

## **Saints families, alumni, and boosters,**

### **Season recap:**

The 2022 season was extremely strong with our team finishing 6<sup>th</sup> in SD county and having three of the top individuals in San Diego high school golf. With the 2023 team losing 5 of the top 8 golfers from last year, it took a while this season to get everyone's game dialed in and for the team to find the top 6 golfers for the varsity. There were a lot of different lineups in the first half of the season until the players improved and the varsity team solidified. While at the halfway point of the season the varsity team was ranked roughly 30<sup>th</sup> in SD county - putting up 9 holes scores of 223-226 consistently - by the end of the season, we had improved to the point where we were posting match scores of 204-207 consistently - scores that were solidly in the top 20. Though we only had five players at CIF San Diego at Steele Canyon, our team had the 15<sup>th</sup> best team score. In the 21 years I have coached varsity sports at Saints (10 years as the tennis coach and the last 11 as the golf coach), I can 100% state that no team I have ever coached has improved so significantly as this year's team! Why did the team improve so much? There are lots of reasons, including the simple fact that we play a lot of golf during the season and many players get better with repetition, but the biggest reason was the support that teammates gave one another at all times. Players always encouraged one another during rounds and had positive conversations after rounds that led to a true camaraderie. Players were getting out to golf outside of team activities and it showed as the year went along. As coaches, we all observed the players bonding as a team and the improvement followed. It wasn't just the varsity team that improved so greatly. The junior varsity scores tracked the improvement of the varsity. By the end of the season, the JV team put up match scores of under 210 at Miramar Golf Course. Those types of match scores would put the JV team in the top 25 in San Diego!

- note: the varsity and JV schedules with results are attached to this email and can also be seen at our team webpage at [www.sahs.org](http://www.sahs.org)

### **Highlights:**

- Saints hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> San Diego Country Club High School Invitational
- We had 10 players participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> Bulldog Open at San Vicente Golf Course in Ramona
- Jack Dougenis qualified for City League Match Play at Balboa Golf Course
- The JV team of Raul Melo, Santiago Ocana, Carlo Salazar and JP Flores won the end of season Best of the Rest event at National City Golf Course against 16 teams
- Raul Melo shot the lowest individual score at the Best of Rest tournament of the 68 JV golfers in attendance

### **Varsity Letters:**

Senior Henry Hooper, 2<sup>nd</sup> year of varsity letter

Senior Jeff Korn, 3<sup>rd</sup>

Junior Jack Dougenis, 2<sup>nd</sup>

Sophomore Lucas Younes, 1<sup>st</sup>

Sophomore Emilio Gallego, 1<sup>st</sup>  
Freshman Austin Lambeth, 1<sup>st</sup>

**Looking forward to 2024 season:**

With two senior lettermen and another 6 seniors from the top of the JV team graduating, there is a great opportunity for returning team members to move into the varsity and lead us in 2024. Besides the four returning varsity lettermen, we have many other players who received significant match experience this season through both Varsity and JV matches and have the ability to step into the openings created on the roster. Part of the fun for the coaching staff each fall is seeing who improved the most over the summer. The beauty of the full JV schedule we provide is that team members get a taste of what competitive golf is like; those who really love it then spend the summer refining their games.

**Other recent note about Saints golf alumni:**

One of the many beauties of golf compared to most other sports is that people can continue improving long after high school and college days are done. We have many recent examples of this in alumni Don Eklund (played USGA championships well into his 50s), Joe Cave and Tyler Torano (played professionally and attempted to qualify for the PGA Tour), and Armando Favela (who has won on the PGA Latin American Tour and is still playing professionally), who played their best tournament golf well after their Saints athletic careers had ended. Chris Derr (Saints 2011, University of San Francisco 2015) is another great current example of this. Chris, whose family has owned and operated the National City and Spring Valley Swap Meets for over 50 years, recently shot a 68 at Soule Park Golf Club, finishing in 4<sup>th</sup> place of the 90 golfers trying to qualify for the California State Amateur Championship. This qualified him to play in the State Amateur Championship which will be held June 19-24<sup>th</sup> at the famous and prestigious Lake Merced Golf Club, one of the very best and toughest tests of golf in the state. Chris is a true student of golf and has worked consistently and diligently over the past 8 years to improve. While he was a very good high school varsity golfer who was a four year letterman while at Saints, his level of play at this point far exceeds where he was as an 18 year old Saints graduate. We all wish Chris the best of luck at Lake Merced as he tries to make it past the tough 36 hole stroke play qualification out of 150 golfers to make the 36 player match play competition.

From the entire coaching staff: Christian Da Luz, Bill Davis, John Morrison, Tom Graciano, and Mark Paule: thank you for your interest and support for the Saints golf team.

Tom Isaak