

# SPORTS

## CHS' state golf trip a family affair

By Nick Herman  
Sports Editor

When the Clinton Red Devils' golf team hits the links at Camden Country Club Monday for the first day of the SCHSL Class 3A Tournament, golfers from across the state will be introduced to a fact that those in the area have known for years:

The Carles family is good at golf.

Four members of the Clinton squad are not just teammates, but siblings. They are Phoebe Carles, Sofia Carles, Zoe Carles, and Javi Carles. All four are homeschooled members of the Clinton team who have routinely been at the top of the squad's for each of the Red Devils' dual matches and tournaments throughout the season, and all four are fixtures in junior tournaments around the region in the summer.

The foursome helped lead Clinton to a sixth-place finish at Monday's Class 3A Upper State Tournament at Three Pines Country Club in Woodruff. Phoebe shot 74, Sofia 81, Javi 87, and Zoe 91 to round out the top four scores. Advancing to the state tournament was a bit of redemption for a team that missed out on state one year ago by a single stroke.

"I'm excited. I felt like we could do it after last year. We were so close," Phoebe said. "I knew if we went out here and played how we knew how to, we would make it."

"I'm glad that I had a good comeback after last year," Sofia said. "Last year, we lost by one stroke from getting out (of Upper State). It felt good to do a lot better this year."

Three of the four played on the team last year at Upper State - only Javi did not. Sofia shot 87 a year ago at Boscobel Golf Club in Pendleton, to lead the Carles' siblings. Phoebe followed at 88 and Zoe hit 91.

"We all did better this year - better than last year," Zoe said.

"I wasn't even in this last year, but we all did a lot better," Javi added.

Javi, the newest member of the family on the Clinton team this year, has improved through the year. Phoebe said Javi shot 110 at the team's first 18-hole tournament of the year, but by the end of the year he shot 91 (regional) and 87 (Upper State) in back-to-back weeks.

Javi gave credit to his father and his siblings, notably Phoebe and Sofia, for the improvements in his game.

"I used to have problems with my chipping, and Phoebe and Sofia helped me a lot," Javi said. He added his father, Javier, also helped with his swing as, earlier in the year, Javi said he was chunking his shots and coming over the ball.

Phoebe has played golf since she was 11. When she got into the game, Phoebe had originally been playing club soccer, while golf was a fun game in the summer. When she reached 13 she started to take it seriously - hoping it would take her to college. That has already been assured as she has verbally committed to South Carolina.

Sofia also took the game lightly, playing in the summer, until two years ago.

"I only played in the summer



**THE CARLES FOUR** — Javi, Zoe, Phoebe and Sofia Carles have helped lead the Clinton Red Devils' golf team to the SCHSL Class 3A State Tournament, starting Monday in Camden.

Photo by Nick Herman

for fun. I'd go out once every month, just for the fun of it. Two years ago I started taking it really seriously," Sofia said.

Zoe and Javi are a little further away from having to decide if they are going to play golf in college, but the two certainly have enough skills to make such a goal possible.

The family spends a lot of time on the course, mixed in with the responsibilities of the day with homeschooling. The four get work in on the course most days - including team practice sessions.

"For me, it's like a stress reliever - going out to the course. I could be having a terrible day, and I just want to go hit some balls," Phoebe said. "It's therapeutic going out to the golf course."

Javi noted how it can occasionally help to take a little time away from the game. He said he took a four-day break from his game after shooting a nine-hole round of 48. The next time he played, his score went down seven strokes.

"Sometimes you just need to walk away for a little bit," Zoe said.

But it can be hard to be away from a near-daily routine. As Sofia put it, "I hate (going) two days without golfing."

The four have their own code when they are on the course, too, helping each other know where their scores are, how their games are going, encouraging their siblings to either do better or keep things going. And when things are going well, the positive attitude can be infectious.

"When you're playing good, and you hear they're playing good, it makes you feel really good," Zoe said.

The foursome have had the experience of working at the RBC Heritage tournament in Hilton Head, getting to hang around with some of the top players on the PGA Tour - including Masters champion Jordan Spieth, Dustin Johnson, and Matt Kuchar. The experience of seeing the pros up close, especially if they hit a bad shot, helped confirm that the pros are

just like they are.

Javi got to experience that when he was following PGA golfer Brandon Grace of South Africa. After Grace hit a bad shot, Javi recalled, Grace turned back to him and said, "Everyone does it."

Each member of the Carles clan has a unique style of play, with its own strengths and weaknesses. Phoebe said Sofia's strength is her ball-striking and her distance off the tee, while Sofia said Zoe's strengths are her putting and her power game.

"For her height, she hits the ball super far. Her putting is good, and she can hit it really far for her age and for how tall she is," Sofia said. "She gets a lot of distance."

Zoe said Javi's strength is his lag - or movement in a swing that can turn a smooth swing into a power swing, while Phoebe added his attitude is a strength. Phoebe noted how Javi can get a triple-bogey on a hole and, just as quick, push it out of his memory for the next hole.

As for Phoebe's game, Javi said she has everything down in her game and also can stay calm when things get a little tough.

"It's really easy to roll with her," Javi said. "She'll be calm the whole time - even if she had a bad hole."

But, as is the case in anything, each of the four has room to grow. Javi said his short game has to improve, while Sofia is

looking to continue boosting her wedge play. Zoe said her iron game could get better, and Phoebe is looking to improve her all-around game - specifically, her ball-striking.

"There's always something you can improve on. The best players in the world always have something they can improve on," Phoebe said.

It's clear that, regardless of what areas need to be worked on, the foursome has had a solid impact on the Red Devils. Head coach Andrew Campbell said the four have brought an intensity and focus that have helped the team out, and that they've raised the bar for the entire squad.

Matthew McKittrick, the lone non-Carles member of the team in the top five spots for Clinton, said some of the things they do have carried into his game, and he feels everyone has great chemistry together.

It's chemistry that, at least for the Carles kids, will carry over for another year as none are scheduled to graduate this year. With that much experience coming back, another run at state in 2020 is well within the realm of possibility.

"We play in the toughest region. We finished third in the region," Campbell said. "Our team goals next year will be to win the region, advance past the Upper State, go back to state and see what happens at state."

## Late homer sparks PC upset of Clemson

By Nick Herman  
Sports Editor

Flagler will sit out next season per NCAA rules.

Jimmy Marcelli hit a two-run homer in the seventh inning as part of a three-run rally that helped erase a 6-5 deficit and lead the Presbyterian College baseball team to an 8-7 victory Tuesday night over the Clemson Tigers at Doug Kingsmore Stadium.

Marcelli's homer was his third on the season, and was his lone hit in the game. Marcelli also had three RBI.

Garrett Jones had three hits, Jonathan White had two hits and two runs scored, and Nick Guimbarada had two hits, two walks, and scored three times.

Clark Dearman picked up the victory in relief for the Blue Hose. Dearman gave up a run on four hits and one walk in 4 1/3 innings. He also struck out three.

Johnny Cook went 1 2/3 of scoreless and hitless relief to get the save, walking one and striking out one.

**PC 13, Georgia State 4 (Wednesday):** A day after knocking off Clemson, the Blue Hose went to Atlanta and routed Georgia State.

Ashby Smith had three hits, scored twice, and had two RBI, Garrett Jones had three hits and scored twice, and both Jonathan White (two runs) and Johnny Cook (two RBI) had two hits. Nick Guimbarada, Michael Varga and Andrew Livingston also had two RBI each.

Matt Norton got the victory for PC. In four innings of work, Norton allowed a run on two hits and two walks, striking out one.

PC (24-25) opened a three-game set at Longwood Friday, and will host Georgia State Tuesday in the final regular-season game of the season for the Blue Hose.

### COLLEGE Men's basketball

**Flagler transfers:** Presbyterian College is losing one of its best players from a year ago as Big South Freshman of the Year Adam Flagler is transferring to Baylor.

The news was reported by *The Waco (Texas) Tribune*.

Flagler scored 15.9 points per game last season, hitting 38 percent from 3-point range and 83 percent from the foul line. Flagler told the *Tribune* the reason for leaving PC was the departure of former head coach Dustin Kerns for Appalachian State.

### Softball

**PC honored by conference:** Jonnie Petree and Kiley Kross were each recognized by the Big South Conference in postseason awards handed out Tuesday, the day before the opening of the conference tournament.

Petree was named to the All-Big South Second Team and All-Academic Team. Petree set a PC single-season D-I record with 34 stolen bases, hit a team-best .356, had a .411 on-base percentage, and scored 28 runs. Her 58 hits tied Ansley Wilbanks for most on the team, and were one short of the D-I single-season record for PC.

Kross had 25 RBI for the Blue Hose, and was one of four PC players to start all 53 games this season. Her slugging percentage of .363 was third-best on the team, and her 10 total extra-base hits (eight doubles, two homers) were second-most.

### Volleyball

**Stevenson transfers to Louisville:** Former Laurens Raiders' volleyball player Anna Stevenson announced on Instagram that she is transferring to the University of Louisville after two seasons with Auburn.

In the post Stevenson said she's been blessed with two good years at Auburn, that she's been coached and mentored by some special people and played with and made some of her closest friends at Auburn, but that she's "super excited to continue playing at the University of Louisville."

Last season with the Tigers, Stevenson played in 21 matches, had 169 total kills, six assists and two service aces. She was named to the War Eagle Invitational All-Tournament Team in 2018. As a freshman, Stevenson was fourth on the team with 188 kills and a 2.11 kills/set average. Her .90 blocks/set career average places Stevenson eighth on Auburn's all-time list, and her 1.15 blocks/per set set a single-season record in the rally-scoring era for the Tigers.

### PREPS Softball

**Greenwood Christian 14, LA 0, 5 innings (Tuesday):** In the final game of the season for the Crusaders, LA picked up four hits in a loss to GWC - the season loss to the team in as many days.

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