

Reimagining Junior Golf at Stonebridge Country Club

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Junior golf programs are a staple of summer at most clubs. With kids out of school, parents look for ways to keep them active and engaged, and golf often makes the list. Traditionally, these programs follow a familiar format: a handful of one-hour coaching sessions spread over several weeks, with a couple of short rounds on the course. While they fill an hour in the day, they rarely provide enough structure or excitement to inspire long-term interest in the game.

At Stonebridge Country Club, we set out to change that. We wanted a junior program that not only offered a safe and fun environment, but also gave kids clear goals, milestones, and a sense of real progress. That's why we partnered with **Operation36**.

Operation36 is a coaching platform designed to guide players of all skill levels through measurable growth. Every student begins by playing a 9-hole round from just 25 yards from the green. Their first challenge: shoot a score of 36 or better. Once achieved, they move back to the next teeing area, gradually working toward playing the course from full length. This framework—clear targets and visible progress—is the backbone of the program.

Our **Operation36 Junior Academy** runs for 10 weeks, with two weekly coaching sessions and bi-weekly 9-hole "matches." Each session combines skill stations with "gamified" drills that keep learning fun while encouraging teamwork and camaraderie.

The most exciting addition this year was our **Op36 SWAG Locker**—our version of a prize wall, filled with toys, gift cards, candy, and golf gear. Students earn "SWAG Tokens" for achieving milestones, winning drills, showing great teamwork, helping coaches, or even practicing outside of class. Tokens aren't handed out freely; the element of surprise keeps kids motivated and engaged. The Locker, displayed prominently at the entrance to our golf shop, quickly became a talking point throughout the club.

The results have been remarkable. Parents love seeing their kids energized and committed to golf, and participation in our junior program has grown by more than 200% since we introduced Operation36 and the SWAG Locker in 2019.