

THE BDGA JUNIOR PROGRAM

The BDGA is committed to the fact that junior golfers, both male and female, are essential to the growth and perpetuation of the game at our district clubs. We make every attempt to encourage young people to make golf an important part of their lives. Since 1976, the BDGA has sponsored one of the finest junior golf programs in the country. A popular Stroke Play Championship and a Match Play Championship are conducted annually for juniors and sub-juniors and are open to boys and girls. Teams from many clubs in the BDGA play in "Interclub" junior league (made up of teams from area clubs and courses) in a round-robin format with the champion teams in each division as well as the individual league medalists competing in a season-ending stroke play overall championship. We are especially proud of the fact that the BDGA and each individual participating course/club keeps Interclub matches FREE for juniors to participate.

Tournament and competition results allow the best Juniors and Sub-juniors to compete for spots on the Williamson Cup team and on teams for Interdistrict events between Buffalo, Syracuse and Rochester, as well as any other possible state or national events deemed appropriate and approved by the Board of Directors.

Junior golf is a major part of what the BDGA does. Giving young people the opportunity to play competitive golf is extremely important to character building. They learn about honesty and integrity, a strong work-ethic, self-discipline and self-awareness. Golf is a game where friendships are made, winning is done with a humble tone, and losing occurs with respectfulness to the winners and the game itself. Golf is truly a game for a lifetime.

The Scholarship Program

The BDGA established a Junior Scholarship program in 1976 that has provided college financial assistance to over 250 young people, male and female, from our member clubs. Students who participate in the Junior Golf Program of the BDGA, maintain an 85% average in high school, and are in the upper one-third of their graduating class are eligible to apply for a scholarship. The program is funded from club dues, tournament entry fees, sponsorships and the Junior Golf/Scholarship tournament each year. Applications are available on the website.

The Interclub Program

The BDGA Interclub Program is a program for junior and sub-junior golfers. Junior golfers are ages 15 – 18 at the time of the event, and sub-junior golfers are ages 14 and under at the time of the event. It is very similar to a high school league with courses enter teams instead of schools. Divisions of 6 - 10 teams are set up, and all the teams in the division will play once a week at a host course from the division. Junior golfers get to play in a competitive but friendly situation, and learn what playing competitive golf is all about. Etiquette, rules, sportsmanship, honesty, and friendly competition are the characteristics we want to teach the kids and are the backbone of the Interclub Program. Additionally, new friends can be made, healthy habits can be formed, and skills can be developed.

An Interclub team consists of 4 junior boys and/or girls, and 4 sub-junior boys and/or girls.

Club/course teams will be split into 3 divisions (north, central, south) consisting of 7 to 10 clubs. Selection of teams by each course is up to that individual course. As many courses have a junior program, selection of the Interclub team is normally worked into the program in some way. Coaches/program supervisors could have a mini tournament or playoff to determine the team. Sometimes rotating the players so everyone gets a chance to play is another way. Or if there are enough players that are “solid”, having a 2nd or even 3rd team would be suggested. Courses are on their own to choose who plays.

The head professional, assistant professional, general manager, or director of golf is ultimately in charge of the interclub team at each club. However, it is suggested that a coach/supervisor or several of them become involved in the program. It might be beneficial to reach out to the local high school coach to ask him or her to become involved in the program. Many coaches are willing to volunteer their time to work with kids. But whoever becomes involved in coaching or supervising the Interclub team (and junior golf in general) must be reliable, a strong communicator, and willing to spend time with the young golfers.

Interclub Match Format

Juniors will be playing individual stroke play, 18 holes. Sub-juniors will be playing 9 hole individual stroke play. Coaches may implement a double par rule for sub-juniors (the most they can take on a hole is double par). Coaches with sub-juniors that are beginners or have limited skills at this stage of the game are asked to use their discretion and do what is best for these players.

Scoring will be as follows:

Team Points – 10 points will be given to the winning team, 9 to second and so on down the line. 3 of 4 scores will count. Any team with 2 or less golfers will receive 0 points for that match.

Individual Points – 200 points will be given to first place, 180 to second, 170 third, 165 for fourth and so on down the line in 5 point intervals.

At the end of the Interclub season, the Interclub Championship will be set up in which the winning teams from each division, plus the top individuals (the number TBD, probably 5 or near 5) from each division will be invited (all based on points). All participants are eligible to win the individual title.

Junior Golf and Interclub - Player Expectations and Responsibility:

All participants are expected to know and play by the Rules of Golf, conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times, respect the golf course, grounds, and the rights of other players, and completely fulfill their playing obligations. Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may subject the player to immediate disqualification and possible suspension from future BDGA events. The Event Rules Committee will make all decisions regarding any violations of this Code.

Players must be sure they are of appropriate age on the first day of the event - Juniors (ages 15 – 18), Sub-juniors (14 years old and under).

Proper golf attire will be worn at all times by players and caddies to include collared shirt (tucked in), spike-less footwear, and long pants or pocketed proper length shorts. Caps, if worn, must be peak-forward. NO DENIM, NO TEE SHIRTS.

Players must be capable of carrying their own bag, completing 18 holes in 4 hours 15 minutes and scoring 120 or below. Any special situations, please contact the BDGA.

Players must conduct themselves properly. Foul language, equipment throwing or slamming, cheating, improper etiquette, or any poor behavior in general will be grounds for immediate disqualification (and removal from the course if possible).

Players must take care of the course by replacing divots, fixing ball marks, raking bunkers, picking up trash (not only what they did, but others as well) or any other means of keeping the course better than it was before they were there.

Players must demonstrate proper golf etiquette, such as marking the ball on the green, tending the flag, pace of play (ready golf), not walking in the line of putt, and so forth. Proper etiquette is vital to having a “friendly” competitive match, which is what our goal is.

Maintaining good pace of play. If groups fall behind, helping them catch up to the group in front of them.

Players are responsible for the score of the player whose card is being kept. A player is responsible for that person’s score on each hole. A player should NEVER ask “what did you get?”. It should always be stated as the score you think the person has, such as “you had a 4, correct?”. If there is a discrepancy, talk about it right away and fix it before the next hole (move away from the green). Be sure all scores on every hole are correct before you sign the card.

All cell phones or other electrical devices must be off. Electronic yardage devices are allowed.

Players must mark their golf ball with a distinguishing mark. Any unmarked ball that is hit into an area where the ball cannot be seen coming to rest will be declared lost, as you have no way to know it is your ball. You must take a stroke and distance penalty.