

SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Coach Hardy helps SMC Golf Program Excel

By Dean Okamura



Campo grad Dan Cone now plays golf for SMC Photo Tod Fierner

The St. Mary's Men's Golf Team is quickly becoming the Cinderella story in our backyard. Since 2000, Coach Scott Hardy has committed himself to building a winning culture and those efforts are paying off big. Ten years ago the Gaels were ranked 270th out of 300 Division I schools. Last year they ranked in the top 30. This meteoric rise has given several standout players the confidence to play professional golf. Moraga Country Club is the home practice area for the Gaels.

They are welcomed to course and driving range access. In return, the membership can enjoy watching the players' skills and get to know them while they practice. It is a common site to see a friendly tip being offered to a less skilled member or a lesson provided to an aspiring youngster. The players remain approachable and polite even when the pressure of preparing for a tournament is foremost on their minds. It has long been held that golf requires a high level of civility. "I think 50 / 50," says Hardy when asked if it is his team's culture or the

nature of the sport that compels his players to be model citizens.

In 1999, Hardy was a new St. Mary's grad who worked in the billing department of a law firm. "I knew pretty quickly that I really wanted to stay involved with golf," Hardy says with a smile. After a quick season under then Coach Randy Kahn, who was also Director of Golf at Moraga Country Club, Hardy was given the reigns.

Learning quickly was nothing new to Hardy. He came to St. Mary's to play baseball, not golf. He didn't even take up the game until he was 16. "I really liked the longevity of golf," Hardy states as he looks back on his decision to drop baseball for golf. "I ended up trying out for the golf team and the coach let me stay and work on becoming a better player."

Hardy can now reflect back on two semifinal appearances in the USGA Mid-Ams (2006 and 2007) and an Invitation to the Jones Cup, an impressive resume that puts him among the elite in amateur golf.

Hardy relates well with players and spends hours recruiting for his team. "You just never know for sure," how a kid will react when he gets to college, says Hardy. "You can spend hours watching a kid play, but in the end you aren't sure if he's playing for his parents or himself," he says, adding that he thinks the risk of signing a player goes up with the level of scholarship money provided.

Current Gaels to look for include Robert McRae, younger brother to Mike, and Dan Cone, a Moraga product and graduate of Campolindo.

OBA Trojan Pitchers Deliver Win Over Firehawks

Submitted by Frank Tse



Trojan Tyler Ohlsen slides into 3rd for a triple Photo Frank Tse

As major league pitchers tuned up for opening day, the Orinda Trojan pitching staff was already into their midseason form as five Trojans combined for 13 strikes and just one walk in their 10-5 win over the Orinda Firehawks on March 25.

Trojan pitcher Shane Dalton started the game with two shutout innings. But in the 4th, the Firehawks rallied with four runs after

Derrick Garcia's lead-off walk was followed up by four straight hits. Trojan outfielders Steven Rein, Walker Lambert and Jonah Medal-Katz repeatedly chased down the hits to limit the damage.

The Trojans answered back with more excellent pitching, as pitchers Will Cassriel and Timothy Tierney combined to strike out five of the last six batters. "Our pitching

really stood up and won this game," said Trojan manager Steve Cassriel.

Although out hit by the Firehawks, the Trojans made their hits count. Ben Mollahan scored three runs and ignited a pair of 3-run innings with lead-off singles. Christian Schillinger, Tyler Ohlsen, Dalton and Will Cassriel each provided extra-base hits to fuel the Trojan offense.

SMC Beats Dartmouth 33-19

Saint Mary's rugby followed last month's loss to Cal by beating Dartmouth 33-19 in Moraga on March 26th. Dartmouth posted an early 12-0 lead but the Gaels fought back and led 21-19 at halftime. Holding Dartmouth scoreless for the remainder of the game, SMC completed two more tries in the second half.

Subsequent April wins against the University of Washington (24-3) and UC-Davis (30-25) sends SMC into the National Championship tournament in the #3 Pacific Coast seed. Play begins April 18, in Atlanta, with SMC expected to face Army, currently ranked #1 in the Northeast. *RSF*



SMC defends as Dartmouth tries to advance the ball in the SMC March 26th home field win Photo Ohlen Alexander



Dartmouth takes possession of the classic scrum as SMC prepares to defend Photo Ohlen Alexander

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Sun, Apr 19 WLAX Oregon (Saint Mary's Stadium) 12:00 PM	Sat, Apr 25 SB Portland State 12:00 PM BSB Loyola Marymount 1:00 PM SB Portland State 2:00 PM	Wed, Apr 29 BSB Cal Poly 3:00 PM

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