Thank you for your interest in Yale and our golf program. I am always eager to share the following information about the team and the recruiting process with those seeking an elite education while playing highly competitive golf at the Division I level. At Yale, there is no reason to compromise either ambition.

Yale Undergraduate Experience

I encourage you to visit Yale’s website to learn about the residential college system, the academic departments and other general information about the university. I also encourage you to seek out reviews like *The Insider’s Guide to the Colleges*.

http://admissions.yale.edu/

http://admissions.yale.edu/home

Program Background

The Yale Golf Team has a very proud and storied tradition that dates back to 1896, making it one of the first teams in college golf. The following year, the team won the very first intercollegiate championship in May of 1897 at Ardsley Country Club in Westchester County. Over the next 47 years, Yale won the National Championship an additional 20 times, including a nine-year consecutive run between 1905 and 1913. The 21 championship total is the highest in NCAA Men’s Golf, six clear of the University of Houston and the third most for any sport in college athletics. During that era, many amateur legends contributed to the program’s considerable dominance, including Robert Gardner ’12 and Jess Sweetser ‘23, both US Amateur Champions.

Since 1945, the Yale team has been one of the elite programs in the northeast, winning the Eastern Intercollegiate “the Easterns” and or the Ivy League Championship a total of 25 times since 1949—including eight Ivy Championships during Dave Paterson’s tenure from 1975-2008.

More recently, the team has had a successful run. We have won our home fall event, The Macdonald Cup, five times in the last ten years (2009, 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2017), The Princeton Invitational in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2018, The Doc Gimmler (2013, 2014, 2015), The Yale Spring Invitational (2010 and 2017) and The Ivy League Championships in 2011 and 2018 by 20 and 22 shots respectively. It is our goal every year to advance to the NCAA Regionals and vie for the chance to advance to the NCAA Championship proper. A bid to Regionals is earned either by winning the Ivy League Championship or by receiving an at-large exemption from the NCAA selection committee.

During the 2017-2018 season, the team had one of the great years in the program’s modern era. The team won three times (The Macdonald Cup, The Princeton Invitational and the Ivy League Championship) and we had Eoin Leonard ’19 win the Ivy tournament and James Nicholas ’19 voted Ivy Player of the Year. The team finished the year 29-0 against our conference foes and we played the last three events, consecutive weeks in April, with a 31-1 record. That includes an 11-stroke head-to-head win over top-50 ranked Virginia with the only loss to Tennessee.
Equally important to their success on the course, the Yale golfers achieve a very high academic standard, a feat recognized year after year by the Golf Coaches Association of American’s President’s Special Recognition/All-Academic Team Honors. (It is awarded to teams with a cumulative grade point average above 3.5.) During the 2013-2014 year, the team’s most recent result was 3.49 and three candidates earned Academic All-American honors. http://yalebulldogs.com/sports/m-golf/2013-14/releases/20130801wh9pah

The Golf Facilities

The Yale players are very fortunate to call the Yale course their home. Conveniently located just 12 minutes from campus, it is the number one ranked college course in the country. Designed by Charles Blair Macdonald and Seth Raynor, the course is considered by architecture experts one of the most memorable and daring creations from the “Golden Age” of golf design. To this day, the course remains a very challenging test for college golfers, validated by its consistent nomination to host the NCAA Regionals four times during the past 20 years: 1995, 2004, 2010 and 2015. For an independent review, I welcome you to read the following profile from leading critic Ran Morrissett: http://www.golfclubatlas.com/courses-by-country/usa/yale-university-golf-course-ct-usa/

Because it is a varsity facility, the players have top priority when it comes to tee-times and access; and the golf course staff does a wonderful job accommodating any team needs. For example, the team plays 18-hole qualifiers on Friday afternoons and early Saturday mornings which allows them to get back to campus in time for the start of brunch in the dining halls. Furthermore, we are able to host two tournaments every year: the Macdonald Cup in the fall and the Spring Invitational in April. Both of these events are on weekends. The Macdonald Cup (formerly the Yale Fall Intercollegiate) dates back to 1976. As a two-day, 54-hole competition, it is one of the premiere events in the northeast on the college calendar, as it attracts programs from around the country. Recent winning teams include Oklahoma (2008) and Illinois (2013). We also host The Yale Spring Invitational every April the week before Ivies. These two home events allow the team to spend two fewer weekends of the year away from campus, in addition to the obvious home-course advantage.

Back on campus, the men’s and women’s teams are also fortunate to have The David Paterson Golf Technology Center, a marvelous indoor facility on the second floor of the Payne Whitney Gym. The DPGTC is a year-round resource and a place for the teams to spend time together during the winter months. Just two floors down from the varsity weight room, the facility has three hitting bays, a practice putting green, a golf simulator and Trackman. (It is also a place where the teams conduct winter clinics for New Haven-area middle school children.) The Yale Athletic Department is also in the midst of planning a major upgrade to existing practice facility at the course on land adjacent to our existing driving range.

Both the men’s and women’s programs have a proud tradition of being represented by coaches who bring out the best in the players. As a former member of the team—and someone familiar with the undergraduate experience—I am aware and sensitive to the challenge the players face balancing the academic and athletic demands. It has helped me set a practice and tournament schedule that allows them the best chances to succeed as students and athletes. Here is a link to my coaching profile: http://yalebulldogs.com/sports/m-golf/coaches/index
Team Travel

Each March during our spring recess, the team travels to warm-weather destinations to prepare for the spring season. These trips to places like Georgia, Florida and California allow the team to gear up for the season by playing in a few early-season tournaments while sampling some of finest courses in the country from Seminole to Riviera to Augusta National. In 2018, the Yale team traveled to Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, culminating with a sixth place finish at Furman’s event.

We are also the only college program to make an overseas trip to England and Scotland every four years. The tradition began in 1976 and our most recent visit was in June of 2016 was yet another installment of a once-in-a-lifetime golf experience where the team plays foursomes and singles matches with a number of British universities, including St. Andrews, Edinburgh, Oxford and Cambridge. The team also plays matches against the members of places like Royal Cinque Ports, Royal Liverpool, Royal St. George’s, Royal Blackheath and the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, in addition to play such legendary links at St. Andrews, Turnberry and Prestwick. Any Yale golfer from the past 40 years who has been fortunate enough to attend one of these quadrennial trips will remember it as one of the golfing highlights of their life. The team will return in June of 2016 for the next tour.

Golf team updates and past results can be tracked on the Yale Athletics website:

http://yalebulldogs.com/sports/m-golf/index

Here is a slideshow of some team highlights from the summer of 2008 to the present.

https://photos.app.goo.gl/hXw92B6OVZrDu0Wj1

The Type of Candidate I am Looking to Recruit

In each recruiting cycle, I will receive unsolicited emails and letters from over 300 talented and ambitious prospective student athletes from around the country, and increasingly around the world. So the process is understandably very competitive. I am looking for conscientious student athletes passionate about the game who will continue to mature, develop and make a solid contribution to the team for four years. At Yale, academics will always be a top priority and I ask that the student-athletes make their commitment to golf a close second. At the same time, the undergraduate experience should be four wonderful years of a student’s life where they are exposed to new ideas and experiences and take advantage of the incredible opportunities the school has to offer, in addition to making life-long friendships.

Golf Achievements

I am looking for candidates who are self-motivated, disciplined and eager to continue their development as a competitive golfer. To become a top recruit, a player will need to demonstrate the ability to consistently shoot around par—and more than occasionally break par—in elite tournaments with a negative scoring differential. Examples of a successful benchmarks would be winning an AJGA tournament or a state junior amateur, or qualifying for the US Junior and reaching match play. I do not insist that a prospect travel the country playing in events—I don’t begrudge those who do—however I do recommend that candidates play in their state’s (or golf section’s) amateur and professional events, like the state amateur and open. I also encourage everyone to participate in regional qualifiers for the US
Junior, PGA Junior Championship and US Amateur. As for a specific handicap, someone with a tournament-tested, proven handicap of +1 or better has reached the desired threshold.

While I don’t discourage candidates from including some of their high school golf team results—like notable state championship wins or other important 18-hole rounds—I place more emphasis on individual tournaments at the state and national level that typically take place during the summer.

**Academic Requirements**

Prospective candidates need to have academic standards as high as possible, meaning students need to be at the top (or near the top) of their high school class. That includes a transcript with a grade point average as close as possible to an unweighted 4.0 while taking the most challenging classes the high school has to offer. There is a sliding scale between different high schools as they each provide various levels of relative academic rigor.

Yale accepts the SAT and the ACT tests. A candidate will need to have taken either the SATs along with two SAT II subject tests or the ACT plus writing by June of their junior year. (The SAT II subject tests need to be taken on a different testing date than that of the SAT.) Like the gpa, these scores also need to be as high as possible. While there are not any absolute benchmarks, a prospect remains on my recruiting radar with an SAT “super score” above 1400 and an average above 700 on each the two subject tests, or a 32 or higher on the ACT plus writing.

As for combined golf and academic achievements, I place a value on those named to the AJGA’s HP Scholastic All-American team.

**Recruiting Calendar**

NCAA compliance rules preclude any college coach from replying to (or initiating) emails with prospects prior to the start of his junior year. Because of that, I file away any emails and letters from high school freshmen and sophomores and then reply during the prospect’s junior year. Prospects are invited to send periodic updates (two or three per year) during their freshman, sophomore and junior years. During June of a prospect’s junior year, I ask all prospects to send me their complete resumes, which needs to include their high school transcript for freshman, sophomore and junior years, all ACT, SAT and/or SAT II subject testing scores, along with a complete list of previous tournament results and the tournament schedule for the coming summer.

During the summer months—primarily late June, July and early August—I will travel to as many tournaments as needed to evaluate as many candidates as possible. It isn’t necessary to always see a candidate in person in order for him to become a top recruit. As I refine my list of recruits, I begin to invite anywhere between two and six people to make an official visit to Yale during the month of September. During these official visits, prospects can spend up to 48 hours on campus attending classes, joining the team for meals, observing practice, staying overnight in the dorms and fully experiencing campus life.
During July, August and September, I will rank each prospect. This process will include not only an evaluation but multiple phone calls and in-person conversations. Eventually, I ask those at the top of my list if Yale is their first choice, and if it so, I offer to support the top candidates who commit to Yale.

Unofficial Visits

I encourage any prospect to make an unofficial visit to New Haven to tour campus and our golf facilities. Anytime of the year is fine, but I recommend prospects try to come during the academic calendar when the campus is busy with student life. I will always make an effort to meet with a prospect, but even if my schedule does now allow it, I still encourage people to attend the information sessions and tours that leave from the Department of Undergraduate Admissions, located at 38 Hillhouse Avenue. Here’s a link http://admissions.yale.edu/tours

Financial Aid

While Yale and the other Ivy League schools do not offer any athletic-related scholarships, Yale is one of the most generous need-based private school intuitions. I encourage prospects and their parents to visit the website for Yale’s Financial Aid office that includes a calculator. http://www.yale.edu/sfas/finaid/