

U.S. Kids Golf announces 2020 U.S. Kids Golf Players of the Year Awards.

The 2020 winners of the U.S. Kids Golf Players of the Year Award are Ariel Collins, age 10, from Locust Grove, GA, and Chase Hughes, age 10, of Oklahoma City, OK.

Each year, the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation recognizes its top-rated boy and girl competing over the course of an entire golf season. To be eligible for this recognition, players must earn Player of the Year honors at a U.S. Kids Golf Local Tour (in the United States) and participate in an 18-hole age group during the U.S. Kids Golf World Championship (Girls 10 and older, Boys 9 and older). The National Player of the Year Award winner is the highest finisher at the U.S. Kids Golf World Championship who meets the above criteria. In the event of a tie, the lowest score relative to par at the event determines the winner.

Both Collins and Hughes won their respective divisions at the 2020 U.S. Kids Golf World Championship in Pinehurst, N.C. Collins posted a 206 (-10) to win the Girls 10 age division, while Hughes shot a final round 63 (-9) at Legacy Golf Links to secure the victory in the Boys 10 division with a 204 (-12).

"Being Player of the Year means you've set yourself apart through a lot of hard work, dedication, and drive," said Dan Van Horn, President and Founder of U.S. Kids Golf. "I'm continually astounded at the talent I see among these young players, and to receive this award among such an elite group means you've distinguished yourself as truly one of the best in the world."

The two young golfers had very similar beginnings in golf, starting their careers by tagging along with their fathers to the course. Collins began playing the game at age three, while Hughes picked up golf at age two.

Since 2016, Collins has won 57 U.S. Kids Golf Local Tour events, ten USKG Local Tour Championships, the 2018 Georgia State Invitational in the Girls 9-10 Age Group, and earned three top-20 finishes in the U.S. Kids Golf World Championships in 2017, 2018, and 2020.

During U.S. Kids Golf tournaments, Ariel's father, Anthony, can typically be found on her bag as her caddie. Ariel's favorite golfers are Lexi Thompson, Mariah Stackhouse, and Tiger Woods. In addition to golf, her hobbies include piano and tennis.

"It's definitely an honor to receive the U.S. Kids Golf National Player of the Year," said Collins. "I really want to thank my parents, family, and friends for supporting me, and I want to thank U.S. Kids Golf for celebrating these wonderful tournaments."

Since 2016, Chase Hughes has won 77 Local Tour events, 7 Regional Championships, 8 State Championships, and has had five top-20 finishes in the U.S. Kids Golf World Championship.

Like Collins, golf is also family time for Chase, as he is usually accompanied on the bag by his father, Nick.

"We enjoy that aspect of it," said Nick Hughes. "I think U.S. Kids Golf has nailed it, as far as allowing (caddying) at a young age. It's the best time that we spend together."

Chase is a three-sport athlete. When not playing golf, he plays football and basketball. When he grows up, he hopes to play collegiate golf at Oklahoma State and then join the PGA TOUR. Chase's favorite golfers are Tiger Woods and Rickie Fowler.

"It means a lot (winning the U.S. Kids Golf Player of the Year Award). It just proves that my hard work is paying off. If you really want it, you can work hard, and you can do whatever you want," stated Hughes.

As a celebration of these players' accomplishments, both players will receive a U.S. Kids Golf Player of the Year Trophy, as well as a Donald Ross Golf Package at Pinehurst Resort.

This 3-day, 2-night offering includes Deluxe Accommodations at the Pinehurst Resort for four people, breakfast and dinner daily at the Pinehurst Resort, three rounds of golf for four, and complimentary use of the driving range and all golf-related practice facilities.

"(Pinehurst) is my brother's and my favorite place in the world to go to," said Hughes. "We love The Cradle and everything about it."

Winning the National Player of the Year Award will offer Collins and Hughes an exemption for all U.S. Kids Golf events through age 18.

Both players will return to Pinehurst this summer to defend their U.S. Kids Golf World Championship titles.

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About U.S. Kids Golf

U.S. Kids Golf is the world's leader in helping grow golf among youth and families. Founded in 1996, U.S. Kids Golf offers three distinct lines of equipment in up to 10 sizes. The U.S. Kids Foundation hosts more than 1600 tournaments globally - including the U.S. Kids Golf World Championship held annually in Pinehurst, N.C.; and its Coaches Institute includes over 1800 members around the world. The Foundation also owns and operates Longleaf Golf & Family Club in Southern Pines, N.C., a "Living Laboratory" of golf's best practices and newest ideas to make golf a better game for everyone. In both 2018 and 2020, U.S. Kids Golf was honored by the National Golf Foundation as one of the "Top 100 Businesses in Golf" based on influence, innovation, and social good, among other criteria.