



2017-2018 District Manual

Optimist Junior Golf Program

www.optimist.org/golf

The Optimist Junior Golf Program is an exciting way for volunteers to promote the sport of golf to the young people of their communities. Each year, more than 5,000 boys and girls compete in **Optimist qualifying tournaments**. The best of these golfers advance to the annual **Optimist International Junior Golf Championships** which offers a week of golf, the opportunity to meet new friends, top competition and a great deal of fun. The tournament is a unique golfing experience where junior golfers and their families enjoy golf, meals, off-course activities and housing all under one roof.

In November we have the **Optimist International Tournament of Champions**: a junior golf championship event for top finishers of the summer Optimist Championships, winners of Optimist District qualifiers, golfers who are included in the Top 100 overall Golfweek and Junior Golf Scoreboard rankings and other top junior golfers from around the world. This junior championship tournament is a 36-hole event for male and female junior golfers ages 11-18.

Optimist Junior Golf also offers the **Optimist Junior Golf Tour Events**: These 36-hole events are for male and female junior golfers ages 11-18. These are additional qualifiers for the Championships and ranked by Junior Golf Scoreboard. Locations include: Myrtle Beach, SC, Orlando, FL, Ft. Worth, Texas, Denver, Colorado and Ontario Canada.

In 2018, PGA National Resort & Spa, located in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, will be the home of the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.

Mission Statement

To build positive values in young people through participation in Optimist District and international junior golf events through Optimist's worldwide network encompassing all 50 states, every Canadian Province and some countries. Participants gain a valuable multi-cultural exposure

Vision Statement

Optimist Junior Golf will be recognized as one of the largest and most prestigious junior golf programs in the world.

Objectives

- To promote the sport of golf among young people
- To provide an opportunity for junior golfers to participate in Optimist Club, District and International Tournaments
- To share the philosophies of Optimism with the junior golf community.

Optimist Junior Golf Department

The Optimist Junior Golf Department maintains direct contact with all Districts and are responsible for the general promotion and planning of the Optimist Junior Golf Program and provides promotional materials such as logos, Optimist Golf video, press releases and qualifying tournament posters.

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Why Golfers Should Attend The Championships

One of the top International Junior Golf Tournaments in the World;

- Ranked by JuniorGolf Scoreboard, Golfweek, Amateur Golf World Ranking and included in the AJGA "Performance Based Entry Process."
- Approximately 30 College Coaches attend and recruit
- Compete against golfers all over the world

Value for a Golfer to Attend

Registration fee includes;

- tournament entry fee
- Golf (practice rounds additional cost)
- Five nights lodging
- Five breakfasts and four dinners
- and access to all Special Events

Additional fees apply for guests. Due to the exclusive nature of the event, golfers are required to stay at PGA National.

2017-2018

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CHAMPIONSHIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2018 Optimist International Junior Golf Championships

PGA National Resort and Spa
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA

Phase 1	July 17-22, 2018	Boys 10-11, 12-13 and Girls 10-12
Phase 2	July 22-27, 2018	Boys 14-15 and Girls 13-14
Phase 3	July 27-August 1, 2018	Boys 16-18 and Girls 15-18

Optimist Junior Golf District Chair

Optimist Junior Golf District Chairs are the central points of contact, information, and coordination for all of the Optimist-sponsored junior golf events that take place in their District. District Chairs coordinate the tournament and the promotion of Club and District events to generate interest in the Optimist Junior Golf Program. They should attend quarterly District board meetings to report and solicit support for upcoming events.

They keep the Optimist Junior Golf Department apprised of their District qualifiers. Junior golfers frequently contact the International office seeking information on how to qualify for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.

Districts should tailor their golf program to suit the specific needs of their localities. Some Districts hold a series of Club or Pre-Qualifying tournaments as “feeders” for the District tournament when there is an expansive geographical area or a large number of participants. Other Districts hold one qualifying tournament by accepting direct applications from players. Districts may also combine efforts with other junior tournaments instead of organizing their own events.

Optimist Junior Golf District Chairs should encourage all Clubs in their District to participate in the program by sponsoring local golfers in District tournament Clubs should also be encouraged to conduct junior golf fundraisers and provide volunteers on the day of District tournament.

IMPORTANT 2018 DATES

January 31	Deadline for District Chairs to submit qualifying tournament logistics to Optimist International.
May 1	At large application deadline and Registration opens for Optimist International Junior Golf Championships
June 8	Golfers who meet the criteria as “exempt” for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships must register.
June 27	Deadline for submission of all District report forms; player and volunteer registration deadline for Optimist International Junior Golf Championships to include Alternates

District Qualifying Tournaments

Participants in the Optimist Championships are determined through Optimist District qualifying tournaments. Golfers must qualify through Optimist District qualifying tournaments unless they are eligible for an exemption or live in a District that does not offer their age division or does not offer a qualifier. If a junior golfer is unable to play in his/her District qualifying tournament, a golfer may play in several District qualifying tournaments.

Only when Districts do not sponsor qualifying tournaments are participants allowed to submit at-large applications. The deadline for a Junior Golf Chair to submit their qualifier date and location is January 31, but may be extended if chair is actively seeking a date and location and communicating with Optimist Junior Golf staff.

Age Divisions

The age divisions for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships age are as follows:

Phase 1

Boys 10-11 Age Division* -- does not celebrate his 12th birthday on or before July 21, 2018.
Boys 12-13 Age Division does not celebrate his 14th birthday on or before July 21, 2018.
Girls 10-12 Age Division* does not celebrate her 13th birthday on or before July 21, 2018.

Phase 2

Boys 14-15 Age Division does not celebrate his 16th birthday on or before July 26, 2018.
Girls 13-14 Age Division does not celebrate her 15th birthday on or before July 26, 2018.

Phase 3

Boys 16-18 Age Division** does not celebrate his 19th birthday on or before August 1, 2018.
Girls 15-18 Age Division** does not celebrate her 19th birthday on or before August 1, 2018.

*Golfers who are 9 years old as of July 21, 2018, may “play up” into the Boys 10-11 or Girls 10-12 division.

**18-year-old golfers may only participate in both a District qualifier and the International Championships if they are currently in high school and a 2018 high school graduate provided he/she has not started college. Advance Placement (AP) credits in high school do not count.

Playing Up

Golfers may “play up” one division, but they must qualify in the higher division unless playing in a tournament prior to December 31, 2017. A golfer playing in an Optimist Qualifier, Tournament of Champions or other Exempt Tournament **prior to December 31** plays in the age division of his current age. If he/she places as a top finisher and qualifies for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship and ages up, he/she must play in the age division as noted under “Age Divisions”. Requests to play up two or three divisions will require a special request to Optimist International.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

District Qualifying Tournament

Tournament from which junior golfers advance to Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.

Pre-Qualifying Tournament

Any tournament below the District level.

District Winners

First place boy and girl in each age category in a District qualifying tournament.

District Qualifiers

Participants in a District qualifying tournament who have met the established scoring criteria and are eligible to advance to the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.

Age Verification/Birth Certificates

District Chairs are responsible for verifying the ages of players participating in Club and District events. Participants should be required to provide their birth certificate as proof of age.

All international championships participants will be required to submit a copy of a birth certificate, baptismal record, drivers' license or passport to Optimist International prior to the international championships. Players must qualify in the age division that they will be playing in at the championships.

Caddies, Carts and Push/Pull Carts

Caddies and electric carts are not allowed in the international championships. Push/pull carts are permissible in all Age Divisions boys and girls.

Distance Measuring Devices

In this competition a player may obtain distance information by use of a distance-measuring device. If, during a stipulated round, a player uses a distance-measuring device to gauge or measure other conditions that might affect his play (e.g. elevation changes, wind speed, etc.) the player is in breach of Rule 14-3.

The use of pull carts and DMDs usage is left to the discretion of the Chair based on host site restrictions, course layout, weather conditions, etc.

QUALIFYING SCORING CRITERIA

In order to qualify for the international championships, all golfers must shoot at or below an established target score in the District qualifier. The target scores by age division are listed below. All scores are in relation to par and are for 18-hole tournaments. For multiple-round tournaments, increase the amount over par accordingly. Refer to the table below to determine the exact scoring criteria based on the golf course's established par.

	Boys 10-11	Boys 12-13	Boys 14-15	Boys 16-18		Girls 10-12	Girls 13-14	Girls 15-18
	<i>24-over-par</i>	<i>18-over-par</i>	<i>11-over-par</i>	<i>6-over-par</i>		<i>25-over-par</i>	<i>21-over-par</i>	<i>13-over-par</i>
Par 68	92	86	79	74		93	89	81
Par 69	93	87	80	75		94	90	82
Par 70	94	88	81	76		95	91	83
Par 71	95	89	82	77		96	92	84
Par 72	96	90	83	78		97	93	85
Par 73	97	91	84	79		98	94	86
Par 74	98	92	85	80		99	95	87

District Qualifying Spots

Each District will be granted a set number of qualifying spots in each age division. The number of qualifying spots granted to a District are based on the number of junior golfers who participated in that District's qualifier during the year prior. The outline explains how the qualifying method works:

1. "Target numbers" for each division were established that will maximize participation levels at the international championships but allow the championships to be completed using only a morning wave of tee times.
2. The total number of golfers participating in 2017 qualifiers throughout all Optimist Districts was logged for each age division.
3. A District's percentage of overall 2017 participation was calculated for each age division.
4. The number of spots granted in 2018 (in each division) will be calculated using the percent participation figure in #3 above.

Winners Receiving Qualifying Spots – Must meet target scores

All age division winners filling granted District qualifying spots must have shot at or below the established target score (see page 5) to be eligible to attend the international championships.

Ties

A tiebreaker should be used to determine the District winners, ties for the last qualifying spot, and ties for alternate spots. District Chairs are encouraged to use the USGA-recommended procedure for breaking ties (Appendix I). A hole-by-hole playoff is the preferred method, but District Chairs may also implement the method of matching scores over the last nine, last six, last three or last hole. The District Chair should announce the tiebreaking method to be used before the competition starts. Please consult the pro at your host course for assistance.

Out-of-District Golfers

If golfers from other Districts participate in your qualifying tournament, their participation will not eliminate any District residents from qualifying.

If an out-of-District golfer qualifies for one of your spots, he/she is eligible to attend the international championships in addition to the next-highest golfer who lives within the District boundaries.

Alternates

Alternates will be admitted to the Championships if a golfer who qualifies for one of a District's designated spots decides not to attend (**The next golfer in line is the alternate whether in or out of District.**). District Chairs should determine alternates based on the tournament results and by using a tiebreaker if necessary (see information on breaking ties above).

District Chairs should keep in close contact with their qualified players in order to offer alternates a spot if necessary. Alternates must register for the international championships by the June 27. Alternates replacing District winners are not entitled to the \$70.00 discount and must pay the full \$730.00 registration fee.

Official District Tournament – Tournament weather delays / Cancellation

A District qualifier will not be considered official unless all golfers in **an age division** complete a minimum of nine holes, in which case the tournament would revert back to the last hole completed by the entire age division. In the case of a District qualifier that is cancelled with no make-up date, golfers in said District will be eligible to submit an “at large” application directly to Optimist Junior Golf. In this situation, the number of accepted “at large” applicants in each division will be equal to the number of qualifying spots granted for the District.

Districts with Multiple Qualifiers

If a District decides to offer multiple qualifiers, it is the District Chair's responsibility to divide the number of allocated qualifying spots to each of the qualifiers held.

Districts with No History of Holding a Qualifier or Age Division(s)

Optimist Districts that have never held a qualifying tournament or have not offered certain age divisions in years past will be permitted to hold a qualifier. Districts in this situation will be limited to two qualifying spot per age division (except in the boys 16-18 age division where they will receive one) offered during their first year and will be included in the percentage allocation in future years.

Qualifying Spots for Future Years

The Junior Golf Department will review the number of qualifying spots granted to Districts annually. The number of spots designated for future years will be directly tied to a District's participation percentage in relation to the overall number of golfers from the year prior.

Suggested Course Yardages (approximate)

The following are the approximate course yardages that will be used at the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships. It is recommended that similar yardages be used for your qualifying tournaments. Please consult the pro at the course you are using for further recommendation.

Boys Age Divisions	Girls Age Divisions
10-11 5,500 yards	10-12 5,000 yards
12-13 6,000 yards	13-14 5,500 yards
14-15 6,500 yards	15-18 6,000 yards
16-18 6,800 yards	

The At-Large Field

Optimist Junior Golf accepts direct applications from junior golfers from the US and Canada who live in a District that does not sponsor a qualifier or that does not offer the appropriate age division. If a player has a conflict with his/her own District qualifier, he/she must choose another District qualifier in which to participate and will not be permitted to apply as an at-large participant.

The at large application deadline is May 1, 2018. A limited number of golfers in each age division will be accepted through the at-large method. Accepted at-large applicants will be notified in early May.

EXEMPTIONS

Optimist Junior Golf limits the number of golfers who register for the international championships through an exemption.

Golfers who meet the following criteria will be “exempt” into the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships. Players in these categories will be guaranteed a spot in the international championships provided they register no later than June 8, 2018.

1. The top finishers in each age division from the 2017 Optimist International Junior Golf Championships as follows: Boys 10-11 (top 5); Girls 10-12 (top 5), Boys 12-13 (top 5); Girls 3-14 (top 5); Boys 14-15 (top 5); Boys 16-18 (top 10), Girls 15-18 (top 10),
2. The top finishers from the 2017 Optimist International Tournament of Champions, specifically: top 10 (Boys 16-18) and top 5 (Boys 14-15, Boys 11-13, Girls 14-18 and Girls 11-13).
3. The top finishers from the Fall 2017/Spring 2018 Optimist International Junior Golf Tour event specifically:
 - Ft. Worth, Texas — Boys 16-18 (3) Boys 14-15 (3), Boys 11-13 (4), Girls 14-18 (3) Girls 11-13 (4). Must meet scoring requirement.
 - Greg Norman Open—Myrtle Beach, SC Boys 16-18 (3) Boys 14-15 (3), Boys 11-13 (4), Girls 14-18 (3) Girls 11-13 (4). Must meet scoring requirement.
 - Academy Open—Florida— Boys 16-18 (3) Boys 14-15 (3), Boys 11-13 (4), Girls 14-18 (3) Girls 11-13 (4). Must meet scoring requirement.
 - Kingsville, Ontario Canadian Open – Kingsville, Ontario Canada - Boys 16-18 (3) Boys 14-15 (3), Boys 11-13 (4), Girls 14-18 (3) Girls 11-13 (4). Must meet scoring requirement.
 - Green Valley Ranch, Denver, Colorado - Boys 16-18 (3) Boys 14-15 (5), Boys 11-13 (4), Girls 14-18 (6) Girls 11-13 (5). Must meet scoring requirement.
 - Any new Junior Tour Events will start with 3 spots per age division.
4. Any previous age division champion of the Optimist Junior Golf Championships.
5. Golfers selected to the 2018 Hugh Cranford All-Scholastic team.

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Boys 10-11, 12-13 and Girls 10-12

- July 17** Arrivals and check-in
- July 18** Practice Rounds; Opening Ceremony & Player Orientation
- July 19** Tournament Round 1
- July 20** Tournament Round 2
- July 21** Tournament Round 3
- July 22** Departure and Parent Child tournament

Boys 14-15 and Girls 13-14

- July 22** **Parent/Child Tournament and** Arrivals and check-in
- July 23** Practice Rounds; Opening Ceremony & Player Orientation
- July 24** Tournament Round 1
- July 25** Tournament Round 2
- July 26** Tournament Round 3
- July 27** Departure and Parent Child Tournament

Boys 16-18 and Girls 15-18

- July 27** **Parent/Child Tournament** AND Arrivals and check-in
- July 28** Practice Rounds; Opening Ceremony & Player Orientation
- July 29** Tournament Round 1
- July 30** Tournament Round 2
- July 31** Tournament Round 3
- August 1** Final Tournament Round (top 50 boys/top 40 girls advance);
For those missing the cut—play in a Consolation Event
Departures