



Optimist Junior Golf Program

International Championships at PGA National Resort & Spa
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA

July 20-25, 2016

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

July 25-30, 2016

Boys 14-15 and Girls 13-14

July 30-August 4, 2016

Boys 16-18 and Girls 15-18

OFFICIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Mission Statement

The Optimist Junior Golf Program's mission is to build positive values in young people through participation in Optimist District and International Junior Golf events.

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.





PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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.

PGA National Resort & Spa, located in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, is the home of the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships. Combined with a dedication to junior golf that few golf destinations can match, PGA National is the perfect location for the event.

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. PGA National is the current host of the PGA TOUR's Honda Classic.

WHY GOLFERS SHOULD ATTEND

- 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 fees include

- tournament entry fee
- Golf (practice round and tournament rounds)
- 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.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

District Qualifying Tournament

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

Pre-Qualifying Tournament

Any club, zone or regional 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.

OTHER OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF TOURNAMENTS

Optimist Tournament of Champions

The Optimist Tournament of Champions is held in November at PGA National Resort and Spa. A junior golf championship event for top finishers of the summer Optimist International Junior Golf Championships and other top junior golfers. A 36-hole event for male and female junior golfers ages 11-18 from around the world.

Junior Golf Tour

In an effort to spread the Optimist Junior Golf name and brand, the Optimist Junior Tour has been developed. These are 36 hole events for boys 11-13, 14-15, 16-18 and Girls 11-13, 14-18 and ranked by JuniorGolf Scoreboard and Golfweek, The events serve to help promote the District qualifying tournaments in the region

Locations include

- Greg Norman Academy Open
Myrtle Beach, SC
- Ft. Worth Texas
- Core Golf Academy Open—Orlando, FL

2015-16 OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF COMMITTEE

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OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF DEPARTMENT

The Junior Golf Department at Optimist International provides promotional materials such as logos, Optimist Golf video, press releases and qualifying tournament posters.

Also maintain direct contact with all Districts and are responsible for the general promotion of the Optimist Junior Golf Program. The Optimist International Junior Golf Championships is publicized in many junior golf newsletters and national publications. Since golfers often call the International office in search of qualifying tournament information, it is imperative that we have up-to-date information about your District's upcoming tournament.

Optimist Junior Golf Department

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OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF DISTRICT CHAIR

Optimist Junior Golf District Chairpersons 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 promotion of Club, Zone, and District events and generate interest in the Optimist Junior Golf Program. They should attend quarterly District board meetings to report and solicit support for upcoming events.

It is essential that Optimist Junior Golf District Chairs keep in close contact with the Optimist Junior Golf Department. Junior golfers frequently contact the International office seeking information on how to qualify for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships at PGA National Resort & Spa. It is critical that Districts supply the Junior Golf Department with the most current information about their qualifying tournaments. Please return all forms by stated deadlines and notify the office of any changes in your tournament structure or location as soon as possible.

Districts should tailor their golf program to suit the specific needs of their localities. Some Districts hold a series of Club or Pre-Qualifying (Zone or regional) 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 Chairpersons should encourage all Clubs in their District to participate in the program by either conducting pre-qualifying tournaments or by sponsoring local golfers in District tournaments. Clubs should also be encouraged to conduct junior golf fundraisers and provide volunteers on the days of District tournaments.



IMPORTANT 2016 DATES

January 31

Deadline for District Chairs to submit qualifying tournament logistics to Optimist International.

February 5

Optimist International begins to accept at-large applications

April 22

At large application deadline

April 29

Registration opens for Optimist International Junior Golf Championships

June 3

Golfers who meet the criteria as “exempt” and as “at-large” for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships must register no later than May 29, 2015.

June 29

Deadline for submission of all District report forms; player and volunteer registration deadline for Optimist International Junior Golf Championships to include Alternates

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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

- July 20** Arrivals and check-in
July 21 Practice Rounds; Volunteer Orientation; District Chair Meeting; Opening Ceremony & Player Orientation
July 22 Tournament Round 1
July 23 Tournament Round 2
July 24 Tournament Round 3
July 25 Departure
Parent Child tournament

Boys 14-15 and Girls 13-14

- July 25** Arrivals and check-in
July 26 Practice Rounds; Volunteer Orientation; District Chair Meeting; Opening Ceremony & Player Orientation
July 27 Tournament Round 1
July 28 Tournament Round 2
July 29 Tournament Round 3
July 30 Departure

Boys 16-18 and Girls 15-18

- July 30** World Cup
Arrivals and check-in
July 31 Practice Rounds; Volunteer Orientation; District Chair Meeting; Opening Ceremony & Player Orientation
August 1 Tournament Round 1
August 2 Tournament Round 2
August 3 Tournament Round 3
August 4 Final Tournament Round
(top 50 boys/top 35 girls advance);
For those missing the cut—play in the PGA Co-Ed Scramble;
Departures

OFFICIAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

District Qualifying Tournaments

Participants in the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships are determined through Optimist District qualifying tournaments. When eligible junior golfers contact Optimist International, they are referred directly to the Optimist Junior Golf District Chairperson in their area.

It is the official policy of Optimist Junior Golf that players are allowed to qualify for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships only 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 due to a conflict of schedule, that golfer may play in any other District qualifying tournament.

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:

Boys 10-11 Age Division*

Ages 10 and 11 and does not celebrate his 12th birthday on or before July 24, 2016.

Boys 12-13 Age Division

Ages 12 and 13 and does not celebrate his 14th birthday on or before July 24, 2016.

Boys 14-15 Age Division

Ages 14 and 15 and does not celebrate his 16th birthday on or before July 29, 2016.

Boys 16-18 Age Division**

Ages 16 and 18 and does not celebrate his 19th birthday on or before August 4, 2016.

Girls 10-12 Age Division*

Ages 10, 11 and 12 and does not celebrate her 13th birthday on or before July 24, 2016.

Girls 13-14 Age Division

Ages 13 and 14 and does not celebrate her 15th birthday on or before July 29, 2016.

Girls 15-18 Age Division**

Ages 15, 16 and 18 and does not celebrate her 19th birthday on or before August 4, 2016.

*Golfers who are 9 years old as of July 24, 2016, 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 2016 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, 2015. A golfer playing in an Optimist Qualifier, Tournament of Champions or other Exempt Tournament **prior to December 31, 2015** 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

Caddies, Carts and Push/Pull Carts

Caddies and electric carts are not allowed in the international championships. Push/pull carts are permissible for golfers in the Boys 10-11, Boys 12-13 and all girls.

Distance Measuring Devices

Distance measuring devices are permitted at the international championships. Devices may measure distance only. Devices that measure slope, wind, etc. are not allowed even if other functions are disabled.

District Chairs are empowered to make a decision on pull cart and DMD usage at their qualifiers. The use of pull carts and DMDs is left to the discretion of the Chair based on host site restrictions, course layout, weather conditions, etc.

Age Verification/Birth Certificates

District Chairs are responsible for verifying the ages of players participating in Club, Zone 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.



QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Scoring Requirement

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
	24-over-par	18-over-par	11-over-par	6-over-par
Par 68	92	86	79	74
Par 69	93	87	80	75
Par 70	94	88	81	76
Par 71	95	89	82	77
Par 72	96	90	83	78
Par 73	97	91	84	79
Par 74	98	92	85	80

	Girls 10-12	Girls 13-14	Girls 15-18
	24-over-par	20-over-par	13-over-par
Par 68	92	88	81
Par 69	93	89	82
Par 70	94	90	83
Par 71	95	91	84
Par 72	96	92	85
Par 73	97	93	86
Par 74	98	94	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 2015 qualifiers throughout all Optimist Districts was logged for each age division.
- (3) A District's percentage of overall 2015 participation was calculated for each age division.
- (4) The number of spots granted in 2016 (in each division) will be calculated using the percent participation figure in Step 3 above.

Age Division Winners

All age division winners filling granted District qualifying spots must have shot at or below the established target score (see information to left) 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. 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 29. Alternates replacing District winners are not entitled to the \$70.00 discount and must pay the full \$720.00 registration fee.

Official District Tournament

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 International. 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 one qualifying spot per age division 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.

Course Yardages

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

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

Girls Age Divisions

10-12 5,000 yards
13-14 5,500 yards
15-18 6,000 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 April 22, 2016. 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 and will be required to register for the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships by June 3, 2016.



EXEMPTIONS

Optimist Junior Golf strictly limits the number of golfers who register for the international championships through an exemption. Exemptions will be broken down into separate categories, namely “Optimist Exemptions” and “Special Exemptions.”

Category #1 (Optimist Exemptions)

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 3, 2016.

1. The top finishers in each age division from the 2015 Optimist International Junior Golf Championships as follows: Boys 10-11 (top 3); Girls 10-12 (top 3), Boys 12-13 (top 3); Girls 13-14 (top 3); Boys 14-15 (top 4); Boys 16-18 (top 10), Girls 15-18 (top 10),
2. The top finishers from the 2015 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 2016 Optimist International Junior Golf Tour event specifically:
 - Ft. Worth, Texas — top TBD (Boys 16-18) and top ?? (Boys 14-15, Girls 14-18). Must meet scoring requirement.
 - Greg Norman Open—Myrtle Beach, SC — top TBD in each age division (still have to meet scoring requirement.)
 - Core Golf Academy Open—Orlando, Florida— top TBD in each age division (still have to meet scoring requirement.)
 - Any previous age division champion of the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.
4. Golfers selected to the 2016 Hugh Cranford All-Scholastic team.

Category #2 (Special Exemptions)

Golfers who meet the following criteria must submit an application to Optimist International no later than June 1, 2016. Golfers in this category are NOT guaranteed a spot into the international championships; rather, a limited number of golfers in each division will be offered a spot in the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships through this application method.

- (1) Any junior golfer who is ranked in the top 100 overall rankings of the *Golfweek* Performance Index rankings as of May 31, 2016.
- (2) Any junior golfer who is ranked in the top 100 overall rankings of the *Junior Golf Scoreboard* rankings as of May 31, 2016.
- (3) Any age division winners of the following junior golf events (most recent tournament happening prior to May 31, 2016).

AJGA Junior All-Star Invitational
Bubba Conlee National Junior
IMG Academy Junior World Golf Championships
Canadian Optimist Jr Golf National Championships
Donald Ross Junior Championship
Doral Publix Junior Classic
Golfweek Junior Invitational
FCWT National Championship
Junior Orange Bowl International
Pepsi Little People’s Championship
Press Thornton Future Masters
Scott Robertson Memorial
US Kids Golf World Championship
Verizon Junior Heritage
Western Junior Championship
Women’s Western Junior Championship

- (4) GIRLS ONLY—the overall winners (oldest age division only) of all *Golfweek* ranked tournaments taking place between June 1, 2015 and May 31, 2016.
- (5) GIRLS ONLY—winners of any 2015 or 2016 AJGA Junior All-Star Series event prior to May 31, 2016.