



PGA

Southern California Section
Desert Chapter



Junior Golf Guide

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Dear Desert Chapter members,

The Desert Chapter PGA junior golf guide was created to aid fellow PGA members and apprentices in teaching, organizing, and coordinating junior golf programs. In this guide you will find junior golf “Best Practices” that have been compiled from PGA members throughout our 41 sections. These best practices touch on things like keeping instruction simple for juniors to running organized junior golf programs. Also included in the guide are junior golf learning and playing opportunities located here in the Coachella Valley. If you have a junior at your facility looking for a quality junior golf program this is the place you will find it. The guide will be updated on a quarterly basis by the Desert Junior golf chairperson. It is our goal that this guide will eventually be filled with hundreds of junior golf best practices for all our fellow PGA professionals to use if they so chose. If you would like to contribute to the guide please send your submission to the junior golf chairperson. Having as many different professionals contribute to the guide will make it more diverse and useful for all of us. Please use the format that is outlined below so that it is consistent throughout the guide. Thank you in advance for for all your support!

Paul Bucy, PGA
Desert Chapter Junior Golf Chairperson

Please send all written contributions to:

Paul Bucy
Desert Chapter Junior golf chairman
paul.bucy@pga.com

Desert Junior Golf Programs

Fairway Kids Junior Golf Program

Year round level based progressive junior golf program including after school, holiday, and summer programs. Private instruction.

Desert Willow Golf Resort, Palm Desert, Ca

Darrell Souza, PGA

Paul Bucy, PGA

Jason Wilkinson, PGA

(760) 340-4057

Joe Simonds Golf Academy Junior Golf Program

After school, private lessons

Woodhaven Country Club

Joe Simonds, PGA

(760) 219-1212

First Tee of the Coachella Valley

The mission statement of The First Tee of the Coachella Valley is to impact the lives of young people by providing learning facilities and educational programs that promote character development and life-enhancing values through the game of golf.

Glenn Miller

Chris Keener

Dustin Smith, PGA

Jeff Harrison, PGA

Amy Anderson, LPGA

(760) 779-1877

Tahquitz Creek Youth golf program

6 week youth skill based program, Private instruction

Dr. Jerry Elwell, PGA

David Shackelford, PGA

(760) 328-1005

Shadow Mountain Golf club

Holiday camps, Private instruction, Youth on course program Juniors who are certified by the SCGA and are members can play Shadow Mountain for \$5.00 during non-peak hours and hit balls for \$2.00 for the range fee.

Nicolas Mesrobian, PGA

Sharon Fletcher, PGA

(760) 346-8242

Desert Junior Golf Tournament Play

SCPGA JUNIOR TOUR

Southern California's largest and most respected junior tour with over 200 events being conducted every year all across the Southern California PGA section. The SCPGA junior tour is made up of the Toyota tour cup, Junior tour, Junior Developmental league, and Square one programs that allow for play at every level.

Niki Gatch – Assistant Executive Director

Mike Meka, PGA – Junior Tour Director

Alexandra Tegels – Junior Tour Manager

(951) 845-4653

www.scpgajrtour.com

US KIDS LOCAL TOUR COACHELLA VALLEY

The U.S. Kids Golf Local Tours are created to provide boys and girls, ages 5 to 14, the opportunity to advance their skills in the game in age-appropriate competition without having to take the time and incur the costs of having to travel long distances. A Local Tour consists of eight one-day tournaments including a season-ending one-day Local Tour Championship. Players earn awards and points for each tournament.

Dustin Smith, PGA

(775) 722-7181

www.uskidsgolf.com

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

November 15, 2011

Put the Youth in a unique, graduated, and measured scoring environment

Dr. Jerry Elwell, the 2004 Southern California & 1998 Middle Atlantic PGA Sections Teacher of the Year, is a 7-time National PGA Teacher of the Year Finalist and teacher of 8 Hall of Fame Members, and is a Teaching Professional at Tahquitz Creek Golf Resort in Palm Springs, California

Dr. Jerry Elwell on his approach to teaching juniors: My Youth Golf Program utilizes a unique concept of getting the Youth into a real scoring environment. They experience success through trial and error with constant refinement as they become aware of the direction the clubface is pointed when they contact the ball. They also internalize concepts such as how the path of the clubhead affects where the ball ends up and how much swing or force is necessary. These young players are eager to learn the type of shots to hit, proper club selection, and the varied skills and judgment required in scoring. They are permitted to progress at their own pace as they complete a series of skills tests in the Scoring Game & Practice area. Their progression earns them the opportunity to utilize these newly acquired skills on the golf course. They will move through my Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced Achievement Levels via instruction, practice, training, and continual testing in the Scoring Game & Practice area and the Golf Course.

Dr. Jerry Elwell on the business impact of teaching juniors: This method of teaching the rising generation of golfers has elicited strong, positive responses from both students and parents. This player enrichment approach with its fun and challenging learning activities has injected a spirit of enthusiasm that has led me to discard much of the methodology we professionals used in the past. There is really no comparison between that and what I am now involved in. There is a certain feeling among the parents that this is really what they have been seeking – to see the sparkle in their young people's eyes and the enthusiasm they show over the challenges that are built into each skills test. This has led to more congenial relationships with parents, other children in the family, and a great educational experience for the young players themselves.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

August 4, 2010

Develop a Strong Relationship With Junior Golfers

Joe Plecker, the 2007 Middle Atlantic PGA Section Teacher of the Year, is the PGA director of instruction at the Baltimore Country Club in Timonium, Md.

Joe Plecker on the importance of developing a strong relationship with junior golfers:

To me, teaching junior golfers is one of the most rewarding parts of being a PGA Professional. When I begin coaching a junior golfer, the first question I always ask them is, "What do you want to do with golf?" The response helps me to tailor a program that fits the player's physical abilities and emotional needs in order to reach their goals. Therefore, every junior golfer's experience is based upon a mutually agreed-upon goal that we work toward. During this initial session with the student, I spend most of the time getting to know them and their personality as well as an assessment of their skills in order to see what the student can and can't perform. This is a great way for me to see the foundation of the student's skills and what as an instructor I need to teach and improve on for the student to be successful. Every student is different and I always work to develop a strong relationship with the student so we develop a level of trust. My goal with students is to teach them life skills along with golf. One way I maintain my relationship with my top junior golfers is to communicate with them while they are on the road at tournaments through phone calls, text messages, e-mails and even Facebook. Our conversations focus on how the course played, with whom they played and other questions not specific to score. This is a great way to relieve the pressure of these tournaments while still communicating with your student.

Joe Plecker on the business impact of developing a strong relationship with junior golfers:

Through coaching and tailoring programs for individual junior golfers, I am able to demonstrate a deep level of commitment to my young students. Helping them play better is an ever-present goal, but through golf I can build life skills in young players. These strong relationships with juniors have led to many referrals, and you can have the same impact, too. Start with one player and more will follow. The impact of your dedication and care for juniors will have lifelong positive results.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

May 18, 2011

Joseph DiChiara on Teaching: Start From the Green With Junior Golfers

Joseph DiChiara, a U.S. Kids Top 50 Instructor, is a PGA assistant professional at Mendham (N.J.) Golf & Tennis Club.

Joseph DiChiara on the importance of starting from the green with junior golfers:

I have developed a program at Mendham Golf & Tennis Club that I use for juniors of all levels. I call this my “reverse golf” program. I’ve found that too many parents have their kids take out the driver and swing for the fences. I believe, to develop the strongest junior players possible, you must start on the green and work backwards. Whenever a junior student begins a program with me, I make them go through a test that measures their ability in all areas of the game. We start by heading onto the golf course and seeing how many three foot putts they can make out of five. We then see how many 15- and 30-foot putts they can make. From there we move on to chip shots, pitches and shots from 100 yards, 150 yards, and so on, until we reach their maximum driving distance. This helps me target weak points in their game. My lessons with that student would then be dictated by their performance in this test.

Joseph DiChiara on the business impact of starting from the green with junior golfers:

I am a student of the game, and when I read about the game’s great players I’ve found that they did more than try to bomb their drives – they were true shotmakers. I teach all around the green and the cause and effect of the clubface in order to make the ball do what you want to do. This program has been extremely well-received, and I have seen students’ scores come shooting down through my philosophy. This has benefitted my lesson book by giving me credibility with my members. They don’t just see me sitting on the range with students – they see improvement and my enthusiasm for the game. About half of my students are juniors, and I have been fortunate enough to be recognized on a national level for my work with juniors.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

July 7, 2010

Find Unique Ways to Reach Juniors

George DeVita is the PGA head professional at Farmington Woods Country Club in Avon, Conn.

George DeVita on the importance of reaching juniors in unique ways:

One of the more popular sports for kids in our area is soccer. We have tried to match the success that soccer has had on local children, and the Snag Golf program might be the best method of reaching them when they are young. The program contains all the elements of golf, but in a modified form that adds fun to the learning and playing experience. In the program, there are only two clubs: one for full shots, pitching and chipping the ball, and another similar to a putter. Shots are played off of a mat and tee to ensure that the player will have an optimal lie every time. The target is not a hole with a cup inside. Rather, it is an above-ground weighted cylinder. The ball is slightly smaller than a tennis ball and sticks to the cylinder. This is a great training program for beginners because it is easy to learn and easy to teach. The key is in simplifying the instruction so that it can be an effective transition into the game of golf. I use this program by traveling to local schools and use the equipment to teach the basic skills of golf to students in first through fourth grade. I set up a mini-course at the school, and, because the equipment is soft, I don't need a wide-open area. This allows me to teach the game in a safe, user-friendly environment. In addition, there is a curriculum the physical education teachers at their schools can use that meets education guidelines and teaches both golf and life skills. We are creating leagues and tournaments around this and our facility has created a membership classification for juniors with the program in mind. Not many 8-year-olds have the opportunity to be members at a private, championship course with great facilities, so this is a great way to reach tomorrow's golfers.

George DeVita on the business impact of reaching juniors in unique ways:

The value this program gives me is an expanded future base of golfers. Their relationship with me is formed when they are young, so once they graduate beyond the program, they can turn to me to aid in their continual growth in golf. And because the kids have access to our facility, their parents come to the facility and take lessons because they also want to learn to play the game as well. There is a vision to get golf in every school in the country and the vision starts here. We are trying to work on getting kids from golf in schools, to the courses and playing golf for a lifetime. I think the program equipment is the best tool for this. Not only do the kids win, but the facility wins – as well as the game of golf.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

June 30, 2010

Emphasize Fun and Discipline to Enhance Junior Golf Programming

David Goldblum, the 2009 Southern Texas PGA Junior Golf Leader, is the PGA director of instruction at the Golf Club at Cinco Ranch in Katy, Texas.

David Goldblum on the importance of enhancing junior golf programming:

In an effort to develop lifelong golfers, we expanded our seasonal golf instruction program for juniors ages 6–14. The program now includes monthly after-school golf programs to accompany an 11-week summer instructional program. The after-school program increased from one day a week to four due to demand. I believe the key to success is a highly structured program emphasizing simple fundamentals, etiquette, Rules, character-trait association and constant competition – with rewards in the form of things like golf balls and trophies. PGA apprentices, golf team members and former program participants act as instructors, and they strictly adhere to the curriculum while fostering individual relationships with the juniors at every available moment. Upon registration, each junior receives a golf cap with his or her name on a label on the bill of the cap, a personalized bag tag, and each junior personally identifies his or her golf ball. These three important personalized items set the foundation, while instructors use the juniors' names often and are conditioned to use only positive reinforcement of the day's fundamental. The instructors themselves are evaluated daily on energy level, effort and engagement. By creating fun competitions at every step, the juniors develop a "practice to win" mentality, which make practices fun and purposeful. The disciplined environment allows for positive coaching, good camaraderie and a safe experience. This helps develop lifetime relationships with the game, and with the inherent character qualities that are associated with success.

David Goldblum on the business impact of enhancing junior golf programming:

We are creating relationships with junior golfers, and the resulting incremental revenue increases are felt throughout the club: food and beverage, equipment and merchandise, additional rounds and more private lessons. Juniors bring parents to the course and motivate them to play, including parent-junior tournaments at off-peak times to increase tournament revenue. Family involvement in the game produces committed, lifelong golfers, and assures the continued growth of the game. The junior golf programs provide a foundation toward competitive golf as well. By developing sound fundamentals in a disciplined environment, the golfer learns to compete and it is proven that competitive golfers rarely leave the game over time. Without the competition, the junior becomes bored, loses interest and moves on to another activity. A current college player reminded me of the trophy she won during the fourth grade in the summer bunker competition. The fact that a college-level player is reminding me of this particular golf event from her past emphasizes the value of the student-teacher relationship.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

June 2, 2010

Offer Winter Programs for High School Students

James Kinney, the 2007 and '08 Nebraska PGA Section Teacher of the Year, is a PGA golf instructor at GolfTEC Omaha (Neb).

James Kinney on the importance of high school programs:

We developed a winter program for area high school students that has been very successful. We send a letter to all of the coaches of the local boys' and girls' high school golf teams in late fall informing them of the opportunity. The program starts with a one-hour evaluation during which we meet, evaluate their swing and talk about their golf goals. The rest of the program consists of 10 individual lessons focusing on all areas of the game. We allow the students to come in and reserve a room in one of our indoor practice bays and use training aids and ball flight simulators; it's one thing to give them lessons during the winter, but they also have to practice between lessons. We also analyze their clubs to see if they have any gaps in their set and incorporate a game tracking membership so the student can work with their coach during the season and follow things like greens in regulation and putts per round. Then the coach can keep track of the students' game and evaluate what to work on in practice. The program takes place from December to February and students are free to create their own schedule. Once the program is over, the students receive a discount on future lesson programs. This is the perfect structure to prepare high school students for the upcoming golf season.

James Kinney on the business impact of high school programs:

The response from students has been fantastic. We had between 40 and 50 students in the winter program this year, and most students follow up with a lesson program afterwards. Many of the students also recommend their friends and teammates to come and join the program. The students and coaches have recognized that this is a great way to get their games in shape over the winter. The program has also helped our teaching center establish ourselves as the best facility for golf improvement in the Omaha area. I am happy to help high school golfers learn the game. Junior golfers are very important to our overall business, as they are the future of the game.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

May 26, 2010

Evaluate Juniors to Know What You Are Working With

Jim Hardy, a TPI Certified Instructor, is the PGA director of instruction at Hearthstone Country Club in Houston, Texas and was named a Top 50 Kids Teacher Honorable Mention by U.S. Kids Golf.

Jim Hardy on the importance of evaluating juniors to know what you are working with:

After nearly 15 years of conducting all kinds of junior golf camps, I decided to shake things up last year and enjoyed some promising results. In the new format I begin each camp with a series of skills tests. These include putting, pitching, bunker shots and ability to call full-swing shots. There are four levels that juniors may strive to achieve: Par Level, Birdie Level, Eagle Level and Double Eagle Level (an Eagle Level golfer that wishes to help out with the camp and mentor younger players). Like a karate belt, campers receive a bag tag that designates their level. Everyone begins at Par Level. In order to achieve Birdie Level, they must make six of 10 three-foot putts, then eight of 10 for Eagle Level. Similarly, for each of the other skills such as lag putting, pitch shots and bunker play, the tests become gradually more difficult as the golfer attempts to reach the next level. We also test what I call GAS (grip, aim and stance) as well as a simple written test of common Rules and etiquette covered during group discussion. In a four-day clinic, we test on day one then teach for two days based on the students' results, concluding on day four with a re-test. On the bottom of the Rules and etiquette test we list their scores for each skill and add comments on what to do to get to the next level, which we give to the parents.

Jim Hardy on the business impact of evaluating juniors:

Juniors can now clearly see what they need to do in order to get to the next level and receive the next bag tag. The status and the pursuit of the next bag tag has increased their attention span and dedication to the game, quickened their learning pace and resulted in more repeat students for the many camps that run yearlong. I see them at the course more frequently, practicing on their own and playing with their families, driving up rounds played and revenue. Parents are impressed when we hand them their child's progress report and know what to help them with. The program has become a point of focus when our membership director meets with perspective members and their families.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

March 31, 2010

Junior Product Testing Increases Business

Vikki Vanderpool, the 2009 PGA Junior Golf Leader and 2006 Tennessee PGA Section Junior Golf Leader, is a PGA Professional and president of Approaching the Green in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Vikki Vanderpool on the importance of junior product testing:

The Tennessee PGA Academy has provided 35 years of exceptional junior instruction and boasts more than 10,000 graduates. Advising our students on properly fitted equipment is an essential part of our camp and has been a key to our success. In our experience the most difficult age to fit is between 11 and 13 and heights 5'2" to 5'6". Finding the right sized equipment can be challenging. As is often the case, Academy students show up with equipment they have outgrown. To remedy this, we partnered with TaylorMade-adidas Golf to offer a demo day prior to registration. Before registration, many students and parents arrive early to check out the facilities. This was a perfect time to conduct a demo day with professional custom fitting from an on-site TaylorMade-adidas Golf staff member who offers equipment suggestions. Parents and students could see the product, try it out and if interested in purchasing, either special order equipment right away or take the specs back to their local PGA Professional. The arrangement with TaylorMade-adidas Golf enabled students to receive their special orders within 48 hours, and in the meantime utilize demo clubs on hand. I also allow juniors to trade in their old set of clubs for credit against a new set. The right tools in the hands of juniors translates to better playing, which means more fun.

Vikki Vanderpool on the business impact of junior product testing:

The obvious benefit is increased equipment sales during the clinic, especially with the quickness our equipment partner is able to provide the new clubs. Another advantage to holding the junior demo day is not many other junior clinics offer this event. This makes the Academy very attractive when comparing itineraries of other area junior clinics. New golf equipment is like a new toy. When a kid has a new toy, they never want to stop playing with it, especially if properly fit equipment enables them to play better. This will result in increased play for the entire family and ultimately increased revenue.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

February 24, 2010

Get Involved with Special Needs Children

Bob Beach, the 2005 New England PGA Section Teacher of the Year and 2008 New England PGA Section Professional of the Year, is the PGA head professional at Braintree (Mass.) Municipal Golf Course.

Bob Beach on the importance of getting involved with special needs children:

My favorite part of being a PGA Professional is teaching golf to people with special challenges. I conduct clinics for golfers with special needs every Monday evening from April to October at the Braintree Municipal Golf Course. Each clinic has approximately 20 to 40 participants. This is an opportunity for my staff and I to help involve children that have special needs in the game of golf. Many of the participants in my golf clinic were autistic and I quickly learned through the clinics that they enjoyed putting. The students had such a strong interest in putting that it inspired me to create a fund-raising program for autistic children and their families. The program is called Putting for Autism and we transformed our putting green into a miniature golf course and the participants used colored balls for the competition. The colored golf balls and miniature golf course helped make putting more visual which was very appealing to these golfers. The participants enjoyed watching the ball disappear into the hole and they quickly developed confidence. The participants really enjoyed our mini-golf holes, which included a gigantic ceramic turtle and a spider made of cloth. In addition to the miniature golf course, we also demonstrated to the participants how a putt curves with the slope of the green by using a large rope. One of the things that impressed me the most was the way our golfers with special needs helped one another. It was a great environment for learning golf and truly special to see these participants progress through the clinics each week.

Bob Beach on the business impact of getting involved with special needs children:

Putting for Autism was a success because it raised awareness of autism and exposed golf to a very special group of children. The clinic has shown a tremendous amount of support from all of our golfers. Being a public golf course, people used to be frustrated with the slower play and the amount of use the putting green took for these clinics. But I believe the attitude has greatly changed with the support we are continuing to receive for special needs golf. There has been a lot of positive feedback and great publicity for our golf course. Additionally, our special needs golfers come throughout the week with their parents, which generates new revenue.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

January 13, 2010

Hold Clinics for High School Coaches

Todd Kolb, the 2008 Minnesota PGA Section Teacher of the Year, is a PGA golf instructor at Willow Run Golf Course in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Todd Kolb on the importance of clinics for high school coaches:

There are plenty of educational programs out there for high school coaches of many different sports, but what has been done for golf coaches? Many high school golf coaches are looking for ideas and guidance that will help their teams improve. With this in mind, I organized a clinic for high school golf coaches in the South Dakota area. The clinic, which takes place right before the golf season begins in March, features four basic topics. First, we go over fundamentals such as grip, posture and alignment. Second, we cover some short game checkpoints like aim, ball position and rhythm of the putting stroke. Third, we give recommendations on developing a good practice schedule for their students, both with the full swing and short game. The goal is to avoid the all-too-common high school practice where everyone is just hitting balls with no real purpose. Fourth, we put the day's lesson to test by evaluating current and past students. Through videos, we show where the student was before he/she received instruction and ask each coach to give their input on a plan for improvement. We then share what plan was actually used with the particular student and walk through the process. Most high school coaches are teachers who were also asked to coach their school's golf team and have not received any formal golf education. However, they are extremely grateful for the opportunity to increase their knowledge and improve their golf coaching skills. As a PGA instructor, this is a great opportunity to promote the game and build relationships with people who are with young golfers on a regular basis.

Todd Kolb on the business impact of clinics for high school coaches:

The clinic has been a nice revenue generator in a typically slow time for golf instruction in our area. With a clinic fee of \$35 and more than 40 coaches attending, we have been able to generate more than \$1,400 for one morning of work. More importantly, it has positioned our golf academy as "experts" in the instruction field and helped develop a great working relationship with high school coaches in the region. Once this relationship was built, the high school coaches became the messengers for our future customer base. Simply said, this partnership has created a pipeline of future students.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

October 7, 2009

Give Juniors a Chance to Compete

Tony Martinez, the 2005 and 2007 Northern Texas PGA Section Junior Golf Leader, is the PGA head professional at Keeton Park Golf Course in Dallas, Texas, a host facility for The First Tee of Dallas.

Tony Martinez on the importance of giving juniors a chance to compete:

Our Section recently started a new team-golf initiative to give beginner-level juniors a fun competitive experience against other area facilities. All too often, junior golf programs only focus on the *how's* of golf: *how* to hold a club, *how* to swing a club, *how* to position your body, *how* to putt, etc. While technique is necessary, it doesn't really give these kids a good idea how to *play* golf. In inter-facility competition, they learn aspects of golf that can only be achieved through experience, such as proper etiquette, playing on unfamiliar courses, good sportsmanship, team support and camaraderie. Each facility is free to manage their team as they like. However, we all agree that this league is geared for developing juniors, not high-level players. I invite all interested juniors to get involved in my municipal facility program. We have weekly team practices and I try to mix it up with some of my top-ranked high school and college players who contribute insight from their level. The response has been overwhelming in every age group, making it necessary to hold tournament tryouts and discuss additional small scale inter-club matches throughout the season.

Tony Martinez on the business impact of giving juniors a chance to compete:

The team golf program has only been around for a few months, and we've already seen a better-than-expected level of growth and interest. I currently have 20 kids on my team and expect more as word continues to spread. While some facilities charge a flat monthly rate for their teams, I have a "pay as you go" system, charging for individual practices and competitions, which gives families flexibility to fit what they can into their schedule. We're seeing a growing number of junior golfers at the course these days, and my private lesson schedule is also filling up. Getting these kids hooked on golf at a young age will lead to continued growth of the game.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

August 19, 2009

Motivating Today's Juniors

Bill Scott, a 2008 U.S. Kids Golf Top Instructor honorable mention recipient, is a PGA golf instructor at the Don Law Golf Improvement Center in Boca Raton, Fla.

Bill Scott on the importance of motivating juniors:

I've always looked for opportunities for growth in myself as well as my students. This is a constant challenge, as all students are different in how they learn as well as how they're motivated to improve. My typical approach to inspire motivation in my students is goal-setting sessions. This works great with adults, as they're able to not only understand what motivates them but also verbalize it. With juniors, however, this is not as easy. Whether I am teaching a 5-year-old or a 15-year-old, the challenge remains the same, as most juniors do not yet understand what motivates them or are not able to verbalize it effectively. Instead of playing a guessing game, I created a multiple-choice questionnaire that identifies the motivators my students find desirable. The questions are derived from seven motivation categories: tangible items, recognition, instructor recognition, parent recognition, awards, time with peers and special activities. For example, a question may read: "When you do a good job on a skills test, what would you really like to have: a) a cool, new golf ball; b) to be invited to a special junior class; c) a note to my parents." The ball would suggest the child is motivated by tangible items, while the invitation relates to special activities and the note is parent recognition. I recommend several questions to help eliminate possible motivation categories. Such questions may be asked verbally during a goal-setting session or offered as a handout. The information I obtain from this questionnaire then helps me outline the skills challenges, games, drills and verbal affirmations I use during the lesson.

Bill Scott on the business impact of motivating juniors:

I am able to use the information gained from the questionnaire to help motivate my junior students in their golf game, which has caused my retention rate for juniors to soar to 98 percent over the last three years. During my goal-setting sessions, I can learn more about them and cater my lesson planning and suggested skills drills to their needs. In addition, it helps me implement motivational techniques that keep their energy up and enthusiasm present. This maintains a happy and fulfilled student as well as a satisfied parent, while helping me to keep focused on improving my students' games.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

June 17, 2009

Prepare Juniors for Tournament Golf

Sean English, the 2007 Southern Ohio PGA Section Teacher of the Year, is a PGA assistant golf professional at Kenwood Country Club in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Sean English on the importance of preparing juniors for tournament golf:

At Kenwood, we have a very large membership, and our juniors come from more than 15 area high schools. Therefore, many of the juniors don't know each other, and they tend to either play alone or mostly with their parents. Last year, I started a program called "The Players Group" for our high school players with two goals in mind. First, we sought to establish a better rapport with all of the high school players as a way to increase participation together. The second was to help these high school players prepare for tournament golf and potentially playing at the collegiate level. We meet twice a week throughout the summer for hour-long sessions. For each practice, we work on a different facet of tournament golf – things like how to practice, what to practice, how to prepare for a tournament, etc. We do a variety of different drills: For one of the days, the players do a putting ladder of two, four, six, eight and 10 feet. If they miss one of the putts, they have to run a wind sprint of 50 yards and back, then start the process over until they make all five putts in a row. This helps the player learn to putt with an accelerated heart rate, much like when the player is under pressure trying to win a tournament. This year I've also teamed with Peter Sanders of Shotbyshot.com on a game-management program to help the players better understand their weaknesses and where they need to practice. In the program, every other week I spend 30 minutes working individually with each player on their technique in problem areas.

Sean English on the business impact of preparing juniors for tournament golf:

The first year I had a few players that declined participation in the program. However, after seeing the progress of their peers that participated, each of our high school players is in this year. Adding the lessons to the program has tripled my revenue, and it does not hurt my regular lesson schedule because I'm able to fill the players into my slower schedule times. Furthermore, with new features such as the Shotbyshot.com analysis, I have added value to the program at inexpensive cost while at the same time gaining pertinent information to help the players improve.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

March 25, 2009

Place Proper Equipment in the Hands of Juniors

THIS IS THE FOURTH OF FOUR SPECIAL EDITIONS ON CLUBFITTING

Mary Schiavetta, the vice president of the Greater Sarasota Junior Golf Association, is the 2007 North Florida PGA Section Junior Golf Leader and is the PGA head professional at Evie's Family Golf Center in Sarasota, Fla.

Mary Schiavetta on the importance of placing proper equipment in the hands of juniors:

Junior golfers grow fast, so it doesn't make much sense to fit a junior for a top-of-the-line set of clubs when they'll outgrow the clubs in a matter of months. Nor does it make sense to order a set of clubs that a junior will eventually grow into, as this will promote a flawed swing and make it harder for them to learn the game even when they eventually fit the clubs. For juniors under the age of six and just getting into golf, I use SNAG (Starting New at Golf) equipment. It is made of heavy-duty plastic materials, is easy for them to swing and color-coded for ease of use. With older kids, I have found that junior clubs such as U.S. Kids Golf and Nike have junior equipment that addresses the issue of placing the proper equipment in junior's hands. They offer several kinds of clubs for all stages of a junior's growth and skill level. Furthermore, the equipment is affordable, and when the junior outgrows their current set of clubs, they may be exchanged, for a fee, to the next set up in size. The upgrades include every component of the golf club from clubhead to grip, so as a junior improves, the program will continue to place the best possible equipment for that particular golfer's hands.

Mary Schiavetta on the business impact of placing proper equipment in the hands of juniors:

A number of companies now offer complete lines of equipment that will take every junior through the elementary stages of learning the game of golf. If stocked in your shop, you can be sure of equipment sales for the first few years of that particular junior at your club. Since the junior will have the correct equipment for their game in their hands, they and their families will trust that you, the PGA Professional, will be steering them in the right direction in regards to their equipment needs. This trust is vital when that junior is ready to make the step into standard equipment and regular lessons. They will be more likely to purchase equipment from a professional that they know cares about them and the continued improvement of their game. Sustained interest in the game by a junior will usually translate into increased interest from the entire family, which will provide additional opportunity for equipment sales and/or instruction for that family.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

November 26, 2008

Summer Golf Camps Attract Junior Golfers

Brad Brewer, the 2000 North Florida PGA Section Teacher of the Year, is the PGA director of instruction at Shingle Creek Golf Club in Orlando, Fla., where he runs the Brad Brewer Golf Academy.

Brad Brewer on the importance of summer golf camps:

A market segment we try to attract is the local junior golfer, but unfortunately the projected numbers didn't warrant a large percentage of advertising dollars. So we put our thinking caps on and came up with a plan that took limited resources and turned them into action and excellent results. We sought out local organizations that had youth affiliations to build a marketing relationship. A great example is our relationship with the YMCA, with whom we provide a weekly golf camp. It is a win-win relationship because it offers the YMCA a unique specialty program that also teaches etiquette, sportsmanship and integrity along with how to play the game, introducing a new generation to golf. The program runs from 9 a.m. until noon, Monday through Friday, during the summer break. With the way our business relationship is set up, the YMCA receives some of the income to offset operating costs of this non-profit organization, and our Academy is also able to give back a percentage of revenue to provide for youths who lack the financial means. The first year, not knowing what to expect, we provided four weeks with 30 youths per session. Each year since then we have continued to provide more weeks and increase in numbers with the support of local private and public schools, retail golf shops and the viral marketing efforts of Shingle Creek Golf Club.

Brad Brewer on the business impact of summer golf camps:

This unique program, intended to be a growth-of-the-game exercise and philanthropic partnership with the YMCA during our sizzling Orlando summer season, has turned into a significant source of our third-quarter revenue. In 2007 we provided camp experiences for more than 250 juniors that generated instructional revenues of \$43,750. Our 2008 numbers are on pace to exceed last year, as more than 40 percent have returned from previous years and approximately 18 percent have participated in all four years of the program's existence. Plus, we've formed significant relationships in the community as the juniors continue developing their golf games and get their siblings and parents on board learning and practicing by way of our individual coaching services and Academy membership programs. Plan ahead now as the weather gets colder, and you can see great results come summer at your facility.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

February 27, 2008

Keep Junior Camps Fun and Interest Will Soar

Todd Bindner, the 1997 and 2001 Rocky Mountain PGA Section Teacher of the Year, is the owner and operator of The Todd Bindner Golf Academy in Boise, Idaho.

Todd Bindner on creating fun activities to incorporate into junior camps:

The first and foremost ingredient in growing junior golf is helping families enjoy their time at the club. Many sports are forced on juniors, and they can get burned out very easily. To avoid this, we incorporate lifetime sports at the club, working closely with the tennis professional and swim coach to coordinate club activities. Our emphasis is on group lessons by age and ability level. We always have contests where the kids can win milkshakes and autographed balls from the professionals. We also have fun events, like a two-day junior golf camp where we sleep outside overnight at the club – the professionals are overnights, too! We practice the full swing, swim, play Frisbee golf and hold a putting championship. When it turns dark, we watch movies on the big screen and fall asleep under the stars on the short range. The next morning we have breakfast and play nine holes. It's easily the most popular junior event at the club.

Todd Bindner on the business impact of incorporating fun activities into junior golf:

Membership demographics at private clubs have been steadily shifting to more family-centric environments. When looking to join a club, a potential member is likely to choose a club that is family-friendly and provides a plethora of activities in addition to golf. The overnight junior camp is exactly the kind of unique experience that a potential member will be looking for when making a decision on joining a club. The camp is a no-pressure environment that groups kids with their peers. This has made the game far less intimidating for juniors, spiking the number of rounds played and lessons given, fueling interest in the club and in myself as instructor.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

February 6, 2008

Make Instruction Accessible and Affordable to Juniors

Kip Puterbaugh, the 2007 Southern California PGA Section Teacher of the Year, a 2007 Golf Digest Top 100 Teacher and Golf Magazine Top 50 Teacher, is the PGA director of instruction at the Aviara Golf Academy in Carlsbad, Calif.

Kip Puterbaugh on growing the game by offering affordable prices to juniors and serving as a mentor:

As a junior golfer, I was fortunate to have two-time PGA Championship winner Paul Runyan as my teacher. Not only did he teach me how to play the game, but I also grew as a person through his mentoring. When I first opened a golf school, my priority was to operate a profitable business with which I could support my family. After accomplishing this, my thoughts returned to the impact that Paul had in my life and I decided that I would like to instill his lessons and values into the next generation of junior golfers. As my lesson book filled with an ever-increasing number of juniors, I realized that teaching and mentoring juniors is what I love most about golf instruction. I decided that I would give a 50-percent discount to juniors. My lesson demographics shifted from 5:1 adults-juniors to 3:7 adults-juniors. I was faced with a dilemma because my income was dropping. On the other hand, there is a very rewarding sense of accomplishment that comes from starting with juniors at 7 years old and watching them grow and go off to college, knowing that you played a large part in their development.

Kip Puterbaugh on the business impact of affordable junior programs:

At first glance, giving 50 percent off to juniors may not seem like the best way to generate revenue. But even though I had a short-term loss of income by teaching more juniors, my staff's reputation and my reputation grew, and continued to expand onto the national level, due to our juniors' success. My enthusiasm is evident when teaching and mentoring my junior students, which in turn rubs off on them and results in their growing love for the game and thirst for improvement. Because of the positive reputation the golf school has produced, we now have more parents bringing their children to our golf schools. My business is successful because I followed my instinct, and I am doing something that is fulfilling and that I love.

PGA Best Practices: Teaching

July 4, 2007

Keep it Simple with Juniors

Jim Flick, the 1988 PGA Teacher of the Year, is a PGA Life Member and is TaylorMade's Golf Ambassador based at The Kingdom, TaylorMade-adidas Golf's testing facility in Carlsbad, Calif.

Jim Flick on his approach to teaching juniors:

I try to keep it as simple as possible, trying to never give them more than one set-up, pre-swing or end-swing thought. I try to teach drills and provide pictures for them to look at that promote swings that they can imitate and feel. I do not want to teach them positions or concepts that would become divisive in the motion of their swing. I want them to feel motion and freedom. I always like to have clubs on the ground to help them learn how to use their eyes for alignment and the starting direction of the golf ball. I put a club on the ground two feet in front of the golf ball, in line with the target, to help them establish a target line. I have them always hit balls with a target in mind.

Jim Flick on the business impact of teaching juniors:

I like to have the juniors bring at least one parent to each lesson so they can see what we're doing and so the parents understand my philosophy about the game and what I am trying to get done with the juniors. It helps them see that I try to teach them life lessons as well as golf lessons, and the parents can be a part of that in things such as their posture, breathing, and other elements parents can help them with away from the golf course. That often leads to a teaching relationship with the parents, as well as the juniors.

PGA Best Practices: Player Development

February 26, 2011

Mick Brown on Player Development: Junior Golf Gets All Ages on the Course

Mick Brown is the PGA head professional at Star Hill Golf Club in Cape Carteret, N.C., a semi-private facility.

Mick Brown on the importance of getting all ages on the course:

I'm at a semi-private club, and our membership is older. When I got here four years ago, we had no junior program and few juniors who ever played the course. We started a program and listed our facility on the Play Golf America website. One part of the junior program that's been a huge hit is our Parent/Adult-Child tournament at the end of each summer. We use the Callaway scoring system, and the kids really look forward to it – it gives them something to prepare for during the summer junior program sessions, and it also gets the parents and grandparents out on the course. We're near a couple large military bases, and a lot of dads are away on deployment, so we open it up to aunts, uncles and any other adults the kids want to play with. The tournament is a big winner for us, and the big lesson the kids learn is how to have fun on the golf course.

Mick Brown on the business impact of getting all ages on the course:

The results have been very solid. We've brought in some members who are here primarily so their kids can be in our junior program, and we've been able to get a lot of our members to get out on the course with their grandkids. If we didn't have this junior program, our business would be in trouble.

Drills, Games, and Activities

PUTTING

Putting challenge course – Design a 9 hole putting challenge course on a practice putting green. Have three balls at each hole. Award 10 points for every putt made. The course should be made up of short, intermediate, and long putts. Make sure to include a few breaking putts. Award a winner with the most points after the course has been completed.

2 Putt tour – Have your students putt around the perimeter of the practice putting green going from hole to hole. The goal is to have 2 putts or less between holes. If they 3 putt they must go back to the beginning hole and start over. The junior that completes the “tour” first is designated the winner.

5 Point – Have 2 students face each other from at least 3 feet away. Each student should have a tee in the green in front of them. Each player gets one putt to hit their opponent's tee. If they succeed they are awarded 1 point. The first player to five points wins.

SHORT GAME

Chipping over a board with targets – Have students learn to chip over a 2x4 or similar board. This will encourage them to hit down on the ball and only reward them for their good shots. Place target strategically on the green with a progressive point system.

FULL SWING

Swing plane drill – Put a tee in the end the grip of your student’s club. Have them point the tee at the golf ball during their backswing when their left arm reaches the 9”oclock position. After they swing they should re point the tee back down at the ball when the right arm reaches the 3 o’clock position. This is a great drill when teaching junior to swing on plane.

ON COURSE

On course rules and etiquette contest – A great way to get juniors to exercise proper etiquette on the course is to award them prizes based on their performance. Award each student 10 points every time they display proper etiquette or rules while on the course. Examples of this would be marking of one’s ball, tending the flag for fellow competitor, raking a bunker, etc. Award prizes at the end of the day and or season based on the point total.