



Swing into Junior Golf!!!

Gather up the Clubs, the tees, the golf balls, and the young people of your community for one of the most exciting sporting events in the world—the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships (OIJGC).

Every year, more than 5,000 boys and girls compete in Optimist qualifying tournaments. The best of these golfers advance to the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships—which are held at the PGA National Resort & Spa in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Youngsters in your community have the opportunity to play in this prestigious event and meet other young athletes from all over the world. The Optimist International Junior Golf Championships provides cultural learning opportunities, competition, a week of golf, and best of all, lots of fun!

Many of today's top professional golfers were past Optimist Junior Golf participants. Past participants include: John Daly, Ernie Els, Justin Leonard, Nancy Lopez, Corey Pavin, Phil Mickelson, Davis Love III, Nick Price, Craig Stadler, Michelle McGann, Bubba Dickerson, and Tiger Woods.

How Can Your Club Participate?

1. Your Club may select one or several of the best young golfers in the community and sponsor them in the District tournament, or in some cases, to a regional tournament where they have to qualify for the District final.
2. Your Club can conduct a local qualifying (Club) tournament.

To determine which way your Club can participate, contact your District OIJGC Chairperson. Some Districts have Club/Zone/regional pre-qualifying tournaments and others elect to sponsor a District qualifying tournament only.

Advantages of conducting a Club tournament

- Opportunity for local youth and Club members to participate together in a fun and exciting activity
- Provides a source for new Club members (ie. golf coaches, golf course personnel, golfer's parents)
- Gains exposure from the local media and golfing community
- Provides young golfers additional playing experience

Planning Your Tournament

Before planning your tournament request assistance from a golf pro or coach or other persons experienced in conducting a junior golf tournament. The United States Golf Association (USGA) and the Professional Golfers Association of America (PGA) have publications, which you may find helpful when planning your tournament. (See last page of this section, "Sources of Information.")

Selecting a Golf Course

Since most participants in the tournament will be serious in their desire to perform well, they should be provided the best groomed course available. Therefore, several months in advance of your tournament, contact local country Clubs or other well-groomed golf courses for use of their facility.

Selecting a Date for Your Tournament

Before setting the date of your tournament, contact your District Optimist International Junior Golf Chairperson for the dates of the District tournament and/or regional. Based on these dates, secure a suitable golf course. Once these two steps are completed, establish the dates of your tournament accordingly.

When establishing the dates for your tournament, keep in mind the closing dates of the school year, daylight savings time and religious or national holidays, and important school events such as prom, graduation, etc.

Arrange an alternative date in case of postponement due to weather or other unforeseeable conditions.

Age Requirement

Boys and girls in the following age groups may enter the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships: 16-18, 14-15, 12-13, and 10-11. A child's age group is determined by the age he/she will be on the last day of the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.

Entry Fee

Set your entry fee at an amount so to cover the general operating costs of your tournament and be competitive with that of other junior tournaments. Request free rounds or rounds at a greatly reduced fee when securing a course. This may allow you to charge a low to moderate entry fee.



Stroke Play

In most cases your Club will have access to one course for one day. Therefore, the most desirable playing format is a one-day, 18-hole tournament, using stroke play guidelines. "Stroke" play simply means negotiating the entire course using the fewest strokes. If you are planning to conduct a tournament with more than one 18-hole round, do not schedule more than 18 holes per day.

Grouping

Contestants can be grouped in foursomes. Normally, you should allow eight minutes per hole, per foursome. If you have a large number of participants front nine and back nine tee-offs may be advisable. When using this format, a spacing of 16 minutes should be planned after the first two hours. An official starter should begin each group from the first and tenth tees.

Scoring

Optimists or parents should accompany each foursome to serve as scorer. Or, a player in each group should be designated as the scorer. In either case, the scorer should check each player's score after every hole. Each player must check his/her hole-by-hole score at the end of the round and sign his/her score once he/she has verified that it is correct. Any protests must be registered immediately.

Rules/Etiquette

The rules of golf, published by the United States Golf Association (USGA) subject to local modification, should govern play. All golf courses have their local rules printed on scorecards or posted at the starting tee. Your players should know the local rules before they begin play.

Emphasize proper golf etiquette throughout the duration of your tournament. Encourage your contestants to dress properly and neatly, and to conduct themselves in proper fashion throughout the competition.

Caddies and carts are not permissible in the tournaments.

Awards Ceremony

No tournament is complete without an awards ceremony. Your ceremony should be fun, exciting and worthy of the event. Remember, you want golfers, parents, coaches, sponsors and Optimists to leave with the feeling that they were part of a first-class event. This will help garner support for future events. A successful awards ceremony will require careful planning and thoughtful implementation.

Your awards ceremony doesn't need to be fancy or expensive. Be sure to tell the audience about your Club, its purpose and types of projects it conducts. Explain the history of Optimist International and the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.

Tips for a successful awards ceremony:

- Prepare an agenda detailing the order of events
- Appoint a Club member who is a strong public speaker to emcee your ceremony
- Award official Optimist International Junior Golf trophies
- Acknowledge all people who made the tournament possible: parents, sponsors, golf course personnel, and Optimist members
- Photograph the highlights of the ceremony
- Announce the date, time and location of the District tournament
- Recognize all golfers, particularly the winners, appropriately.

Ideas to further enhance a successful awards ceremony:

- Get a well-known golfer, golf enthusiast, or sports celebrity to present awards
- Give away door prizes such as divot tools, Club head covers, golf towels, etc.
- Recognize holes-in-one and other outstanding performances
- Host a barbecue or banquet in conjunction with your tournament

Official Optimist International Junior Golf trophies and other products with the official Optimist International Junior Golf logo are available through Shumsky Enterprises toll free at (877) 678-2582. Trophies in three sizes can be engraved for use as first, second and third places, or a first place with several smaller trophies engraved as "runners-up" or other combinations thereof.



Soliciting Entries

Contact Persons

A local PGA or golf course professional or high school golf coach can provide you with the names of young golfers in your area.

Posters

Create posters promoting your event. Display them at golf courses, country Clubs, sporting goods stores, golf pro shops, and high schools.

Be sure to include the dates and location of your tournament and the contact person before displaying posters.

Entry Form

Design an entry form and distribute them in the same locations where you are displaying posters. Your entry form should contain the following information: name of entrant, address, phone number, age and average score. Also include your tournament information such as location, date, starting time, entry fee, contact person and entry deadline.

Sponsors

In your community there are numerous companies that might be willing to help offset the cost of your tournament. This may be in the form of monetary support or donation of golf equipment, or food and beverages and so on. Whenever you receive such support from a company, always offer proper recognition. This can include a letter of appreciation, promotion in your program materials, signage at your tournament and recognition during your awards ceremony.

Naturally, to be considered as a sponsor, a company must be reputable. Your relationship with a sponsor must not compromise the name and integrity of your Optimist Club.

Promoting Your Tournament

To be successful, the public must know about your tournament. There are numerous ways to promote: news releases, TV/radio announcements, posters and entry forms, and personal contact with the golfing community.

News Releases

At least two weeks prior to your entry deadline, send a pre-event news release announcing your tournament. Include the following information: location, date, contact person, entry fee, and deadline for entry. Upon completion of your tournament send a news release stating the results and listing any outstanding performances. Be sure to include complete results and photographs with your news release. Submit news releases to local newspapers, high school publications, church bulletins, and weekly shoppers. Follow up with a phone call a few days after submitting a news release.

TV/Radio

Request from your local television and radio stations information on community awareness programs on which you can promote your Club and the tournament. Also, most local and cable TV stations have a community bulletin on which you can advertise your event.

For more information on publicity, order a free copy of the *Optimist International Public Relations Guide* from Shumsky Enterprises or the Canadian Service Centre.

PSAs

Optimist International has several Public Service Announcements (PSAs) available on the Internet. There is one highlighting the Optimist Junior Golf Program that has a tag for club information. These are ready to be downloaded on your computer and sent to local radio stations. Please visit www.optimist.org for more information.

Internet

If the resources are available, create a web site for your club tournament and include the tournament information as well as the registration form.



Pre-event release

Pre-event releases should be typed on Club or District letterhead and mailed two weeks prior to the tournament.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Date)

For More Information
(Contact name and number)

LOCAL OPTIMISTS TO HOLD JUNIOR GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Optimist Club of (name of Club) will host a junior golf tournament on (date) at (location). Boys and girls ages (age range) will play (number of holes). The top boy and girl finisher will advance to the (District name) District tournament where each will attempt to qualify for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Entry forms are available at (locations). They may also be obtained by calling (name of contact person) at (phone number). An entry fee of (amount) and entry form must be submitted to (name and address of Chairperson) by (entry deadline).

The Optimist International Junior Golf Championships is one of the largest tournaments in junior golf. Annually, more than 5,000 junior golfers compete in Optimist-sponsored qualifying tournaments. The championships are played on four courses at the prestigious PGA National Golf Resort & Spa in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Optimist International is one of the world's largest and most active service Club organizations with 117,000 members in 3,500 Optimist Clubs in the United States, Canada, and other nations. Promoting the motto "Friend of Youth," Optimist Clubs conduct positive service programs, which reach six million young people each year. Optimists, Bringing Out the Best in Kids.

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Post-event release

Post-event releases should be typed on Club or District letterhead and mailed immediately after tournament with photographs and a complete list of results.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Date)

For More Information
(Contact name and number)

LOCAL YOUTHS WIN JUNIOR GOLF TOURNAMENT

(Name of boy winner), of (name of city he resides) and (name of girl winner), of (name of city she resides) were winners of the Optimist Club of (name of Club) Junior Golf Tournament. Both winners will advance to the (name of District) District tournament, where each will attempt to qualify for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships to be held in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., in July.

(Name of boy) shot a (score) on a par (par of course) to win the boys' division. He is a (year in school) at (name of high school). (Name of girl) shot a (score) on a par (par of course) to win the girls' division. She is a (year in school) at (name of high school).

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Sources of Information

For information on the time, date, location, qualification requirements and entry fee for your District tournament and the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships, contact your District Junior Golf Chairperson.

If you need the name of your District Chairperson contact the OIJGC at Optimist International.

Optimist International

OIJGC Department
4494 Lindell Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63108
(800) 500-8130
(314) 371-4057 fax
web site: www.optimist.org
e-mail: oijgc@optimist.org
provides general information about the Optimist Junior Golf Program

American Junior Golf Association (AJGA)

1980 Sports Club Drive
Braselton, GA 30517
Toll Free: 1-877-373-2542
Web site: www.ajga.org

United States Golf Association (USGA)

Order Department
P.O. Box 2000
Far Hills, NJ 07931-0708
(908) 234-2300
"How To Conduct A Competition"
www.usga.org

Professional Golfers Association of America (PGA)

web site: www.pga.com
100 Avenue of the Champions
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418

Canadian Professional Golfers' Association of Canada

13450 Dublin Line
R.R. #1
Acton, ONT L7J 2W7 CANADA
(519) 853-5450

Royal Canadian Golf Association

1333 Dorval Drive
Oakville, ONT L6J 4Z3 CANADA
(905) 849-9700
(905) 845-7040 fax
Canadian Junior Championships
Junior Development Program
e-mail: golfhouse@rcga.org
Web site: www.rcga.org