

Why Junior Golf?

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Hitler and Stalin have been earnest advocates of the youth movement. If those dedicated to world domination find that marching boys around imbues them with the spirit to do or die for an unworthy cause, why don't older golfers, country clubs and associations take more interest in promoting the grand game of golf among our younger players?

To be sure, Senior passes along his cast-off clubs to Junior and may even arrange for a few lessons. But Junior usually is supposed to play his golf without even being visible when older players are present, and few think of arranging activities for Junior and his pals. Truly, golf must be a wonderful game if Junior plays it in spite of these discouragements.

Also, who is going to replace Senior when he becomes too feeble to totter around the course? And why deprive Junior of the chance to indulge in a health-giving, character-building sport he can enjoy for the rest of his life? There is just no sense in the way we neglect our opportunities in junior golf.

It has been with the thought a national program was necessary to stimulate interest in junior golf that the USGA embarked on its present program. Juniors are naturally contest-minded, and the hope has been to provide a national competition that would serve both as a standard and a stimulant for junior activities at the district and club levels.

To tie in USGA activities with those of the districts, a Junior Championship Committee was appointed last year, and it is the plan that members of this Committee be leaders in junior golf in their respective sections. Not only should these Committee members serve to develop interest in the USGA Junior Amateur Championship but they should also promote junior activities at the district level.

Perhaps the first consideration is to obtain recognition of the importance of junior golf. Golfers, club and district

officers, the press and all those closely associated with the game should appreciate that junior golf is a serious, important business.

Next, it is of value to establish a definite program for junior golf at the club level: group lessons by the club professional, a schedule of junior events, and, above all, recognition of the rights of the juniors to the club facilities under reasonable limitations.

Finally, the promotion of junior golf must be carried up to the district level. A well-planned program of activities and the stimulation of interest in them is the most important feature.

The Expense Question

Here, however, we run into a problem that requires careful consideration. Not all junior golfers have the means to participate in a very extensive program. Therefore, without giving the impression that golf can become a means of getting something for nothing, some of the juniors may require and be found worthy of financial assistance, particularly when attending national competitions.

It is quite proper for such aid to be given, as the Rules of Amateur Status on expenses do not start to operate until a boy has reached his 18th birthday.

In addition to some expenses for individual juniors, there is also the need for financial help in connection with trophies, the cost of putting on tournaments properly, and so forth. We must remember that the juniors' earning capacity is limited and proper financing is important.

And so, Mr. Senior, if you find some merit in these thoughts, may we suggest that you do more than accord them your tacit approval? Discuss the subject of an adequate junior program with your fellow golfers, express your opinions to your club officers, and, above all, support and take an active part in some worthwhile program for junior golf.