

# Nat'l Assn. of Junior Golfers ushering in 'Junior Golf Decade'

It's cool — and big business is taking note. Junior golf is striking courses around the globe, crossing socio-economic factors and bringing the sport into neighborhoods worldwide. More than offering youths new alternatives for their free-time, the sport ranks high in the "coolness" factor.

The trend-setting youth market is speaking and corporations are listening to the consumer group which is known to spend \$100 billion annually.

"What's happening right now is for real," said Steve Jubb, director of the PGA Foundation. "It is changing the game of golf before our eyes and its changing

golf for the better. But as an industry, we must face the challenges that are brought with the wave. Our challenge is to provide opportunities for everyone, everywhere to enjoy this great sport."

Whether considered the "Tiger Effect" or an idea that has met its time, the coming decade

is being termed the "Junior Golf Decade." Throughout 1997, more than 2.7 million U.S. boys and girls, ages 5-18, participated in the sport.

Corporations around the country have begun to tap into a market that plays a major role in family buying decisions, with most purchases based on brand

name insistence by these kids. Sponsors know that positive buying experiences in youth translate into adult brand loyalty.

Junior golf projects are receiving support from some of the sport's big names such as the USGA, the PGA and LPGA. A group call the National Association of Junior Golfers (NAJG) has been uniting corporations with junior golf programs and organizations across the country, serving as the network for junior golf and corporate marketing efforts. In fact, in 1997, NAJG initiatives reached an estimated 1.5 million youth.

"The National Association of Junior Golfers is able to provide services to youth and junior programs as a direct result of corporate support," said Executive Director Tom Griffin. "The NAJG has an immediate need to develop more corporate relationships that will enable us to carry on our service to children worldwide."

Tournaments such as the Pepsi Little People's Golf Championship are expanding annually and proving to be popular venues for business marketing. Whether supplying products and services or contributing funds to a program, junior golf ventures have become the latest way for corporations to reach a market that until recently had remained relatively untapped.

"The NAJG offers a great opportunity for Sanford to capitalize on our flagship's brand 'Sharpie' marker while supporting and helping young people broaden their experiences through the game of golf," said Robert S. Parker, president of Sanford, on the company's involvement with the NAJG.

NAJG can be contacted at 1-800-441-6254.

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## Robin Hood

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streams and bridges. The highlight will be an abandoned gravel pit where two golf greens converge, separated by a 50-foot waterfall and pristine lake.

Construction features include a five-lake circulation, with beautiful streams serving as overflows. One pump circulates water from the lower lake to the waterfall and the rest is done by gravity.

The South Course and Robin Hood Course are in the design stage. The length of the North Course is over 7,200 yards, and the South Course will be more than 7,100 yards from tip to tip.

The project began to take shape last May when Borbonus hired Rob Huff, a former PGA European Tour professional from the OB Sports operation of Angel Park Golf Course in Las Vegas. The design was created by Cloverdale Nursery and Dan Whiteside and Russ Dillon.