

The SCGA and Junior Golf Clubs — A Winning Combination

They say golf is a game that can be played for a lifetime. If that's true, then demand at golf courses in Southern California for the foreseeable future should be quite high — for there are more than 30 SCGA member clubs comprised of predominantly junior golfers, accounting for more than 7,000 junior golfers among them.

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These junior golf clubs range from junior tours, to Youth on Course clubs, and even clubs within the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) sections. Each of these clubs is unique in its makeup, but they all share the dedication to teach and provide access to

golf to juniors. Let's highlight just a few examples to get a better look at how these clubs are impacting the lives of juniors.

HANDICAP INDEX FOR HIGH SCHOOL PLAYERS

In the early 2000s, John Morello, now an SCGA board member, discussed with the SCGA the idea of having all high school golfers in the San Diego CIF Section establish a Handicap Index. Scores played and posted during high school matches could then be used to help seed the players for the Section Championship. So for the past several years, the San Diego High School Boys and Girls Golf Clubs have provided all San Diego high school golfers with a Handicap Index. "The high schools in San Diego County are extremely grateful to the SCGA for allowing them to use the scoring system," said Morello. As these students have graduated, many have maintained a Handicap Index by joining another golf club. And thanks to the success of the program, the CIF Southern Section now provides an SCGA Membership, including a Handicap Index, to all male high school golfers.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Now with more than 450 SCGA members, the Los Angeles County Junior GC was initially established to help juniors acquire a Handicap Index for competitions. Today, the county provides free golf lessons to juniors through weeklong after-school and summer programs, as well as one-day clinics. In addition, 19 county courses offer affordable junior rates and junior golf championships throughout the summer months for the more established and competitive players. More than 1,600 juniors of various skill levels participate in the seven annual events.



Looking ahead to 2012, the Youth on Course program will require an SCGA/USGA Handicap Index for all participants seeking unsupervised access. Learn more about posting scores at scga.org or contact us at handicap@scga.org.



THE SCPGA

The Southern California PGA has added an alumni club to its successful Junior Tour Club, so each golfer can continue to maintain a Handicap Index and stay involved after high school graduation. In the Junior Tour Club, kids progress through four stages: Recreational/Skill Development, Tour Preparation, Competitive Golf and College Preparatory. And at each level, juniors are provided invaluable learning opportunities and playing experiences.

YOUTH ON COURSE

The SCGA Youth on Course clubs allow junior golfers the opportunity to get involved in golf and access courses and driving ranges at discounted fees. Actually playing golf is just a small part of these clubs' activities, however. To be eligible for participation, juniors must achieve certification, which encompasses golf rules, etiquette, ability and life skills/education.

To learn more about any of the SCGA's junior golf clubs, please visit scga.org.

PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the competitions available through the junior golf clubs mentioned, the SCGA has several championships open to juniors who maintain a Handicap Index. The 2011 SCGA Parent/Junior Championship will take place on July 18 at Rolling Hills Country Club. This event is open to related partners (e.g., parent/child, grandparent/grandchild, uncle/nephew) who are both members of the SCGA. The deadline to enter is June 29. There are many opportunities for juniors to get involved in this great game we all love.