

# Sarah Pravecek

## 2020 Player Development Award

### Wilderness Ridge Golf Club



Dear Selection Committee,

It is an honor to be nominated for the 2020 Player Development award. With all the challenges this year has brought, I am grateful I still had the opportunity to run all our player development programs. Thank you for taking the time away from your busy schedules to read about my player development journey at Wilderness Ridge Golf Club.

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Sarah Pravecek, PGA

Assistant Golf Professional at Wilderness Ridge Golf Club

## Get Golf Ready

In May, June, and July I hosted a series of Get Golf Ready Classes.

The classes were Monday through Thursday from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. consisting of beginners and individuals getting back into the game. My youngest student was a 22-year-old woman and my oldest was a 74-year-old man. The class participation was 6 people in May, 10 people in June, and 8 people in July.

On the first day, I started out with introductions and taught the fundamentals of putting. The schedule for the rest of the week was learning the basics of chipping, irons, and driving.



A daily email was sent out with instructions on where to meet on the course for that day and what clubs will be required. Since everyone was of age, a beverage cart was set up next to our lesson area. Everyone seemed to enjoy it and had fun with a drink in one hand and a club in the other. At the end of each series, a wrap-up email was sent out with some tips from what they learned throughout the week. Below is a sample of the wrap-up email that was sent for the July session.

**From:** Sarah Pravecek  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 19, 2020 11:59:46 AM  
**To:** Sarah Pravecek <[spravecek@wildernessridgegolf.com](mailto:spravecek@wildernessridgegolf.com)>  
**Cc:** [\[mailto:spravecek@wildernessridgegolf.com\]](#)  
**Subject:** Get Golf Ready Wrap Up

Get Golf Ready Wrap Up.

I want to thank you all for joining our Get Golf Ready class. Jaxon and I enjoyed getting to work with you all and hope you continue this fun game! Below you will find areas of the game we went over:

**Putting: Double D's- Distance and Direction**

Distance is speed, which is the most important in putting. How close can we get our golf ball to the hole. Direction is figuring out if the ball is breaking left or right of the hole. Feet shoulder width apart. Place the ball in the middle of your stance, bend at your waist so your eyes are directly over the golf ball, and then putt using your shoulders. No wrist. Straight back and straight through. However far back you go that is how far through you should be going.

**Chipping/Pitching: Chipping-** low running shot, getting the ball on the ground as quick as possible. Using a 9, 8, or 7 iron (depends how much green you have to work with). Feet close together, place ball inside your back (right) foot, and keep your Y when you swing. It's like a putting stroke. **Pitching-** longer shot that you need to hit higher, you don't have a lot of green to work with. Use your highest lofted club, S or P wedge. Same swing, but place the ball more towards the middle or front of your stance to get the ball in the air.

**Full Swing:** Ball placement for irons will be the middle of your stance and your woods/driver will be placed inside your front (left) foot. Feet a little wider than shoulder width apart, bend at your waist so you have a flat back for good posture, then check to see if you have a fist and thumb from your belt bucket to the butt end of your club. In your swing, your arms and shaft will make a Y, L, Y, L, X. Make sure your chest and hips all finish at your target.

We learned a lot in a few days, so don't feel like you have to get it all at once. Make sure you practice and get out on the course in your free time. Behind the counter in the golf shop we have punch cards for all of you to hit 5 buckets of balls and 5 rounds on the Talon course. Please use them up by August 31, 2020. If any of you ever have questions, do not hesitate to reach out to me or Jaxon!

Thanks for a great class.

Sarah Pravecek, PGA  
Jaxon Clouse



**Sarah Pravecek, PGA**  
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## Spring / Fall Bootcamp

Bootcamp is an hour-long program, Monday through Thursday, that was started last year and created by Mike Schuchart and myself in order to target golfers who are more advanced and a step up from Get Golf Ready. The Spring Bootcamp was



offered in May with two session times, one at 12:00 p.m. and another in the evening at 6:00pm. Our Fall Bootcamp also had the same two sessions times from the spring. Last year we only had a class at 12:00 p.m. but the demand this year was high so we added 6:00 p.m. as well.

Participation of all four session times maxed out at 12 participants due to Covid-19 restrictions.



The camp helps participants get a deeper understanding of their golf game including: chipping, putting, and driving. Each participant received a drink ticket at the beginning of class that could be used for that day only. We wanted

to make it a laid-back atmosphere. Short game drills were set up on the putting and chipping greens at the beginning of camp. Then we transitioned to a full swing station that included club

positions and how the body weight should properly transfer throughout the swing. On Thursday, the final day, we had class on the Talon course to assist the students with a better understanding of course management. Our goal was to make sure they were lining up correctly on their tee shot and had a plan of how to attack each hole when they are out golfing.

## Professional Golf Management (PGM) Seminars

It is a pleasure to be a part of these PGM seminars for the past two years. The seminars are hosted in the spring and fall at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln on East Campus and



Wilderness Ridge Golf Club. On East Campus, the simulator lab is used to work on full swing. Short game and bunker shots were taught at Wilderness Ridge. A total of 36 PGM students took advantage of the free lessons this year for 6 weeks. Many of these PGM students looked up to me as a mentor by asking for advice about career paths they have the opportunity to take and how they can improve their golf game.

A few students have connected with me after these seminars to help with their portfolios, job opportunities, and instructional help. When I went through the associate route, it only took me a year and half to get my membership. I am hoping this inspires these young individuals to get a move on their PGA levels, so they can join all of us as PGA Members.



## Junior Golf Academy

Golf is a sport that can be played all year round, that is why Junior Golf Academy was created. It is a 75-minute, 8 week winter program running from January - March improving junior's golf game from ages 7-12



years old. All classes were held inside our Nebraska Golf Academy, so we had to max out at 16 juniors in our program. The 8 weeks were dedicated to working on short games (chipping and putting) and physical fitness. We created a fun atmosphere that kept the juniors engaged each time they came. During this time, I got PGA Coach certified. I utilized the PGA Coach application to help build chipping noodle towers and added some of their putting drills with the program we already had structured.



## High School Academy



The wintertime is a great opportunity for high school golfers to prepare for their season. The timing of this program was very beneficial for the boys, because High School Academy ends right in time for the start of high school tryouts. From the months of January - March, this 75-

minute, 8 week program was built to help High School golfers better their game in the offseason.

We also allowed 8th graders to join this program in hopes of them wanting to try out for their golf team when they become

Freshmen. There were 14 high schoolers who participated in the program. Four out of the 14 were females and they all made their high school team in the fall. Unfortunately, the boys' season got cancelled due to Covid-19, but there was a good chance the majority of them would have made their team.





# HIGH SCHOOL & JUNIOR GOLF ACADEMY



### COST

\$200 plus tax for 8 weeks

### DATES

January: 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st  
February: 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th

### AGES

Junior: 7 - 13 years old  
High School: 9th - 12th grade

### TIME

Junior: 3:00 - 4:15 p.m.  
High School: 4:30 - 5:45 p.m.

\*all programs are open to boys and girls

#### Jan. 10th: Workout

- Speed Stick Training
- Core Exercises
- Resistance Bands
- Stretching

#### Jan. 17th: Short Game

- Chipping & Pitching
- Proper set up
- Hula Hoop Drill, Landing Spot
- Club Selection

#### Jan. 24th: Workout

- Upper Body Strength
- Battle Rope Training
- Swing Speed Training

#### Jan. 31st: Short Game

- Putting
- Finding Your Perfect Grip and Posture
- String Line and Arc Drill

#### Feb. 7th: Workout

- Cardio Exercises
- Stretching
- Medicine Ball Training

#### Feb. 14th: Short Game

- Up and Down Drills
- High/Low Chipping
- Distance Control Pitching

#### Feb. 21st: Workout

- Lower Body Strength
- Kettle Bell Exercises
- Speed Stick Training

#### Feb. 28th: Short Game

- Tug-a-War Game
- Putting Ladder Drill
- Tornado Drill



MIKE SCHUCHART



SARAH PRAVECEK



CERTIFIED

Email Sarah Pravecek at [spravecek@wildernessridgegolf.com](mailto:spravecek@wildernessridgegolf.com) or call 402.434.5106

# Spring Divot Dog Academy

We had a successful turn out in our Junior Golf Academy with 16 students, and our parents and kids requested that we have another program during the springtime. Since the Junior Academy was in the winter months working on short game, we decided to make the Spring Divot Dog Academy



focused on the full swing. This program is offered for 6 weeks running 75-minutues weekly from



## DIVOT DOGS ACADEMY







COST	DATES	AGES	TIME
\$195 for 6 weeks	<b>March:</b> 25th <b>April:</b> 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th	7-13 years old <small>*all programs are open to boys and girls</small>	5:00 - 6:15 P.M.

**MAR. 25TH:**  
 Fundamentals of Full Swing  
 • Short irons  
 • Grip / Alignment / Stance / Posture  
 • Ball position  
 Fundamentals of Chipping  
 • Proper Set up - B.L.T Method  
 • Landing Zones  
 • Club Selection

**APR. 1ST:**  
 Golf Fitness Exercises  
 • Speed Sticks & Golf Ropes  
 • Medicine Ball  
 • Core exercises  
 Full Swing  
 • Irons  
 • Club Mapping

**APR. 8TH:**  
 How to hit the Tee Shot  
 • Angle of Attack (descending / ascending)  
 • Ball Position  
 Fundamentals of Putting  
 • Distance & Direction (double D's)  
 • Break

**APR. 15TH:**  
 Full Swing  
 • Recap of week 1 - 3  
 Pitching  
 • Difference vs chip shot

**APR. 22ND:**  
 Full Swing  
 • Target Practice  
 Golf Fitness Exercises  
 • Speed Sticks & Golf Ropes  
 • Medicine Ball  
 • Core exercises

**APR. 22ND:**  
 FGolf Drill Challenge



  
**CHRIS THOMSON**

  
**MIKE SCHUCHART**

  
**SARAH PRAVECEK**

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the last week of March to the end of April. Fourteen juniors from our winter Junior Academy program joined us in the spring. At the start of the program, we got a feel of how the juniors swung the club, and each week we advanced their knowledge on how to improve their swing. We added a few short game drills throughout the classes to see how much fundamental skills were retained from the winter Junior Academy program.

## Team Golf - Divot Dog



One of my favorite junior programs of the year is Team Golf. When I was a junior, being a part of a golf team was memorable for me. I wanted to make this team special for these kids, so they would have memories that would last a lifetime. We have four rules when being a Divot Dog: Have fun, Do your

best, Good manners, and Win! Our goal for 2020 was to defend our Team Golf Championship belt, but unfortunately, that opportunity was taken away due to Covid-19 and changing the way Team Golf was run. We had 30 kids earned their spot on the Divot Dog Team. Five kids were on the waitlist, which we did not have room on our team golf, so we added them to our Talon League. Practices were run differently, to ensure we socially distanced ourselves. Each kid started out on an X, placed on the ground, then we split up into smaller groups to work on different aspects of the golf game.

After 45-minutes on the range tee, the players would go play 9-holes. We coached them on the course as they played. It is rewarding to be able to coach these kids and hopefully inspire them to want to pursue a future playing golf beyond their youth.



## Wilderness Ridge Golf Camp

A total of 60 kids ages 6 -14 years old participated in our Junior Camp while our Pee Wee Camp for ages 3 -5 years old had 13 kids participate. This camp is held for 90-minutes each day Monday - Friday. Lancaster county put in restrictions with Covid-19, so we added two new stations to our program to practice social distancing.



With this large group, lots of considerations were in place due to socially distancing before we committed to making our camp run successfully. Camp typically is in May and June but with Covid-19 we had to condense everyone to the month of June only.



Our stations consisted of: Full Swing, Short Putting, Chipping, Pitching, and we added Fitness and Lag Putting. These camps have been a fun way to introduce kids to the game of golf and 78% of the kids end up participating in another one of the junior programs. My favorite part is at the end of camp, some of the kids went around to all the coaches and got our autographs. It is amazing how much these kids look up to us. It reassures me why I love teaching and growing the game.

## Wilderness Ridge Talon League



Every Wednesday from the beginning of June to the last week of July we held our Talon League on our 9-hole executive course. This program was created for the kids who advanced from junior camp and ready to play holes. Three sessions were offered but split up into different age groups. The older kids ages 11-14 played nine holes and our younger group 8-10 years old played four to five holes.

This program is designed to evaluate the juniors progress throughout the summer. We give 45-minute lessons before they go out on the course. There are three evaluations given at the beginning, middle, and end. Kids were evaluated on putting, chipping, pitching, irons, and driving station. We handed out wristbands and every time the junior improved his/her game then they received a different color band. The kids had fun seeing if they could get the more advanced wristband compared to their friends.



## After School Program

The After School Program is a great program for juniors to learn what it is like to be a student athlete. Once a week from April - May I taught 5 juniors 45-minutes on the range tee then went into the clubhouse to finish the last 30-minutes working on homework or studying for exams. I assisted the kids as much as I could with their schoolwork, and it was a fun time getting to know the kids better. My knowledge on middle school



homework was refreshed. I am grateful to have influenced these kids on how to balance golf and school. Biggest challenge I had to personally deal with, and now I am still dealing with, is finding a balance between work and home.

## Practice Like the Pros

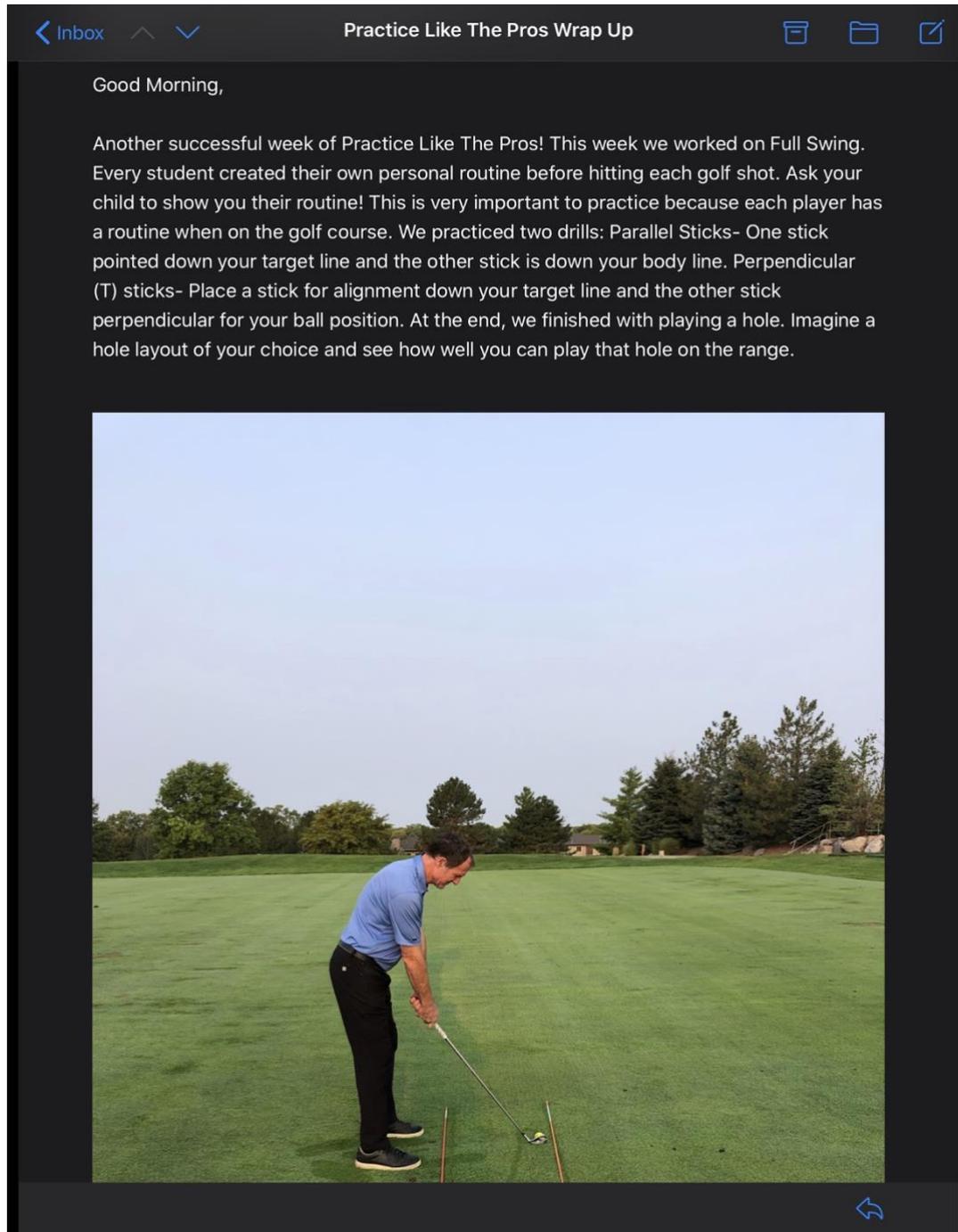
This was a new program in 2020 with the goal of our juniors learning how the PGA professionals' practice. Mike Schuchart and myself have played on big stages, so we wanted this as an opportunity for the juniors to learn some of our secret practices that they could apply to their own game. I created drill cards that we handed out to each junior who participated that day.

### PRACTICE WITH THE PRO – FULL SWING

- 1) Routine: Create a routine that you use before hitting each shot. Practice like you play!
- 2) Two drills:
  - a. Parallel Sticks: One stick down your target line and another stick down your body line
  - b. Perpendicular (T) Sticks: Place a stick for alignment and the other one perpendicular for your ball position
- 3) Play a hole on whatever course you prefer. Imagine the hole layout of your choice and see how well you can play that hole.

It was a drop-in program for the month of September and October so the juniors did not have to commit to all the practices. We averaged about 8-12 kids per week.

At the end of each practice, sent out an email to the parents so they could have a copy of the drill card and stay connected to what their child learned.





Perpendicular (T) Sticks

Thanks for another great week with us! Next week we will be working on Drivers!

Coach Sarah and Coach Mike



## Private Lessons

Many of my individual lessons came from juniors who participated in our player development programs throughout the year. The other portion of my lessons came from word of mouth. I have the privilege of giving private lessons to the age range of 7 to 73.

One of my favorite success stories teaching this year came from Sue, a 62-year-old retired English Teacher. Sue came to me last year never taken a lesson in her life. She picked up golf because she was on a weight loss journey and thought it would be a good exercise for her to walk 9-holes on our Talon executive course. To give you a better understanding, Sue lost over 100 pounds within three years; truly an inspirational individual. On the Talon course, Sue was shooting 70's and 60's last year. At the beginning of this year, she started shooting in the upper 40's. Sue was very intimidated by our 18-hole Championship course, but I encouraged her to play a couple rounds on it. She started out shooting in the low 100's and mid 90's. We had many conversations about not worrying about the score and just be out there having fun. After playing almost every day, Sue shot her lowest 80 on the Championship course and 29 on the Talon course. She came to me never thinking she would be able to break 50 on the Talon course, and she blew that score away.



To show my appreciation for my students, I find time on my off days or after work hours to play a few holes with them. I think this is a very important part to growing the game. It builds relationships and shows how invested I am to them as a golfer and person.

## **Gross Revenue**

The player development programs this year brought in a gross income to the club of **\$46,180**.



Sincere “**Thank You**” to the nomination committee for taking time out of your busy schedules to follow along my Player Development journey in 2020. I am very passionate about growing the game so it is fulfilling getting to share my experience with you. Through these pages, I hope one of my player development programs catches your eye and you can apply it at your own facility.