

# INTERESTED IN JUNIOR GOLF?

## THIS IS KENWOOD'S ANSWER

by

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**W**HAT can my club do to stimulate interest in junior golf? With a new season fast approaching, many club officials are probably attempting to answer this question as they complete summer plans.

An example of what can be done with junior golf on the club level is the program of Kenwood Golf and Country Club in Bethesda, Md. Kenwood junior golfers are now preparing for what promises to be their most active program to date. Last year, 130 participants were attracted, most of them in the 12 to 14 age group.

### **Program Objectives**

In analyzing Kenwood's rapid success with junior golf, it is well to begin with the objectives of the program as outlined by the club's Junior Golf Committee. The first objective is to enable Kenwood families to derive the maximum benefit of their membership. Secondly, the program teaches juniors how to play properly, enjoy golf, and how to conduct themselves on the course. Indirectly, the program has the added benefit of publicizing Kenwood as an active club interested in junior golf, thus making the club more attractive to present and prospective members.

A study of last year's schedule of events reveals why Kenwood's juniors responded so enthusiastically. The formal program began with golf movies in mid-May, and ended in late August with a Field Day and picnic supper to award season trophies and prizes. Highlight of the picnic supper was the showing of 200 feet of 8 mm. color movies taken as the junior program progressed. The movies will be expanded this summer.

As a prelude to the season, the Junior Golf Committee sponsored the District of Columbia's first Junior Girl's Talent Hunt

in May. As a postlude, the juniors were guests of the Kenwood women golfers in a lady-junior foursome tournament in October.

During the summer, the juniors took part in a well-planned, active program designed to build and maintain interest. There was constantly something to do and something worth while on the way. There were five weekly clinics; a clinic-exhibition featuring the then Women's Amateur Champion, Miss Barbara Romack, and other top women golfers; a midget tournament; a parent-junior twilight event; and the junior championships by age groups.

To keep the Kenwood juniors informed of planned activities, six newsletters were mailed during the summer. Each newsletter was printed on a distinctive letterhead with a three-hole punch for suitable placement in a notebook. In this manner, the juniors were informed of coming activities at Kenwood and in the District of Columbia, results of past events, and other information designed to stimulate their interest and participation in golf. One newsletter offered tips on golf etiquette and good conduct.

### **Handicap System**

A handicap system was established with a card box and handicap rack in George Diffenbaugh's golf shop. A wallet-size handicap card was issued to juniors turning in at least ten nine-hole scores, properly attested. They were urged to play on Monday mornings when the course had least play and, unless they had played enough to carry a handicap card, were asked not to play at other times unless playing with an adult or another junior with a handicap. Scores for handicaps were turned in by 44 juniors and 16 of them received handicaps and cards.

## Kenwood Junior Champions



Photo by Robert J. Hawkins, Kenwood Golf and C. C.

Climax of last year's junior golf program at Kenwood Golf and Country Club, Bethesda, Md., was the presentation of trophies. Here Johnny Dunn, boys champion, and Daphne Dutton, girls champion, accept their prizes. At the left is Frank Emmet, Director of Junior Golfers of Washington and member of USGA's Junior Championship Committee, and on the right is Joseph M. Gambatese, Chairman of the Junior Golf Committee.

A special bulletin board was maintained at the entrance of the golf shop. In this way, all members of the club, and juniors, were kept fully informed of junior activities.

Financially, the 1955 program cost Kenwood a total of \$175, less than the dues of one member. The Junior Golf Committee raised \$70 for defraying of incidental expenses with a "Hit the Green" contest in mid-summer. Needless to say, the benefits resulting from the program were considered well worth this slight expense.

Highly gratified by last year's response, Kenwood approached 1956 with no reservations about junior golf. Registration cards have been mailed and the program will open at ceremonies in May. Clinics, a balanced tournament schedule, and continuation of the junior handicap system will remain a part of the program. Group lessons will be added this year after the spring clinics are completed. A Kenwood Junior Golf Association is being organized so that juniors may begin learning how to run their affairs with adult advice.

As in USGA junior play, participation in the Kenwood program is limited to juniors who have not reached the age of

18. Those who reach that age before May 1 are ineligible. During championship play, age at the time of play applies.

### Indications of Success

It is hoped Kenwood's interest in junior golf will produce more good golfers like Johnny Dunn. Johnny, 1955 Kenwood Junior Champion, competed in the 1953 Junior Amateur Championship at Tulsa, Okla., and in the 1954 tourney at Los Angeles. Kenwood juniors have taken an active part in tournaments in the District of Columbia area. In this respect, Frank Emmet, Director of the Junior Golfers of Washington and a member of USGA's Junior Championship Committee, considers Kenwood's program an ideal adjunct to junior golf on the district level.

Of primary importance is the fact that all Kenwood juniors have been given every encouragement and opportunity to play and enjoy the benefits of golf.

The Kenwood program is the result of much hard work, but the benefits have been rewarding. The increased junior interest in golf has resulted in better golf for everyone, and the training junior golfers of Kenwood are receiving will bring them lasting enjoyment of the game.