

# Varns excited to play for defending national champ – Saint Mary of the Woods



**Louisburg senior Drake Varns is looking forward to playing golf in college with Saint Mary of the Woods**

Entering his freshman year of high school, golf wasn't even on Drake Varns' radar.

Four years ago, however, all that changed.

Varns tried out and made the team as a freshman, and from there, golf quickly became a love of his. In less than four year's time, Varns went from not really playing the sport to getting a chance to compete at the collegiate level.

Last month, with his family and friends in attendance at his house, Varns made it official when he signed his letter of intent to play golf at Saint Mary of the Woods College, an NAIA program based out of Indiana.

"To play in college is a huge accomplishment," Varns said. "Starting golf freshman year left me a little behind most but to get where I am now is amazing. Plus, signing with all my family and friends was a huge deal for me since they are the ones who really pushed me through and made me who I am. Also, with all this COVID stuff going on, it really was a much needed get together."

Varns was all set to help the Louisburg golf team to a second straight trip to the state tournament, but the COVID-19 pandemic cancelled the spring season, which forced him to skip his final season of high school and get ready for the college level.

He will join a respected program on the NAIA level as the Pomeroy's won the national championship the last two years and Varns is hoping to continue the tradition.

"The Saint Mary program has had a winning program for the past couple years and they won consecutive national championships the past two years," Varns said. "This attracted me, along with the big senior class graduating allowing for young golfers like myself to get playing time my first year."

With a lot of golfers exiting the program, it gives Varns an opportunity to compete right away and Saint Mary coach Abe Nasser is excited to see what Varns can do.

"Drake has a great personality and will add a lot of character to our team," Nasser said. "His game has potential and we'll look for him to contribute from the start of his career."



**Drake Varns signed his letter of intent to golf at Saint Mary of the Woods College last month. Standing behind Drake is his brother Brock, his father Ryan, his sister Reagan and his mother Paulette.**

As happy as he was with his decision, it wasn't the only option for Varns.

The Louisburg senior had an offer to golf at Southwestern College in Winfield, but he also had an opportunity to kick on the collegiate football level as well. As he began to weigh all the offers, he realized Saint Mary was the way to go.

"It wasn't that hard of a decision to go there with the huge scholarship they offered me and how the campus felt like home," Varns said. "I had a couple other options like Southwestern in Winfield for golf. I could've chosen the football route and took the walk on position at Western Florida to kick, but the price difference and the feel for

those colleges wasn't for me."

Now during his time off from school and preparing for college, Varns has been busy hitting the course and tuning up his game for his first year at Saint Mary. Although the competition gets tougher, he is looking forward to the challenge.

"I expect what every kid should try and do and that is to try my hardest and work to better myself both as an athlete and a person," Varns said.