



Participants and instructors in the Vic Johnson Junior Golf Clinic.

File Photo



Among the participants in Sam Puryear's group was Chris Roane (first on right).

File Photo

Clinic

from page B1

four-week program. Of that total, there were 15 girls, in grades three through nine.

"This was our best year for attracting and keeping girls in the program," Johnson said. "They came in, tried it out and stuck with it."

Sticking to a task is one of the goals of the program, according to

Johnson. Exposure to golf and other areas is another.

"This gives them a chance to learn about golf," Johnson said. "We're not teaching them golf so that they can become a pro. We want them to receive exposure, and once they learn the game they might want to go further and play on their own."

Many of the kids who have come through the program have done just that. Some have gone on to try out for their high school

teams. Others have taken it a step further.

Johnson and his staff try to make the most of their time with the kids. They receive two hours of instruction on both Tuesday and Wednesday. The sessions get under way at 10 a.m. and last until noon.

"That's about as long as you can keep kids involved," Johnson said. "As hot as it has been this summer, that's taken a lot for them to make it through the program."

The staff (Sam Puryear, Jim Conrad, Robert Bethea, Donald Evans and Edward Frazier) has been together four years now and that too has been a key, according to Johnson.

"They really help out a lot," Johnson said. "They've gone through the process and they understand what has to be done."

At the conclusion of this year's camp Johnson had six golfers who were ready to play on regular courses. Arrangements

have been made for each of them to play at Winston Lake Golf Course two days per week. There are also several young players in the group who Johnson said he believes will be outstanding players when they get older. One of them is Chris Roane, who will be a sixth-grader at Hanes Middle School when school starts next month.

The kids who participate in the program are from four areas targeted by Johnson. This year the

program consisted of 15-20 kids from the Sims Center in Happy Hill, Reynolds Park Recreation Center, The Winston Lake Family YMCA and Emmanuel Baptist Church.

"We have gotten good cooperation from the centers," Johnson said. "The directors have done an excellent job of working with the kids in different programs. They really have a lot of structured programs in which the kids can participate."

Golf

from page B1

Both have had a busy summer schedule. Each enjoys participating in other sports such as basketball, football and volleyball as well as playing musical instruments. Joseph plays the clarinet and Torrence plays the saxophone. In addition to working with the golf program, they attended band camp this summer at UNC-Greensboro. Torrence also participated in a science camp on the Wake For-



Photo by Inas Sivad
Joseph Martin follows through on his swing during a practice session.

est campus this summer.

Although they've been playing golf only a little more than a year, both say they plan on pursuing it in high school and college. Joseph said he plans on trying out for the team at North Forsyth.

Gene Williams, one of the HAWS instructors, said he believes the two could have careers in golf if they continue working hard at it and progressing.

"Right now they're doing really good," Williams said.

"You would really be surprised at how well these kids and the other kids in the program have taken to golf. All they really need is the proper exposure and training."

That combination is the key to success, according to Mohammed Herb, who runs the program.

"We have a lot of kids with the talent but they haven't had a chance to get the instruction and training," he said. "That's why we are so adamant about providing it."

JPress Box

from page B1

said. The staff has split the participants into four groups.

"The first level consists of the ones who don't know anything and are starting from scratch," he said. "In level two we teach the basics. It's all fundamentals. In level three we take the ones who show potential and put them on the HAWS

golf team. They go out and play on golf courses (Grandview on Tuesday and Winston Lake on Thursday). The ones in level four know the rules, the etiquette of the game and are ready to play by themselves. We let them go out to tournaments and urge them to play for their school teams."

The level three and four participants make up the team that plays against other Housing Authority programs. This year

they will travel to Rock Hill, S.C., and Durham for tournaments. Also for the first time the program will host a USGA-sanctioned tournament to raise money for its operation.

"The instructors and myself are really looking forward to the challenge of putting on a tournament," Herb said. "There are a lot of people who want to help junior golf for minority kids but they don't know how. This is one way they can by

supporting the tournament."

Another of the keys to the program has been the relationship with the local housing authority. Bill McLean and Wesley Chapman have been instrumental in keeping the funding along with interested kids coming to the program each year. "There are quite a few people working with the Housing Authority who have been instrumental in making this possible," Herb said.

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