

Monday, May 4th, 2020

Dear Parent,

This past weekend we took a break from competitive golf after four weeks of high-level competition. The break provided students an opportunity to relax, bond with others over common interests, and support one another. Building positive and supportive friendships are an important part of the Bishops Gate experience, especially during this COVID-19 situation.

Going around the houses last night, I loved the entertainment I saw in the homes, some computer gaming but mostly dinner parties and hanging out with friends. At the start of “lock-down” we offered students a shopping list of food requirements every Sunday evening which our Chef Matt then ordered through our professional food suppliers, with the hope that students would cook for themselves and their friends. Last night there was a Japanese dinner party with almost fifteen students, celebrating a birthday, a Chinese dinner party with a similar number of students, and a smaller Korean dinner party. I was so pleased to see the success of this initiative, which is another form of activity to complement our physical activities such as volleyball, dodgeball, soccer, tennis, etc. Here is a summary of those activities:

- Final Putting competition on Saturday morning, with our champions for the semester being:

Men: Sid Somani, averaging 8.0 under (from best 5 results)

Ladies: Thin Kaing / Rivekka Jumagulova, averaging 7.4 under (from best 5 results)

- Par 3 Championship early Sunday afternoon with 69 participants, with some great scoring:

Men: Ian Davis, 8 under, Nolan Donze 5 under, Klay Hsu, Christian Munoz, Sean Citherlet and Jhon Jairo sharing third place on 4 under;

Girls: Alise Knudson, 5 under, Carla Alvarez 3 under, Joon Jang 2 under;

- Volleyball on Saturday afternoon / Dodgeball Saturday evening, with 30 students playing;
- Pool Party late Sunday afternoon / early evening, with 20 playing water polo.

As you can see, many students are enjoying our facilities and most are involved in multiple activities.

Competitive golf resumes this weekend with an IJGT Invitational “Tournament of Champions” with WAGR rankings as well as an IJGA Celebration event. These two tournaments will be the last of this school year as we then have to conduct our annual aerification of the golf course starting on Monday, May 11th. The events next weekend will be celebrating the end of the school year and the many friendships made and enjoyed.

On the education front, our student “watch” list of poor grades continues to decline, and we are getting those students doing online studies ahead of their schedules. For most students now into their last few weeks of class, an emotional time, in particular for our Seniors.

Now into our eighth week of “lock-down” the number of COVID-19 cases in Florida stands at 35,000 with 1,300 deaths (two thirds in the Miami / West Palm Beach area). Here in Lake County, the number of cases rose from 210 to 223, a relatively modest increase. This past weekend the Governor of Florida relaxed some restrictions in the gradual opening up of the state, following the recommendations of President Trump and the lead of other states. However, we do not see any imminent end to our precautions in “locking-down” the students in Bishops Gate.

We have noted in previous letters how valuable our secure Bishops Gate campus is, with the private golf facilities for junior golfers and many other alternative activity options. For those planning their summer, although we would like your children to continue with their golf coaching, we are open to flexible solutions, from the full coaching program, down to some partial program and even offering a boarding only program, which has access to the golf and other facilities but without the golf coaching, which in any event is more limited due to the Covid-19 “social distancing”. Our Program Advisors will be in touch to discuss these options, but we do need to plan our resources therefore the sooner you are able to make your decision, albeit one that might change as news of Covid-19 virus changes, the better for us.

The students have written their usual monthly reports and we are adding our coach and RI comments, and expect to send the reports out by the middle of the week.

Best regards,

Andrew Summers (CEO)