Norwood Park Golf Centre: Coaching for Women & Juniors

At a Glance …
★ Norwood Park enjoys a strong, but predominantly male membership.
★ To address the gender imbalance, initiatives have been introduced to attract women and girls.
★ Pink Ladies offers coaching, 9 holes of golf and a hot drink to ladies.
★ Girls into Golf is supported by England Golf. Once a girl has attended three low-priced lessons she is given a free Junior Girls Membership of the Par 3 course.
★ The number of lady members has increased by a third since Pink Ladies was introduced.
★ In early 2015, the Centre had 30 Junior Girl members.
★ As a spin-off benefit, both initiatives have brought extra revenue to the clubhouse.

The Issue:
Across all age groups, Norwood Park’s members are predominantly male. The General Manager identified Women and Girls’ golf as an area of potential growth for the Centre. In order to address this and achieve a more balanced male/female membership, the Centre needed to implement initiatives that would attract both junior girls and adult ladies to golf.

The Solution:
Norwood Park has implemented two successful initiatives for attracting females to the game and to the Centre:
★ For adults, Pink Ladies coaching sessions are available. For £10 per person, each session offers coaching and 9 holes of golf on the Par 3 course. Sessions are held every Friday and Saturday morning. Included in the price are a charitable donation and a hot drink, which helps the ladies to enjoy the social aspects of club life.
★ The Centre also offers coaching lessons for girls, in its Girls into Golf initiative, supported by England Golf. Under this programme, the girls are charged just £4 per session, with sessions held between 5pm and 6pm on Monday afternoons. Once the junior girls have attended three sessions, they are awarded with a free Junior Girls Membership of the Par 3 course.

The Challenges
Norwood Park has enjoyed a trouble-free implementation of these two initiatives. The Centre does not have any committees and therefore kicking off such initiatives can be speedy and straightforward: decisions are made between Norwood Park’s General Manager, head professional and Golf Development Manager.
The schemes have also proved beneficial for the clubhouse, which has enjoyed extra revenue from both the lady players and parents of the juniors.

"Norwood Park Golf Centre implemented two initiatives for attracting females: one for the ladies and one for the girls. Both have proved very popular."

Impacts:
At the time of writing, Pink Ladies has been running for three years and the number of lady members has grown from 60 in 2012 to 80 in 2015. This represents an admirable 33% increase in membership within this category, which has not only boosted overall numbers of members of the Centre but has largely redressed the gender imbalance. The Club’s current Ladies’ Captain and Vice-Captain both started golf by attending Pink Ladies sessions.

Girls into Golf has also proved a great success. In early 2015, Norwood Park had 30 Junior Girls Members of the Par 3 course as a result of this programme. The Centre is hopeful that many of the girls will continue to take out full Junior Memberships and develop a love of golf that will last a lifetime.

Next Steps:
Both initiatives are ongoing and will continue to run for the foreseeable future.

Tips & Advice:
Norwood Park’s General Manager stresses that for introductory initiatives to work it is essential that the environment is as welcoming and friendly as possible. This encourages new members to play regularly, as well as enjoying the social facilities of the club.

"The environment must be as welcoming and friendly as possible!"
General Manager, Norwood Park Golf Centre

A final word from Norwood Park Golf Centre:
Attracting more girls and women and introducing them to the delights of golf is essential for the future of the game and Norwood Park Golf Centre has two excellent initiatives in place that are successfully achieving this. The General Manager, Paul Thornton, summarises his thoughts: “We feel particularly proud of the results. Females into golf is such a potential growth area and we will continue to expand this sector.”