



(Twitter/@Buccigross)

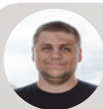
Jack Buccigross (freshman, marketing) took a swing at an outing over the summer.



(Twitter/@Buccigross)

John and Jack Buccigross from an image posted online.

Family, support, dedication help golfer Buccigross



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Jack Buccigross (freshman, marketing) looks just like any other average student here at IUP. In his first semester at Indiana, he said, "it's the perfect fit."

From South Windsor, Conn., he was recruited by IUP to play on the golf team.

Not only is Buccigross a talented golfer, but if you recognized that last name from somewhere, you wouldn't be off-target; his father is ESPN personality John Buccigross,

an anchor on the network and its flagship program SportsCenter since 1996.

Obviously, not everyone's dad appears on national television on a regular basis, but it's all that Buccigross has known.

The family has lived in South Windsor, roughly 35 minutes from the massive ESPN headquarters in Bristol, for Buccigross' whole life.

"I've been to the studio quite a bit. I know [fellow ESPN anchors] Scott Van Pelt, John Anderson, all those guys, plus I've been lucky enough to meet a few athletes," Buccigross said, referring to ath-

letes such as the Tampa Bay Lightning's Steven Stamkos.

"I've been lucky. For me, it's kind of the norm; I don't really know anything different," Buccigross said, sporting a hoodie while being interviewed with the popular "cawldige hawkie" slogan that his father developed on it.

The phrase, presumably coined by saying "college hockey" in a thick Pittsburgh accent, has become connected with John Buccigross and his deep passion for hockey of all kinds.

John was born in Pittsburgh and spent his early childhood in Indiana, living here until he was 11 years old.

The game of hockey has played a big role in Jack's life, to the point where the Buccigross family home had an ice rink in the backyard.

"I'd be out there all day, all night, skating for hours, basically until Mom told us to come inside," he said.

His high school team made the Final Four in 2017, which was "the most fun experience [he's] ever had on a team," he said.

Despite such a busy schedule that comes with being a television personality, John was still a supportive and encouraging father to Jack and his siblings.

"He's been my role model and my best friend for my whole life," Jack said. "He volunteered to coach my teams. Now that I'm looking back on it, I appreciate it more than I did when I was a kid.

It's nice to have someone that cares that much despite being busy all the time."

While John has carved out quite the career in sports broadcasting, Jack sees his life going in a different direction.

"I've been around it a lot, it's really cool and interesting, but I kind of want to do my own thing," Jack said.

That "thing" may just materialize in the game of golf, with Jack now ranked third out of five starters on the Crimson Hawks golf team this fall season, coming off of back-to-back PSAC championships.

Through the first pair of tournaments in Buccigross' college career, the freshman has put up solid stats.

At the Hansen Invitational in DuBois, Buccigross shot 2-over-146 overall, with a 1-under-71 in the first round.

He followed that up by placing 17th overall in the Mercyhurst Fall Invitational with an 11-over-155.

"We've got a really good team with a great leader in Matt Cocorikis (senior, accounting)," Buccigross said. "He's played well and we've got a lot of guys starting to find their games."

With one of their tournaments already cancelled due to rain, it makes the fall season even shorter than it already is for Buccigross and his teammates.

"It's tough because it forces you to play well in the tournaments you do have," Buccigross said. "It's unfortunate because you want to play

as much as you can before it gets real cold, but having that spring is nice to look forward to after a good fall season."

Not only has the team played well consistently at the halfway point in their fall season, but they have bonded as well, which included watching the final holes of Tiger Woods' monumental win recently in the pro shop of a course following one of their tournaments.

"It made me so happy [to see Tiger win]," Buccigross said, "because I've been rooting for him so hard, and after so many letdowns, he finally gets it done."

Buccigross' ultimate goal is to play on the PGA Tour, and with more strong performances throughout his career as a Crimson Hawk, you never know what can happen.

Buccigross entered the Bud Elwell invitational, which took place Sunday and Monday at Gannon, as one of three IUP golfers ranked within the region's Top 10.

The other two top-ranked Crimson Hawks were Cocorikis at the top of the rankings and Nicholas Ward (freshman, business) tied with Buccigross in 10th.

Buccigross finished the Elwell Invitational tied for 20th place at 12 strokes over par, third best of the Crimson Hawks.

"I think we're going to be a real threat," Buccigross said, as the season comes to an end at the PSAC Championships in Hershey, which run from Oct. 19 through the 21.

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