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## **THE PURPOSE OF SPORT IN OUR SCHOOL**

### **Sport and its place in Education**

Many people would say that the education one receives in school is about thinking – mental activity, part of our work, our career, something that is the essence of what it means to be human – while sports are merely recreational, a physical activity, and therefore less important. But that would be a narrow perspective, for to be human is to have both mental and physical abilities.

Here in South Africa, we are fortunate in that school sport is valued and is still largely based in the school system. This has ensured that schools have retained a sports programme of some kind and, while some remain traditional in the extreme, the more progressive schools have diversified their sports offering to accommodate the growing diversity in our country. The better schools will have sports programmes that are flexible and individualized and yet the importance of team sports is also recognised.

We believe that sports participation is more than just fun, more than optional recreation. It helps to build character. It teaches leadership. One learns to try harder when things get tough, instead of giving up, to persevere, concentrate, and practise. One learns how to compete with friends, to play with people one does not like, to consider game strategies, even to sit on the bench. One learns the capabilities of one's body, to have a positive self-image and greater self-confidence.

The clichéd metaphors about being “team players”, “playing the game”, “playing by the rules”, “good sportsmanship”, even “knowing the score”, all testify to the value of sports participation in learning to flourish in our society. And that is exactly what education is all about: to provide the tools for success in our culture and the means to participate fully in the world.

### **What schools do we compete against and why them?**

Over the years our fixture list has changed significantly, mainly as a result of our own drive towards greater success. We have become far more competitive in the last decade and that



has led to our boys wanting to play against schools that have a similar competitive ethos. Our boys want to compete and to know that they rubbed shoulders against the best schools out there - irrespective of how much bigger they are, in comparison to us. We have forged really good relations with the schools we compete against and there is genuine respect and a common set of values amongst the boys' schools about the way in which schoolboy sport should be played.

**Schools we play on an annual basis:**

St Stithians Boys College

King Edward VII

St John's College

Jeppe Boys' High

Pretoria Boys' High

Parktown Boys' High

St David's Inanda

Sutherland High School

St Benedict's College

**Sports offered at St Alban's College**

St Alban's College has always valued the importance of team sport in our curriculum. All boys are required to participate in a team sport. It is particularly important that all Form 1 and 2 boys participate in a team sport, in both seasons, as this forms part of the integrating process here at the College. Being part of a team and teamwork and the values that are associated with the team dynamic, are the bedrock on which the College is founded.

That is not to say he may not take part in an individual sport, but this must be seen as a second sport. We are wary of young boys specialising too early and encourage boys to experience the benefits of cross-training and participating in a multitude of sports. It has been shown that partaking in multi-sport activities is far more beneficial in the long run, even if you were to specialise later on. Boredom and burnout, when specializing, are a reality and we must ensure that boys remain enthusiastic and actively involved. We encourage boys to participate in a life sport, in other words, a sport that they will more than likely actively undertake when they are much older. Thus, sports like athletics, tennis, squash and golf are all second sports in Forms 1 to 2.

As boys develop and show signs of preference, through excellence, we do allow a certain degree of specialization and give boys the opportunity to fulfil their talent. We are confident





that the young man concerned has had the grounding and the necessary foundations laid in his early years to cope with his individual choice.

Senior boys may apply to participate in Life Sports (Athletics; Tennis, Squash, Golf) as major sports in their form 5 year. This is on the condition that they have actively participated in a summer and winter team sport in their Form 1, 2 and 3 years and have excelled in an individual sport. This will be at the discretion of the Director of Sport.

## **Summer Sports**

### **Athletics**

The value of athletics at the school is significant and cannot be overlooked. The profound impact that it has brought on individuals and the community as a whole has been nothing but positive. Bridging gaps and bringing people who, otherwise might have not interacted together, has provided opportunities not available elsewhere.

Athletics is a non-compulsory sport that is only offered for those boys who are really invited to join the club based on athletics performance. We have a dedicated coach who trains these athletes and they are also conditioned in the gym by our resident Sports Scientists. Our athletes are offered the opportunity to compete in Inter-Schools events as well as our annual Interhouse Athletics Day. We have recently seen an Old Albanian, Phatu Maswanganyi, qualify for the 2021 Olympic games in both the 100m and 200m events.

For any further information regarding athletics, please contact Mr Yondela Stampu at the following email address:

[stampuy@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:stampuy@stalbanscollege.com)

### **Basketball**

The Basketball Club is a popular club and has made remarkable progress over the years. The open division comprises 6 to 8 teams, depending on the year. There are 4 teams each of the other age groups. The Basketball Club has achieved great success over the years. The 1st team have won the Kearsney Stayers Tournament in 2013 and 2018. They also finished runners-up at the St John's Tournament in 2019 out of 32 schools, They were ranked number 1 in the country in February 2018 and have won the Pretoria Schools League in 2018 and 2019. The U16A Team won the St John's Tournament in 2017. The College plays competitive friendlies in summer, against our traditional boys' school rivals and then competes in the Pretoria League during winter. All teams play in summer, but only our 1STteam plays in winter.

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Mr Victor Fouda, our Director of Basketball, has broadened the tours that our players go on and as a result, our U16A Team compete in the St Stithians College Basketball Tournament and The U15s have been invited to the St David's Tournament. The 1st Team competes at both St John's and DHS tournaments and we also have a team that competes in the Kearsney College Stayers Tournament. In 2015 and 2018 the 1st team went on an International tour to America and plan to tour overseas every 3 to 4 years.

For any further information regarding Basketball please contact Mr Victor Fouda at the following email address:

[foudav@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:foudav@stalbanscollege.com)

### **Cricket**

St Alban's College has a very long and proud cricketing history within South African cricket. The founding Headmaster of St Alban's College, Mr Anton Murray, was a Protea Cricketer and thus cricket has a very important role within St Alban's College extramural program.

St Alban's has produced numerous players who have gone on to represent Northerns at a Franchise or at a semi-professional level. Most notably St Alban's has produced former SA U19 players which is a testament to the rich cricket history at the school.

The cricket coaching structure has grown over the last few years and many of our coaches have either played or coached at provincial level. Mr Curtly Diesel is our High-Performance Coach and Old Albanian, Mr Chicco Ponela is the High-Performance Cricket Manager, with these two appointments the club will look to grow from strength to strength.

St Alban's College has five cricket ovals that we make use of on weekends as well as during the week for fixtures. The main cricket Oval is the TC Mitchell Oval and is rated as one of the best school cricket fields in South Africa. The school has six artificial turf nets and has over thirty turf practice strips that it makes use of during the week for facilities.

The 1st XI, 2nd XI, U15A and the U14A teams participate in festivals during the school year. St Alban's is proud to host the Independent Schools Cricket Festival, which comprises 20 teams from around South Africa and Zimbabwe. This festival is over 20 years old and is noted as a major event on the school's calendar.

The school currently fields five open teams and two teams per age group in the U14 and U15 categories. These teams will either play Wednesday or Saturday fixtures against local opposition from Johannesburg or Pretoria. These weekly fixtures are combined with other

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sporting codes to create derby days which are a true spectacle to have the campus full of sporting activities.

For more information on the cricket program at St Alban's College please do not hesitate to contact:

Mr Curtly Diesel [dieselc@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:dieselc@stalbanscollege.com)

Mr Chicco Ponela [ponelac@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:ponelac@stalbanscollege.com)

## Rowing

The Rowing Club was launched in 2000 and since then has become one of the major summer sports at the College. Currently, the Club has a membership of approximately 40 boys, which is a relatively small, but potent force.

Since its inception, the club has been very successful. We enjoy being in the closest proximity to the National Training Centre and 2000m (Roodeplaas Dam). St. Albans is consistently the top boys sculling school in the country, and last season we managed to win 3 of the 6 first team boat classes on offer, including the boys' pair for the very first time. Describing sculling & sweep: Athletes with two oars – one in each hand – are scullers. There are three sculling events: the single (one person), the double (two) and the quad (four). All sculling events except the quad are rowed without a coxswain.

Over the past 10 years, we have had 20 Junior South African rowers who have represented our country at the World Rowing Junior Championships, one of which, Dan Watkins, deputy head boy in 2014, achieved a bronze medal in the single scull. Many of our boys continue into the South African U23 and Senior Team or move to foreign universities to compete there.

John Smith, an Old Boy of 2008, not only won the first Gold Medal in a World Championship regatta as an U23 but was crowned Olympic Champion in London 2012, in one of the closest finishes of all time!

What does rowing entail?

None of this is possible without a lot of hard work. Our boys learn and show great dedication and commitment. Our boys are incredibly passionate about the sport, and competing in the grey and blue. There is simply no way that you can excel at rowing without first learning dedication and perseverance. It is physically and mentally a very demanding sport that





intensively challenges each boy. This is complemented by the strong need for team cohesion, as moving together is the biggest key to boat speed.

On an individual level, the sport appeals to goal-orientated boys, as it encourages a single-minded determination to strive towards achievement, whether that means winning or exceeding a personal best. Even the simple pleasure of spending some quiet time alone on the water at dawn is an enriching experience. As their abilities grow, rowers also learn to cope with the pressure and stress of competition - win or lose.

Our Rowing Season starts in August and ends in March every year. We invite boys to our camp in August preceding their start at the college.

For any further information regarding rowing, please contact Mr Andrew Grant at the following email address: [granta@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:granta@stalbanscollege.com)

## **Swimming**

Swimming takes place in the first term, where the swimming team competes in the Inter - School's competition

The season is kick-started by the annual Interhouse Gala, which is a highlight of the sporting year and culminates in the Inter-high Gala. All boys who play Water polo are available for the swimming team and there have been, a number of swimmers who have taken their swimming training outside of the College, and have as a result been selected for the Gauteng swimming squad, that compete at the Inter-provincial meeting at the end of the year.

For any further information regarding swimming at the College, please contact Mr Sean Smith: [smiths@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:smiths@stalbanscollege.com)

## **Soccer**

At present, the soccer season runs with our Form 5s (Matrics) playing in July and the other forms starting in September playing through to October. We have at least eight teams on any given fixture day. Our teams are involved in both weekend and midweek fixtures and also participate in local festivals.

We are continually looking internally at our soccer structures to ensure that the sport is well-managed, has competent coaches and will allow our boys the opportunity to play successfully.

For any further information regarding soccer at the College, please contact the Head of Soccer Mr Jack Sachane: [sachanej@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:sachanej@stalbanscollege.com)





## **Water polo**

Water polo forms a significant part of the sports programme at the College. The Water polo club consists of eight teams, ranging from U14 all the way up to 1st Team. Our Water polo programme is run by Mr Nardus Badenhorst. Mr Badenhorst has been a part of the South African Men's Water Polo team since 2009 and is currently the U16 Gauteng Boys Head Coach. He has also recently been selected to represent The South African Men's Water Polo team to compete in Tokyo at the 2021 Olympic Games.

The Water polo club competes against all the top schools in the country and all athletes are provided with the opportunity to further their sporting career at a provincial level. St. Alban's College boasts a state of the art Aquatics Centre that forms part of the Tom Hamilton Wellness Centre. The school is also home to Marlins Water Polo Club that provides prospective students with the opportunity to start playing Water polo at Primary School level.

For any further information regarding Water polo please contact the Director of Water Polo Mr Nardus Badenhorst at the following email address: [badenhorstn@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:badenhorstn@stalbanscollege.com)

## **WINTER SPORTS**

### **Hockey**

Each year Hockey at St Alban's College continues to grow from strength to strength. Currently, the school boasts in excess of 18 hockey teams that compete with schools all over South Africa. Our philosophy is to ensure that we use hockey as an extension of the classroom and provide a positive sporting experience for all our boys, regardless of the team they represent. We also strive to provide excellent coaches that will ensure that our teams are competitive regardless of the opposition, as well as provide the best opportunity for each individual to realise their potential.

Currently, the School boasts a plethora of exceptional coaches. The Director of Hockey and 1st XI coach is the current Northern Gauteng Men's Coach, as well as being part of the South African schools coaching team. He is assisted in the 1st XI by Mark Holliday. As a player, Mr Holliday has represented Northern Gauteng for over ten seasons and has been a part of the St Alban's 1st team coaching staff for over six years. The U16A team is coached by Mr Martyn van Zyl, who is the former Northern Gauteng Women's coach, as well as Alastair Trafford who is the incumbent Northern Gauteng U14A coach. The u14A team is led by Mr Krinesan

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Moodley who is the previous Director of Hockey and has been involved in coaching the South African U21 team as well as various other provincial and national teams in South Africa over his illustrious career. There are many other coaches in the club who have coached provincial school teams, with the Headmaster himself being one of them.

In recent years, St Alban's Hockey has introduced a more professional approach to their conditioning which is headed up by the Sports Science department at the school. This approach, coupled with our improved video analysis practices has allowed the club to develop and excel.

On the provincial front, St Alban's continues to produce a large proportion of players that represent Northern Gauteng across the various age groups. In recent years they have produced a player that has represented the South African Schools, U17 team.

St Alban's has recently upgraded their facilities and now boasts a world-class playing surface as well as some significant improvements to the existing infrastructure. The facility is floodlit which allows us to maximise the time on the astroturf and allows us to play some of our fixtures on a Friday evening.

For any further information regarding Hockey at the College please contact Mr Elliot at the following email address: [elliottg@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:elliottg@stalbanscollege.com)

## **Rugby**

The College has not only taken on tougher opposition but also has been successful against them. New fixtures on our fixture list, along with our invitations to the St Stithians and St John's Easter Festivals, have added depth to our fixture list.

Since 2006, the College has produced numerous Provincial players (U16 Grant Khomo, U18 Academy Week, U18 Craven Week and U19 Invitation) and 7 SA Schools representatives. Many of these boys would only have started playing rugby when they joined the College as Form 1 boys. Currently, we have five old boys playing franchise rugby: Bongsi Mbonambi, Kurt Haupt, Jason Jenkins, Jade Stiglingh, and Abongile Nonkontwana and Michael Kumbarai. In addition, we have Cornel Korff who plays for the Cheetahs U21 team and Shimlas varsity cup team, Orateng Koikanyeng was a member of the successful UP-Tuiks varsity winning side of 2021. Simon Miller was a member of the SA schools side in 2019. He joined an exclusive list of Albanians who had the honour of playing for the SA Schools side which includes the likes







of Dan van Zyl (2000), Tshepiso Vundla (2000), Yondela Stampu (2007), Mlungisi Bali (2008 & 2009), Bongji Mbonambi (2009), Abongile Nonkontwana (2012 & 2013), Jason Jenkins (2013).

However, Simon went on to sign for Western Province and represented Maties in the 2021 version of the varsity cup. Simon has gone on to higher Honours as he was selected for SA U/20 (Baby Boks) side for the international series in 2021.

St Alban's produced its 1st Rugby Springbok when Dan van Zyl made his only Test match appearance in a fixture against England at Twickenham in the year 2000. On 28 May 2016, Bongji Mbonambi was included in a 31-man South Africa squad for their three-test match series against a touring Ireland team. Bongji went on to be named in South Africa's squad for the 2019 Rugby World Cup. South Africa went on to win the tournament, defeating England in the final. Jason Jenkins has also been selected for the South African "A" team and we look forward to enjoying his progress as a rugby player.

The College's most successful 1st XV in the last ten years has been the team of 2018. In that year they won 84% of their matches, including wins over St Johns, Pretoria Boys High, and St Stithians. This is testimony to the boys themselves, to their coaches and the structures in place in the College. Many of our boys have gone on to represent their Universities and other clubs at various levels.

The success of the club has also been due to the very strong links we have with the Blue Bulls Rugby Union. Their input and support have meant that our structures are in line with what the union wants and that can only be beneficial for our boys. Mr Boikanyo Nkolobe, our High-Performance coach is the U/16 Blue Bulls High-Performance coach and also serves as a SARU Elite Player Development coach.

The College's commitment to further developing our rugby and our brand of play saw the appointment of a Director of Rugby from 2016 - 2019. Mr Kennedy Tsimba, a former provincial player himself, and International Hall of Fame member who played 6 times for Zimbabwe was appointed in this position and he also coached the 1st XV. His impact on our skill development and pattern of play has helped our rugby grow even stronger.

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We are also fortunate that we can boast a formidable coaching staff with the likes of Mr David Mukhari, an Old Boy, who still holds the record for the most 1st XV caps (94), from the Blue Bulls. David worked in the Blue Bulls juniors (U19 and U21) set up for three years. Having worked in a professional environment, like the Bulls, for several years, his knowledge and experience will have an undoubted effect on the club.

Mr Boikanyo Nkolobe joined the college in 2019 as a rugby specialist from the Leopards Craven Week side (2016-2019) and now fulfils the role of High-Performance coach. His task is to continue to develop the sport as well as the individuals who form part of the Rugby club. As a College, we are proud to punch well above our weight and our boys excel in the challenge of facing opposition schools twice or sometimes three times our size! and we wouldn't have it any other way. SAC...SACRIFICE, ADAPT AND COMMIT!

For any further information regarding rugby at the College please contact Mr Boikanyo Nkolobe on: [Nkolobeb@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:Nkolobeb@stalbanscollege.com)

## **LIFE SPORTS**

As part of our motto of preparing young men for life, we offer what we call life sports. These are sports we see our young men playing well after school, as a means of exercise when team sports are no longer an option.

### **Golf**

The Golf club has a membership of 35 members and we play out of Irene Country Club. The College has 3 teams that participate in the Gauteng Schools League and in various other tournaments such as the Sun City Invitational, the Pecanwood Tournament, the Dainfern Tournament and the Affies Tournament. This, though, is not what it is all about; it is more about getting boys out to play golf on a casual basis, understanding that it is a sport that they will play long after they leave school.

For more information about golf at the College please contact Krinesan Moodley on: [moodleyk@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:moodleyk@stalbanscollege.com)

### **Tennis**

The tennis club has members who play and train at least twice a week. The club enters a number of teams into the local Gauteng North Leagues with our 1st team playing in the very

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competitive “A” League. Most boys play tennis as a second sport, alongside a team sport, although boys in Forms 4 and Matric can play it full time at the discretion of the Director of Sport. The club tours annually to Hilton College in KwaZulu Natal, where they play in the Hilton/St Anne’s Doubles and Mixed Doubles Tournament. We partner with St Mary’s DSG for this tournament. We also compete in the Sun City Independent Schools’ Tournament every year.

For more information regarding tennis at the College please contact Mr Michael Chimbila on: [chimbilam@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:chimbilam@stalbanscollege.com)

## **Squash**

St Alban’s squash has gone from strength to strength over the last 6 years. St Alban’s have been crowned Northerns Top squash school in 2018,2019 and 2020. This has allowed the club to represent Northerns in the South African Top Schools tournament, which means we are placed in the top 6 squash schools in South Africa.

The club competes in the Northerns School League and Northerns Top Schools Qualifier. They go on tours to St Andrew’s Squash festival, Stayers Cape Town Squash Tour and SA Tops School, should they qualify.

The intention is to build our own squash courts in the future. However, currently, the boys practice at Glenwood Squash courts which is a 700m walk. They have 3 glass-backed courts and are excellent facilities. The 1st Team boys practice 3-4 times a week, while juniors train twice a week.

The aim of the squash club is to be very competitive and continue to be the top squash school in Pretoria. However, squash is a life sport and the other goal is to give boys the opportunities to enjoy and improve at this amazing game. Currently, we have 12 members of the squash club.

For more information regarding squash at the College please contact Mr Justin Cook at the following email address: [cookj@stalbanscollege.com](mailto:cookj@stalbanscollege.com)

