

Partial History Of CB Golf

This is just the first page of the history of golf At CB. Mr O'Brien had been a golf coach at CB and did not have a great deal of historical information available to him. I do know that there were golf teams in the 1930's. This was written in 2010. Hopefully someone will come up with a more complete history.

History of golf at CBS-Bishop Armstrong in Sacramento

Pat O'Brien

June 2010

1948: Bob Henderson '48 recalls Christian Brothers High having a golf team that played its home matches at Land Park. Bob's first year, 1944-45 was the last year of the World War with war-time conditions limiting travel. The team was organized by the students as so called "minor sports" were not recognized as official sports in those days. However the team was quite active with matches against Sac High and McClatchy at Land Park, matches with the San Juan schools through the assistance of Superintendent Bud Keema (he later was a strong supporter of CBS being admitted to the Sac-Joaquin Section of the CIF in 1963). Some matches were played at Del Paso Country Club where Bob was a member. The team also played Stockton High School at the Stockton Country Club as well as a match versus St Mary's High School of Berkeley at hilly Tilden Park; there was a tradition of sports competition for many years between CBS and St Mary's High, possibly because Brother Eugene was revered at both schools. matches were practice matches since Christian Brothers was not a member of a league. Scores that counted could include as few as three players, as many as six players. Matches were generally 9 holes at Land Park, but usually 18 holes at country clubs.

In the spring of 1948 after baseball season Brother Eugene brought some of his baseball players out to Land Park to get some schooling in the fine art of golf from Bob and his team. Joe Lutzy, an antsy second baseman, reports that Bob laughed at the various baseball grips and swings. It was then that the cocky baseball players got a new respect for Bob's ability and patience. Later in life, Joe himself became a capable golfer as he taught at various schools in the San Francisco District; and was even an assistant basketball coach at San Joaquin in Fresno to rookie coach Jerry Tarkanian who later had a storied even shady career at Fresno State, Long Beach State and Las Vegas.

1957: With the construction of Bishop Armstrong High School for Juniors-Seniors on the Sacramento Blvd campus, a video that was produced showed a Brother walking across the lawn at the school. The next scene showed the Brother, I believe it was Principal Brother Gabriel in his recreation clothes, taking a golf swing on that precious and "stay off the grass" lawn. Later that photo sequence was banished. Perhaps it was seen as too informal, perhaps as a bad example to the students on a lawn that they were supposed to keep pristine.

1960 -61: When I came to Bishop Armstrong in the fall of 1960, I discovered that Sacramento had a great tradition of youth golf unlike the sports played in my San Francisco neighborhood. I was appointed the golf coach, an extra-curricular in addition to my teaching duties, moderatorship of the Talon and Junior class. No way was I a coach of the golfers since they were all better at it than I was, so I called myself the Golf moderator. Our team was led by the competitive but fun-loving Jerry Yuke, probably the top high school golfer in Nor Cal. The team still was playing a non-league schedule because we were not allowed in the Sac-Joaquin section, played all comers from the Metro League, San Juan schools and Grant District. The team was loaded with

excellent players. In fact, one of our players competing for the 6th position was taking an art class after school and showed up late and played against a JV player from the other squad. Rushing, he hit his first shot out of bounds over a fence, and then pared and birdied the rest of the holes for a competitive 72.

As the season ended, once again not being in a league robbed us of the opportunity to compete against the most competitive teams of Northern California, however we were named as the City Champs of Sacramento, and that took some of the sting away.

An interesting tidbit of those years is that I handed each player a new golf ball for a match with instruction to return the ball to me at the end of the match. The balls were cheapies which Brother Eugene had purchased through Catholic Purchasing of San Francisco for perhaps five dollars a dozen, perhaps three. At the end of the matches, I'd receive a couple of balls from players. Some gave me back the ball unused as they refused to hit those cheap, inconsistent balls. Little did they realize that I gave the balls to Brother Eugene so that he could dispense them to the Brothers for their golf play.

1961-62: Chuck Zeller, who had been the second player on the squad the championship Team the year before, became the number one player. A sleepy skinny and tall young man, Zeller usually sat in the back of classes which were arranged alphabetically. He'd tend to fall asleep during lessons. As his English teacher, I was aware of this and would mention some golf comparison during a lesson. Suddenly I'd see Chuck's head bob up as if he was a puppy getting a treat. From then on, I'd continue the practice and Chuck would respond the same way throughout the school year.

Though not blessed with as much talent, the team was competitive and won nearly all its matches. Zeller was undefeated in the matches we played at Bing Maloney, Haggin Oaks, North Ridge, Stockton and Lodi. At season's end, I was informed that we would be playing in the North Section of the CIF at Chico, however I was not given the specific details of the event, just the place and start time. That day I drove our top four players and their equipment to Chico in our station wagon. We arrived in plenty of time and players practiced. The course was a 9 hole layout that players played twice. Medalist that day was our Chuck Zeller with a 68 and the other players shot well in the 70's. However we discovered that this was a five player match and without that fifth player we were declared ineligible to win the top award. In addition, I discovered that if our fifth player had just hit a 15 over par, we would have won the event. To me this made clear that minor sports were not considered that important at Christian Brothers.

1962-63: Brother Anselm Forrest took over the golf team this year. An excellent athlete and golfer, he continued the successful golf program at Christian Brothers.