golf. Students learn about agronomy, giving instruction, golf course business operations, golf course design, and other industry knowledge that will let them pursue a career in the golf industry. Part of the program is great internship placement as evidenced by Kyle's summer internships. For the past two summers, Kyle has worked at country clubs in New Jersey and in the Boston area, and he will be working in Vail Colorado this summer. Besides the schooling, students in the program are expected to work on improving their golf games which leads them to playing at least 3 or 4 rounds per week – now that is what I call fun studying!! Congratulations to Kyle for finding a way to make his passion for golf into a fulfilling and interesting career.

**Saints golfer Sam Drummy (Saints 2009, UCLA 2013) give presentation at team banquet:** As part of our team banquet, which had 120 people in attendance, Saintsman Sam Drummy was our featured speaker and gave team members, coaches, and parents some insight into how golf has shaped his life in a positive manner. Sam recounted for the team his work for two summers as an intern in the finance department at TaylorMade Golf, his first career as a CPA at Ernst & Young (first in Los Angeles, then in San Diego), into his current career at Qualcomm. Sam's sage advice to the team included the importance of networking to your future and how golf can be the conduit to meeting and establishing friendships that will change your life's path. Sam suggested to the players that they "go out to a golf course as a single player as a way to get to get paired with and meet new people; then find ways to keep

in contact with those people". Sam also discussed the importance of contacts he made through his Saints education including friendships he made with teachers and coaches that will last for a lifetime.

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Saints Golf Team fundraiser – date set:**

The Saints golf team will be running our major fundraiser on Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup> at Mt. Woodson GC in Ramona. This is a fun way to catch up with Saints alumni and current team members. The event will start with a BBQ lunch from 11:00-12:45 followed by a 1:00pm shotgun with a four person team scramble for 18 holes, and a raffle. The money we raise from this event is used to help pay for golf course rental fees (which in 2017 cost us a total of over \$8000) to cover the golf for our team of 34 players. The rest of the funds go to ensure that all members of the team get their own Saints golf bag, team shirts, and other golf related items. I do not exaggerate in saying that without the success of the Mt. Woodson fundraiser, we would not be able to provide a golf program that serves 34 golfers of all levels; most schools have a varsity team of 8-10 players with, at best, a small JV team while our goal is to provide a larger opportunity for Saintsmen of all skill levels to learn about golf and help develop a lifelong pastime that is also useful in a business context. Please contact me if you are interested in playing in the event, either as a foursome or as a partial group that can be paired with others for the day.

Thank you to all of our golf team, boosters, team members, parents, and coaches for a great 2017 season. I would personally like to thank the coaching staff - Christian Da Luz, Bill Davis, Tom Graciano, and Jess Wilson - for being great mentors to the young men on the team and making great memories for everyone involved with the team. We are all looking forward to a fantastic season next year as we continue to build on the legacy of the golf program at Saints!

Sincerely

Coach Isaak