

## Parents' Support Needed in Junior Golf Program

Keeping parents informed of what is going on insures the kind of support and encouragement needed to put over a Junior golf program, says Grant Bennett, pro-supt. of the Florence (S. C.) CC.

"I'm strong for good parent relations," Bennett says. "When I started my Junior program I found that if you try to sell a kid's father and mother on the idea that golf is not only healthy for their youngsters, but teaches him self control and sportsmanship, you've got a real talking point. When I want to put over something special in my Junior program, I put more pressure on one or both of the parents than on the child because after you've got the adults properly enthused, their enthusiasm is transmitted to the child. It makes the job easier."

Bennett, who held offices in both the Carolinas PGA and GCSA, points out that the real secret of running a Junior program is being able to detect when a group of youngsters have become restless and distracted and would rather play Cowboys and Indians than continue swinging at golf balls. He has had them all the way from two to 18 years of age in his Junior setup and has concluded that any pro who can get 10 solid teaching minutes out of 30 has conducted a successful lesson. Another important thing, Bennett says, is for the pro to try to understand the complexes and restraints common among children and then learn how to cope with them.

Saturday mornings are set aside for Bennett's Junior clinics. Children, 11 and under, make up one group and the older ones, a second. Practice emphasis for the younger ones is placed on short iron play; the older kids besides getting instruction in hitting short shots are shown how to handle long irons and woods. When rain intervenes the kids are taken inside to brush up on rules and etiquette which Bennett graphically outlines through the use of imaginary situations and rounds.

For the past several years, Bennett has played a leading role in promoting and staging Junior tournaments in South Carolina. Several of them have been held in Florence. They are divided into three groups with 64 12 to 18-year olds competing for the major title; 16 sub-juniors (9 to 11 years of age) playing for the championship in that class; and eight youngsters (8-years old and younger) vying for pee wee honors.

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