



PGA

Kentucky Section

2017 KPGA YOUTH PLAYER DEVELOPMENT AWARD NOMINATION

Name of Nominee: Colby Wollitz
Facility Name: Persimmon Ridge Golf Club
Facility Address: 72 Persimmon Ridge Drive Louisville, KY 40245
Facility Phone Number: 502-241-0456
Nominee E-mail Address: cwollitz@pga.com

1. Please briefly describe the nominee's contributions to youth golf programs in the Section and on a National level including service as a chairperson or a member of the Junior Golf Committee/Youth Player Development Committee.

Colby contributes to youth golf programs on the sectional level as the chairman of the Player Development Committee and as a constant participant in small group sessions and section sponsored workshops. Colby speaks with the Player Development Coordinator regularly to share ideas about what is working with junior golf at Persimmon and around the state. His eagerness to continue learning and willingness to share new ideas with fellow PGA Professionals is encouraging. He also assisted in creating the Golf in Schools program manual with Kim Shafer.

2. Please briefly describe the nominee's involvement in the promotion and development of youth golf at the club level and within the community.
At Persimmon Ridge, Colby is the leader in every aspect of junior golf. In 2014, the junior golf program at Persimmon consisted of a little under 20 juniors. In 2015, over 150 juniors came through the doors for the first time. And in 2016 this number rose to over 300 junior golfers. The main reason: Colby offers fun and educational programs for junior golfers of all ages and abilities. Colby's programs in 2016 consisted of:

Drive, Chip, and Putt- To coincide with the national program, Colby started a DCP Training series at Persimmon Ridge to help prepare his juniors for their competition. In its second year, the program reached over 20 juniors. 8 juniors made it through the local qualifying stage....one 7 year old missed Augusta National by only 1 point! (But he wasn't too upset....he did get to play Oakmont :))

PGA Junior League Golf- In its second season at Persimmon Ridge, PGA JLG boasted 56 participants. Colby was able to create 3 travel teams and 1 practice team out of the juniors that participated. The practice team consisted of 8-10 juniors that were new to the game. They would practice with the travel teams weekly and competed in their own matches at the end of the season. The season kicked off with a very successful “Fun Night” which included SNAG Baseball, BirdieBall Golf (with the inflatables of course!) It concluded with much of the same: inflatables, SNAG Baseball, and an awards banquet.

Junior Camps- In 2016 Colby directed the following Junior Camps:

PGA Junior Golf Camps- 7 camps conducted reaching 60 juniors. Camps ran Monday-Friday and juniors had the choice to participate in either a half day or full day camp.

Weekly Junior Camps- Colby conducts weekly one-day junior camps year round. These camps totaled over 200 students taught.

St. Patrick Middle School Team- In 2016, Colby and The Golf Academy took over the Middle School team at St. Patrick School. The team consisted of 150 juniors that would meet twice a week during the season. Colby coordinated with 6-8 other coaches working on athletic development, short game skills, on course learning, full swing, and of course fun games weekly.

HS Prep- A developmental group for 6-8th grade students aspiring to compete at the High School level and beyond. Colby began this class in the summer of 2015 and it quickly grew. The group now practices weekly during the 6 month “tournament” season. This program focus’ on developing a juniors athleticism, practice habits, course management skills, and golf specific training.

The Littlest Golfer- The Littlest golfer consisted of a group of golfers ages 3-5. The program utilized the book “Let’s Play Golf” by Nicole Weller and The Littlest Golfer sets were provided to those that did not have their own clubs. Colby is a certified “Little Golf Train Conductor” which specialized in working with kids in this age range.

Colby is also very involved with you golfer development in the community. Last Winter/Spring, Colby visited 6 different elementary schools with his Golf in Schools Program. He visited each school for 1-2 weeks with the attempt of seeing every student (K-6th grade) at least once. Since its inception Colby has reached over 3,000 kids.

Last winter, Colby began visiting a local juvenile detention center with SNAG equipment in the winter of 2016. The goal is to provide an incentive for the kids to set goals and stay focused on getting their work done. Colby printed out a goals sheet for each participant. In order to get to do golf the next week, they had to come up with a list of goals as well as steps to achieve them. They also needed to get all of their work done and be on good behavior. 100% of the juniors still at the facility the following weeks succeeded in both of these areas.

At the Louisville Golf Expo, Colby spoke on the main stage twice, both times focusing on the topic of youth golf and how to develop junior golfers.

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's image and leadership in the area of youth golf and the nominee's overall integrity.

To say that Colby was perceived as a good leader and mentor to youth golfers would be an understatement. Colby not only takes on the role of a youth golf instructor, but also sees himself as a coach, mentor, and friend to every student that comes through his programs. He takes the time during camps to sit down with every junior on an individual basis and speak to them about their goals. Together they come up with a course of action to help them achieve those goals, or sometimes just a plan to come up with some goals.

Perhaps the mission statement of The Golf Academy @ Persimmon Ridge sums up Colby's role best:

The Golf Academy has been created to provide our students with all of the resources needed to help them become the best golfers and individuals possible. Regardless of the students' ability level, The Golf Academy provides a roadmap to success. We aim to provide fun, safe, and educational programs for golfers of all ages and abilities. We provide the student with year round mental coaching, tournament scheduling, fitness, competitive tournaments, lesson plans and state of the art technology to help the student achieve all their goals.

To get the commitment of parents and juniors both takes a great deal of integrity. Parents trust that Colby is going to give their child a fun, educational experience that will help them grow as golfers and people. Juniors trust that Colby is going to be there to support them in both the highs and lows of golf and life.

4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow PGA Professionals and promotes the game of golf.

Colby will often take the time to encourage fellow PGA Professionals to take part in PGA sponsored junior programs as well as continued education. During these conversations and through the avenue of group workshops, Colby has freely shared his ideas and programs with fellow professionals. Colby has also

welcomed fellow PGA Professionals to shadow his Golf in Schools Program so that they can venture out on their own and help promote the game in schools around their facilities.

The curriculum that Colby and The Golf Academy @ Persimmon Ridge have created for junior golfers is unlike anything around. To be willing to take the lead to do something incredibly positive for the young people of our region is nothing short of inspirational.

5. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received

Award	Year Received	Section
Youth Player Development	2016	Kentucky