

nies continued to do well in MIAC competition and out-shot Concordia at Alexandria, then defeated Augsburg at Keller, St. Paul, with Skwira and Schuster tied at 77 for the medalist position. On May 9 the Johnnies clobbered St. Thomas on the St. Cloud course by a score of 13½-4. Schuster was low man with a 76, followed by Skwira with 77.

The 1962 *Sagatagan*, reviewing the prospects for the 1962 golf team, reported, "The 1961 team finished high in the conference last year."

— 1962 —

In his second year as head of the golfing fraternity, Coach John Leonard maintained a cheerful outlook on the prospects for his team. Captain Skwira was lost to the squad by graduation, but the combination of golf star Eugene Schuster, Ken Preimesberger, Denis Duffy, Jay Dunham and Tom Fritz formed a solid nucleus on which to build.

Despite the good prognostications, the Johnnies finished in sixth place. The five-man squad fired a high 625 strokes, each member playing 27 holes. The title was won by Duluth with 576 strokes.

The members of the team that played in the conference tournament were Denis Duffy '64, Tom Fritz '64, Eugene Schuster '63, John Reichert '65 and G. Joseph Liemandt '65.

— 1963 —

The golf seasons 1963 and 1964 do not rate high in the history of St. John's sports, at least according to the amount of information that is available for record keeping. The new coach, Captain David Bear of the military ROTC staff, was confident that his 1963 golf team, though young, had the potential to eventually win the conference title. The basis for his conviction was, first of all, the ability of his team captain Eugene Schuster, both as player and fiery leader, to stir up the confidence of his teammates. The problem that afflicted St. John's teams, he wrote, was the lack of consistency, a tendency to be easily discouraged when making a faulty shot and failing to shake it off. He lamented also the lack of a campus following for golf, the one sports activity that is more a lifetime game than any other sport at St. John's.

It is probable that his message found a hearing, for after two early setbacks through losses to St. Thomas and Concordia, the next two matches were a complete reversal in form, a convincing romp over Gustavus by a score of 14-1. This was followed by a defeat of Macalester in an unexpected 8-7 victory over the favorite for the championship. With the record of two wins and two losses, the team was determined to out-score Hamline and be set for a determined try for the champion-

ship. Unfortunately, the above was the last report on the 1963 season. Duluth, however, was the 1963 title holder.

— 1964 —

The 1964 golf season commenced with an Easter Week jaunt down south to Excelsior Springs of Missouri. The team expected ideal golfing weather, but the temperature dropped to 28 degrees Fahrenheit. It rained, and the ice caked three-fourths of an inch on umbrellas (*sic*). By the end of the trip the team had participated in six tournaments but invariably ran into rainy and cold weather that limited or nullified practice periods (*Record*, April 17, 1964).

The first meet at home was a triangular affair at the St. Cloud links with St. Thomas and St. Mary's. The Johnnies tied St. Thomas 7½-7½ but were bombed by St. Mary's 11-4.

The 1964 Johnnies participated in two large tournaments, the first at Bemidji, from which St. John's emerged in eleventh place in a field of sixteen schools. Later, in another invitational between Minnesota and North and South Dakota colleges, St. John's placed seventh in a fourteen-college tourney. Makeup of the 1964 squad was as follows: John Schneeweis ('66), Thomas Lynn ('67), John Ponterio ('66), Mike Williams ('67), Jon Schilling ('66) and team captain Robert Neis ('65). In addition to those mentioned were Joe Liemandt and Ken Utecht.

— 1965 —

The only record of the 1965 season available is the following excerpt from the *Record*, May 26, 1965: "St. John's golf team completed a moderately successful season this spring despite frequent rains. Seniors Robert Neis ('65) and Joe Liemandt ('65), juniors John Ponterio ('66), Jon Schilling and John Schneeweis, sophomores Mike Williams and freshman Pat Antrim were the main contributors as the Johnnies finished high in the MIAC open held at Minneapolis' expansive Hazeltine course on May 15-16." The 1965 conference champion was Macalester.

— 1966 —

The golf team of 1966 was similar to that of 1965—a group of linksters who both practiced and played off-campus to the utter indifference of the rest of the St. John's student body. Again, as in the previous year, the only information about the team is contained in a single article of the *Record*, May 13, 1966:

"The rather inconspicuous sport of golf at St. John's finds this year's team enjoying an exceptional year on the MIAC tour. Coached by Jon

Schilling, the team is looking forward to its first conference championship.

"Finding adequate facilities in the early part of the season proved to be difficult, and it took a couple of early defeats by Macalester and Hamline to get the rust out. The Jays then tied an exceptionally strong St. Cloud team and followed that with crushing defeats of Concordia and Augsburg at St. Cloud on May 4.

"Playing on this year's team are seniors John Ponterio, Roger Hipwell and Jon Schilling, junior Michael Williams, sophomores Pat Antrim, Dennis Bianconi and Joseph Lamothe, and freshmen John Bonifaci, Thomas Malerich and Tom Kozney.

"The Johnnies will play in the Honeywell Invitational and the Cougar Invitational at Alexandria, as well as the remaining conference matches before heading down to Hazeltine for the MIAC championship tournament tomorrow."

Macalester took the title, the third in a series of conference championships that started in 1964 and ended in 1968.

— 1967 —

In 1967 St. John's continued for another year the policy of having a student-coach take charge of the team. The new coach, senior Michael Williams, took a firm hold of the assignment, fully convinced that the chief fault during the past few years had been inconsistency. He immediately made a move to get in a period of daily practice to remedy the team's situation.

In the early part of the season St. John's defeated Gustavus and St. Mary's but lost to St. Thomas and Augsburg. At this particular point Coach Williams blamed the weather for the inconsistency, although, when asked for an opinion, he replied, "We may have been bothered at times by lack of practice, but overall our only drawback was our instability, our inability to come in with consistent showings. There's no doubt about it, we can beat anybody. Whether we do or not is another matter" (*Record*, May 9, 1967).

St. John's finished the season in eighth place, one point ahead of Gustavus, the cellar holder. Macalester again won first place.

The St. John's team was made up of the following members: Michael Williams ('67), Patrick Antrim ('68), Dennis Bianconi ('68), Timothy Baumgartner ('70), John Bonifaci ('69), Mark Harrigan ('70).

— 1968 —

Terry Haws, the new wrestling coach and football assistant, took over the golf team in 1968, the year following the eighth place finish

of the St. John's Jays. Terry adhered closely to the analysis of former coach Williams and his effort to overcome the team's failings—that the trouble was not entirely the lack of talent but of consistency from meet to meet. It had become almost a trademark of the golfing Jays that individual players did well in one meet and failed miserably in the next.

Terry's system was to observe carefully the performance of each member of the squad, gradually advancing the best scorers from meet to meet as on an ascending ladder. The result was that talented freshmen Joe Nett, Craig Schneider and Anthony "Tony" Strupeck, as they climbed the ladder, gradually began to replace the letter winners of the previous year. Moreover, the freshmen made excellent replacements. Antrim, a holdover from 1967, said, "Weather permitting and if we jell together, nobody could touch us."

The Jays toppled Hamline 11-4 and Augsburg 12-2, led by two freshmen: Joe Nett with a 77 score and Craig Schneider with a 78. The Jays traveled the next day to St. Mary's and stopped them 12-3, as also title contender Macalester 11-4.

Hard luck halted the brilliant early spurt of the youthful Jays, however, in the form of injuries to John Bonifaci and Mark Harrigan, and the Jays dropped the next four meets, with a resulting conference meet record of four wins and four losses.

In the MIAC tournament the St. John's golfers jumped from eighth place to fourth, with John Bonifaci and freshman Tony Strupeck leading the team, followed closely by Joe Nett, Craig Schneider and Dennis Bianconi.

Terry Haws, despite his disappointment with the team for not doing better, was satisfied that his system had worked. The future looked bright.

— 1969 —

The high hopes of Terry Haws at the end of his first season as golf coach were amply justified. The 1969 team won the MIAC championship, the first and only golf championship in St. John's history. With Pat Antrim the only 1968 team member graduating, the coach had a line-up of tried golfers to start the season: Mark Harrigan, Joe Nett, Tony Strupeck, Jack Herb, with freshmen Joseph Parise and Paul Welle to challenge them for first place positions on the team. The motivation provided by the freshmen was demonstrated when freshman Joe Parise, who emerged from the conflict as the conference champion for 1969, stirred up the Jays to a startling comeback at a time when

it seemed that the team might finish among the also-rans of the conference.

Unfortunately, the *Record* failed to report the entire season's play, despite an elaborate program of six invitationals and only two dual meets. In the 1970 preview for the coming season we read a brief account of the final phase of the MIAC tournament: "In last year's conference meet the Johnnies stormed from ten points behind in a rain and hail storm at Edina's Braemar Country Club to capture the first title in school history. Joe Parise, the conference individual champion and medalist, was the hero of the day by coming from behind with two 76 scores for the first and second rounds. In scoring his 76 finish he broke out of a three-way tie to secure medalist honors" (*Record*, April 15, 1970).

— 1970 —

"Golfers Playing Unfamiliar Role" was the headline of the 1970 golf preview: "The St. John's golf squad is in an unfamiliar position—they are the defending champions and are rated a strong favorite to repeat" (*Record*, April 15, 1970).

Heading the list of returnees for the 1970 season was sophomore Joe Parise who in 1969 had broken a three-way tie to take medalist honors in the conference. Others less noteworthy were senior captain Mark Harrigan and seniors Craig Schneider and Jack Herb; juniors Joe Nett, Tony Strupeck and Paul Welle; sophomore Robert Brick and three promising freshmen—James Kruzich, Kim Culp and Patrick McKeon.

The prediction of Terry Haws was that the race would be between St. John's, Gustavus and St. Thomas, with Duluth coming in as a dark-horse possibility. The weather was particularly adverse to the Jays, however, ". . . because of inclement weather the entire Jay schedule prior to the conference championship was cancelled, and so the conference meet was their first competitive event. The team finished in a very disappointing seventh place in the MIAC" (*Record*, March 26, 1971).

— 1971 —

Joe Parise in his pre-season column in the *Record* was guardedly optimistic in his predictions for 1971. "St. John's," he commented, "is definitely a potential contender, but whether the Johnnies can sharpen up and show some consistency remains to be seen" (*Record*, March 26, 1971). Later, in an interview conducted by the excellent commentator Ernie Bedor, Parise again was guarded in speaking of his own chances to win the individual title: "It all depends on how hot you get and

how everyone else does. The team, I know, will be a lot better . . . Joe Nett has been playing his best golf and could win the championship" (ibid). It might be added that he and three others had gone to Tulsa, Oklahoma, for the Easter season to practice so as not to be caught unprepared before the conference meet.

The 1972 *Sagatagan* published the outcome of the Jays' golf season as follows: first place in the St. Cloud dual meet, third place in the Cobber-Dragon Invitational, second place in the MIAC, second place in the NAIA District 13 play-offs. It was one of the good St. John's years in golf.

— 1972 —

Around 1972 or slightly earlier, a radical change had taken place in the reporting of golf activities. With the new academic calendar and the shortening of the spring season from June to May 20 or so, the golf season was now limited to ten days at the most. As a result, careful records of the spring sports were not kept as important. For the 1972 golf season, by a lucky break, the newspaper clippings of the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* are available.

St. John's finished in second place in the conference, losing first place to Macalester by a meager eight points: Macalester's total points for the meet of 791 to the 799 of St. John's. Joe Parise won seventh place with a total score of 155, Kim Culp and James Kruzich tied for tenth place at 159 points, Pat McKeon took seventeenth place, and Douglas Dero and John Possin were in 36th and 37th places respectively. The solid second place finish ranked the Jays among the leaders in the conference.

— 1973 —

The untimely death of Terry Haws brought football coach John Gagliardi to the head coaching position of golf in 1973. The turn-out of candidates for the team was enthusiastic with 36 contestants for the ten-man squad the coach would select. Coach Gagliardi singled out five veterans as most likely winners of the choice spots on the team: Kim Culp, Douglas Dero, John Possin, James Brewi and Pat McKeon. When the MIAC championships came around, however, the team was represented by three new men, David Koebele, Rick Sheldon and Tom Broman, along with Culp and Brewi.

After the first round of the conference golf tourney St. John's title chances looked bleak. The new members, through lack of experience, found it difficult to cope with what they called the "choppy unpredictable greens." Brewi, in an interview with a *Record* sportswriter,

acknowledged that the conference "had a lot of good experienced teams." According to a later report, the Jays were headed for sixth place in the conference standings.

— 1974-1978 —

Since neither the school paper nor the golf coach kept statistical data and squad rosters for the years 1974-78, Coach Patrick Haws was able to provide only the following information about these years: 1) The MIAC standing of St. John's for the period; 2) the name of the team captain for each year; 3) the names of the individual competitors who represented St. John's in the conference championship matches.

1974—MIAC place: third. Captain: Jim Brewi. Team members: Dave Krebs, Scott Hogan, Doug Spanton.

1975—MIAC place: sixth. Captain: Jim Brewi. Team members: Dave Koebele, Doug Dero, Phil Murphy.

1976—MIAC place: third. Captain: none. Team members: Mike Jennings, Mark Hall, John Dorgan.

1977—MIAC place: fourth. Captain: Mike Jennings. Team members: Mark Hall, Jim Lehman, Robley Evans.

1978—MIAC place: fourth. Captain: Mike Jennings. Team members: Jim Lehman, Terry Putz.



CHAPTER XI

**Soccer**

— 1967 —

In the period from 1966-69 two new sports made their appearance on the St. John's campus, soccer football and rugby. First came soccer.

A change in the general atmosphere of St. John's, as well as in other colleges, had been building up after the war, one feature of which was the heavy influx of foreign students from various countries—Mexico, Central and South America, the Bahamas, Viet Nam, Hong Kong—all countries where soccer was the international sport par excellence. It was in response to their request for soccer equipment that Athletic Director George Durenberger furnished them with the needed material: balls, goal nets and an adequate playing area on the new intramural field. He also arranged a series of scheduled games with colleges where soccer had become one of the fall sports, especially Macalester and Carleton.

It turned out that not only foreigners but also North American students were interested in soccer and wanted to play the game. Although it was a popular international sport, every American boy had at one time or another engaged in a modified form of soccer, kicking the ball only and striving to drive it over a given goal line. The great difference that the Americans had to surmount in order to play the game was that the player could use any part of the body except the arms and hands to maneuver the ball to a point where it could be kicked into the nets. Butting the ball with the head, known as "heading," is a characteristic feature of the game.