USGA Media Center

While the golf world was locked in on the final round of the 89th Masters Tournament, the next generation of major champions was making their mark at Champions Golf Club in Houston, Texas. There, the U.S. National Junior Team hosted Team Canada – NextGen in a World Amateur Golf Ranking®-sanctioned match, with the USA squad coming out on top, 16-8.

"We loved getting to compete while keeping it friendly and getting to know some golfers we don't normally get to play against," said Tiffany Joh, two-time USGA champion and assistant coach of the USA team. ""The kids can learn a lot from a weekend like this. Just because it's a competition doesn't mean it's not an opportunity to build relationships. I met some of my best friends, to this day, in match play situations."

The match, featuring twelve juniors from each country, spanned two days of competition, featuring mixed (boys and girls) four-ball and foursomes on Saturday, followed by singles matches on Sunday. A key objective of the U.S. National Development Program is to prepare America's top junior golfers for success at the highest levels of the game—and competing in Ryder Cup- and Solheim Cup-style events is an essential part of that journey.

Trevor Gutschewski, 17, of Omaha, Neb., Jude Lee, 17, of Walnut, Calif., and Ryleigh Knaub, 18, of DeBary, Fla., each earned three points for Team USA. Knaub, who will begin her collegiate golf career at LSU this fall, also represented the U.S. in last summer's team match against Australia. Gutschewski and Lee are both in their first year as members of the National Junior Team.

"The weekend was great," said Lee. "Our team chemistry was awesome, and I enjoyed every moment. I learned the importance of teamwork, especially in an individual sport like golf. Playing in these team events is a new experience and it shifts your perspective, and you realize how proud you are of your own country and how proud you are of your teammates."

The sentiment from the opposing team was quite similar.

"It was fun meeting new people and playing a match against the USA," said Alex Zhang, 16, of Richmond, B.C. "Champions is a really nice course, so we were really lucky to be able to play out here."

The juniors took on a golf course steeped in history, with Champions' Cypress Course most recently hosting the 2020 U.S. Women's Open, won by A Lim Kim of Korea. The 36-hole facility was created in 1957 by major champions Jack Burke Jr. and Jimmy Demaret and has been the host site of five USGA championships.

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