

## **COLORADO-WYOMING DISTRICT OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF PROGRAM**

The Optimist International Junior Golf Championships (commonly referred to as THE OPTIMIST) is one of Optimist International's major youth programs for boys and girls ages 10 – 18 and is one of the largest and best-known junior golf events in the world. More than 3,000 boys and girls across the United States, Canada, Mexico, and several dozen other foreign countries compete in official Optimist qualifying tournaments. The best of these junior golfers, along with additional international junior golfers from around the globe, advance to THE OPTIMIST.

Each year, THE OPTIMIST is held at Trump National Doral Resort - Miami FL and fields over 600 of the world's best junior golfers from more than 28 countries around the globe. In addition to top-level tournament golf, junior golfers have the opportunity to make new friends and to have a great deal of fun. What makes THE OPTIMIST unique from other tournaments, junior golfers and their guests are housed, play golf, enjoy group meals, special events, entertainment, and fun all at a world-class resort. College coaches come from all over the U.S. to scout some of the best junior players in the world.

Past age group winners at THE OPTIMIST (and its predecessor, the Optimist Junior World Golf Championships) include Denver's own Mark Hubbard, Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Ernie Els, Davis Love III, Lorena Ochoa, Beth Bauer, Nancy Lopez, Brittany Lincicome, Lexi Thompson, Brooke Henderson, and Jason Day, among dozens of prominent PGA and LPGA golfers.

Other Denver area golfers that have played in THE OPTIMIST include PGA and LPGA stars Wyndham Clark and Jennifer Kupcho.

The Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program is recognized as the best Junior Golf Program in all of Optimist International and serves about 400 junior golfers each year. The best of these golfers will qualify for THE 2024 OPTIMIST.

Dates for the 2024 District qualifying tournaments are Thursday, May 30, at South Suburban Golf Course in Centennial (Girls ages 10 – 12, 13 – 14, and 15 – 18); Thursday, June 13, at Overland Golf Course in Denver (Boys ages 10 – 11, 12 – 13, and 14 – 15); and Monday, June 17 at Patty Jewett Golf Course in Colorado Springs (Boys ages 16 – 18).

The 2023 District qualifying tournaments were held Friday, June 9, at Flatirons Golf Course in Boulder (Boys ages 10 – 11, 12 – 13, and 14 – 15); Thursday, June 15, at Meadow Hills Golf Course in Aurora (Girls ages 10 – 12, 13 – 14, and 15 – 18); and Monday, June 19 at Flatirons Golf Course in Boulder (Boys ages 16 – 18). Almost 300 golfers teed off in those three events, competing for 73 spots at THE 2023 OPTIMIST. Dozens of local Optimists and their friends volunteered at the three events, acting as forecaddies (ball spotters) and marshals, maintaining pace of play and ensuring that the junior golf competitors played in professionally run District qualifiers.

In October 2023, we held the 8th Annual 36-hole Optimist Junior Golf Tour event at Green Valley Ranch Golf Club in Northeast Denver. This was a new event for us starting in 2016 and, because of its success, has become an annual event, welcoming golfers from around the

country and from several foreign countries. A total of 60 golfers teed off, competing for an additional 18 spots at THE 2024 OPTIMIST. Again, dozens of local Optimists and their friends volunteered to ensure a professionally run tournament.

The Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program is totally self-funded. We sent 55 junior golfers to THE 2023 OPTIMIST and raised over \$ 45,000 for that purpose. We were able to give \$ 670 to each of the seven age group winners and \$ 500 to the 48 other qualifiers from the 2023 District qualifying events.

If we are to send 59 junior golfers to THE 2024 OPTIMIST, we need to raise another \$ 45,000.

As part of our fund-raising activities in 2024, we will hold an adult scramble fundraising tournament and silent auction on Wednesday, May 22, at Meadow Hills Golf Course in Aurora.

We will also solicit title, hole, banner, and player sponsors for the qualifying tournaments at Flatirons and Meadow Hills from many Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Clubs, individual Optimists and their friends and businesses.

In addition, we solicit cash and in-kind donations from local golf courses, parents of our junior golfers, and the general public.

The Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program website is <https://sites.google.com/site/cowyoptimistgolf/>.

Please continue to help support the Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program to "Bring Out the Best in Kids".

For further information, please contact:

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