

# St. Pius X battles north country

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Golf is tough even in perfect playing conditions. But toss in aerated greens covered with sand, and par putts become bogey-matics and birdies are reserved for divine intervention. It helps that St. Pius X is a catholic school.

In holy crusades fashion, the Golden Lions traveled north for an 18-hole match against South Forsyth and Alpharetta High March 22 at The Hooch Golf Club in Duluth. The par 61 4000-yard executive style course seemed like driving range practice for the golfers until approach shots landed on the greens.

**Chase Decraene**, playing in the number one spot for St. Pius X's junior varsity squad, went up against Alpharetta's **Chris Patton** and South Fulton's **Jake Davis**. Decraene and Davis both missed the fairway on the opening 294-yard slight dogleg right. The two chipped within five feet of the hole but missed par putts while Patton's approach shot landed on the fringe leaving him two putts for an opening par. The second hole seemed a much easier task—the 145-yard par 3 over water is hardly daunting given its large green. Decraene had a medium range putt for par which came up inches short as did Patton's attempt at par. Both have good putting strokes, but putting through sand is akin to skateboarding through grass. Davis's tee shot found the water hazard and he made triple bogey. For the rest of the round, Davis had trouble navigating the course. Patton however, just one stroke better than Decraene heading into the third hole, split the fairway on the 354-yard par 4. Patton's approach shot sailed over the green where he feared it might be unplayable until he found the ball a few feet from the out of bounds marker. Patton bogey, opening the door for Decraene



Chase Decraene of St. Pius X tees off on the par 3 fourth hole at The Hooch Golf in Duluth. Photos by Brian Egston.

who settled for double bogey. All three golfers parred the next hole, but the battle was clearly growing between Decraene and Patton.

With a picture perfect swing and bit of swagger to match, Patton gained a two shot lead by the fourth hole.

Decraene is a double-plane swinger. Like **Jim Furyk** and **Tom Lehman**, Decraene has abandoned the strict rules of the fundamental golf swing and instead does whatever it takes to get the ball in the hole with the least amount of strokes. Despite missing 50 percent of the fairways on the front nine, Decraene pulled to within one stroke of Patton on the 340-yard par 4. Patton missed his only fairway on the front side when his tee shot landed near the base of a tree leaving him a slightly downhill lie approach shot over water. He

spent plenty of time thinking about his approach shot. The sucker-pin placement was front right, a few feet from the water hazard. Fundamentals and swagger prevailed as Patton's shot landed eight feet from the cup. His birdie putt, of course, fell short on the sandy putting surface. For the remaining front nine, Decraene stayed on Patton's heels never dropping more than one stroke behind. But then came the 296-yard par four. Most golf-

ers who play The Hooch try to drive the green. Decraene, however, played an iron off the tee and his ball landed in the middle of the fairway just beyond the 150-yard marker.

A nifty approach shot landed on the slope of the green and trickled near the hole. His birdie putt, guided by the sand, and perhaps a bit of the catholic school intervention found the bottom of the cup scoring the only birdie on the front side. Patton parred the hole and the two headed to the back nine tied at 34. Davis' struggles were the only low points for South Forsyth. His teammates apparently navigated the greens much better as the War Eagles topped St. Pius X and Alpharetta. Final Scores: South Forsyth-296, St. Pius X-303, Alpharetta-309.



## Exciting senior class finishes career with 12 in 1,000 point club

The 2007 DeKalb County basketball senior class brought their high school careers to a close in March.

The four year span included six state championships and 12 seniors that surpassed the 1,000 point mark in career scoring which again shows the depth of talent in DeKalb County basketball.

Three of the 2007 class eclipsed the 1,500 point plateau led by Avondale's **Angelica Mealing** with 1,584, Tower's **Quaneisha Perry** with 1,582 and Columbia's **Jeremy Price** with 1,526.

Price, a Georgia signee, and Perry also grabbed over 1,000 rebounds in their careers with 1,256 and 1,079, respectively.

Mealing, a Central Florida signee, finished her career with 407 assists and 302 steals for averages of 3.3 and 2.5 per game, respectively, in helping lead Avondale to the state playoffs four consecutive seasons, including the 2006 Class AAA state championship.

Three more seniors finished with over 1,200 points in their careers led by Tennessee-Chattanooga signee **Anelia Murray** of Redan with 1,278. Avondale's **Shaday**

**Woolcock**, a Georgia Tech signee, only played two games in the 2007 season and was on pace to go over that 1,500 plateau before injuries cut her senior season short. She finished with 1,264 points, 422 rebounds, 348 steals (3.7 avg) and 152 assists (1.6 avg.).

The last to join the 1,200 point club was Stone Mountain sharpshooter and College of Charleston commit **Andrew Goudelock** who hit for 704 points this season (22.7 avg.) to finish with 1,211 points and over 100 rebounds (195), 100 assists (173) and 100 steals (117) for his career.

Four of the senior guys and one senior girl went over the 1,100 point level with Stone Mountain's **Terrell Bell** and Columbia's **Lance Storrs** both hitting for 1,187 points.

Bell, a Virginia Tech signee, also added 723 rebounds (6.6), 251 assists (2.3) and 146 steals (1.3) in a stellar career for the Pirates.

Storrs, a Georgia Tech signee and a catalyst in Columbia's 2006 state title run, grabbed 613 boards (4.7), 355 assists (2.7)