



# 71<sup>st</sup> U.S. Girls' Junior Championship

## Additional Information about SentryWorld & Story Suggestions

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For more information about these story suggestions, or to be connected to people for interview, contact Carolyn Schamberger ([carolyn.schamberger@sentry.com](mailto:carolyn.schamberger@sentry.com), 715-346-7104) or Rebecca Eckhart ([rebecca@corecreative.com](mailto:rebecca@corecreative.com), 312-720-7666).

### Preparing the Course

Spread out over 200 acres, SentryWorld's 18-hole course offers rolling green fairways, pristine blue waters, impeccable white sands and a one-of-a-kind course designed by Robert Trent Jones, Jr., that encourages creativity and rewards resourcefulness for players of all ages and skill levels.

Perhaps the most memorable sight is the 16<sup>th</sup> hole, more well known as the Flower Hole. Approximately 30,000 flowers (mostly patagonias and impatiens) surround the green. For the Championship, a massive floral display of the USGA logo will be created. But players need not be too taken with its beauty, if a ball lands in the flower bed it will result in a [penalty](#).

Getting the course ready for a USGA Championship takes thousands of hours of preparation to get every detail just right. Visit the [USGA media site](#) for an infographic outlining all that goes into making SentryWorld ready for the limelight.

### Training the Caddies

For the Championship, SentryWorld will bring in 85 caddies from the area – including some from other nearby courses, it's a true community effort. Leading the charge is Caddie Committee Chair, John Laehan, a Wausau native and caddie at Augusta National.

Caddie experience for tournaments of this nature can vary, and sometimes fresh recruits are needed. These are often area golfers who are well versed in the game, its etiquette and rules. For those golfers, two special training sessions will be held, a two-hour crash course in all they'll need to know for the tournament. The sessions will consist of a classroom component where the manual, caddie procedure, etiquette, and more will be discussed. Then, training moves to the golf course to review caddie rules and allow participants to get familiar with the layout of the course.

Media are invited to attend a Caddie Training Session to learn first-hand about this unique position that is so integral to the Championship. Sessions will be held on the afternoon of July 14, and the early evening of July 17.



## Volunteers from Near and Far

The Championship is a community affair. It couldn't be hosted without thousands of volunteer hours so graciously provided by those who are in the Stevens Point area, and even some from states much farther away.

When the six-day tournament is complete, 300 volunteers will have worked more than 1.7 millions hours! There are eight different volunteer duties: Walking Scorer, Standard Bearer, On-Course Status Boards, Registration, Practice Range Set-up, Forecaddies, Marshals and Scorecard Runners.

Each volunteer, whether young or old, or coming from near or far, has their own story. Here's some with interesting stories to share:

- **Julia Engebretson (Wausau, Wis.):** A 14-year-old from nearby Wausau, Julia has been actively involved in SentryWorld's Girl's Golf Program, which is sponsored by the LGPA/USGA, for the last three years. The program, for girls ages 6 – 17, gives girls the opportunity to learn the game from a female mentor, without the disruption of boys. Julia will be a walking scorer at the Championship and is very much looking forward to meeting the players.
- **Jim Larsen (Nampa, Idaho):** This will be Jim's 10<sup>th</sup> year working as a caddy for the Girls' Junior Championship. He started 10 years ago when the event was in his hometown of Boise, Idaho. He enjoys getting to meet and advise the players – always arriving the day before the tournament starts to walk the course and take notes.
- **Nancy Layman (Phoenix):** Nancy picked up golf 12 years ago when she lived in California, and fell in love with the game. Since then, she has made friends from around the globe and doesn't take a vacation if golf isn't involved. Nancy and her friend Laura (see below) will volunteer for six days of the Championship. As a big supporter of girl's golf (she was once on the board of the local chapter of Executive Women's Golf Association), she does anything she can to help advance the sport.
- **Laura Vieth (Los Gatos, Calif.):** Laura got into golf in the late 90s thanks to her husband who is an avid golfer. After volunteering at last year's Girls' Juniors Championship in Poppy Hills, Calif., with Nancy (see above), they were hooked. She likes the youth tournaments because it's a chance to really watch the game and not be lost in a crowd. Her favorite volunteer role is working registration, as it allows her to meet the families and learn their stories.
- **Greg Wanner (Sun Prairie, Wis.):** Greg has volunteered at every USGA Championship event held in Wisconsin for the last 20 years. While he has worked a variety of roles, it's his role as a walking scorer that has changed the most – everything is now done electronically on a tablet instead of on paper.

To learn more about any of the volunteers above, visit the [USGA Media Center](#). Volunteers are also available for interview upon request.



## Empowering the Next Generation of Female Golfers



The game of golf is an empowering sport, with incredible physical and mental benefits. SentryWorld is one of only eight courses in the state, and the only one in central Wisconsin, to offer the LPGA/USGA [Girl's Golf Program](#). The program strives to help prepare girls, ages 6 – 17, for a lifetime of enjoyment of the game while also inspiring them to feel confident, build positive self-esteem and live active and healthy lives.

One of this year's volunteers at the Championship is 14-year-old Julia Engebretson, who has participated in the program for the last three years. What started out as a hobby has become a passion and Julia is especially looking forward to meeting some of the players at the Championship. She will be a walking scorer, which she knows will take a lot of focus, but her time on the course has prepared her well.

"Golf is one of those things you don't need anything else to do," Julia said. "Whenever I go on the course, it's a way to set my mind free."

The Girls Golf Program is run by SentryWorld LPGA Golf Professional and Championship chair, Katie Kreuser.

"I strive to keep classes small, no more than six students per class, to give each girl the opportunity to learn and focus," said Kreuser. "It's amazing to see the girls embrace the sport and make friends along the way."

Both Katie Kreuser and Julia Engebretson are available for interview.

## Impact of the Tournament on the Greater Stevens Point Area

The USGA is the premier organization for golf in the world, and SentryWorld is very proud to host the 71<sup>st</sup> U.S. Girls' Junior Championship. The week-long event is expected to bring close to one million dollars to the area – with nearly 200 players (and their families), coaches and USGA officials set to descend on the city. This means good things for the greater Stevens Point area, as it brings additional patronage to area businesses.

It also allows area businesses to share all that's great about Stevens Point, creating a groundswell of opportunities to shape perceptions and generate return travel and tourism. That's why area businesses help provide goods and services the week of the tournament sure to leave a positive impression on visitors. From gift baskets featuring unique local products to special offers, businesses are rising to the occasion to make the entire tournament experience a success.

Interviews are available with the following:

- Tom Coleman, Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. Tom can provide additional information about baseline summer tourism impact on the area, as well as details about unique offers being provided by area businesses.
- Katie Kreuser, SentryWorld. Katie can provide additional information about SentryWorld's preparations for the event.
- Mike Wiza, mayor of Stevens Point. Mayor Wiza can comment on what hosting a Championship of this magnitude means to the area.

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