



### **Team Member Selection Criteria**

The USGA has created a State Junior Team program that will expand, strengthen, and diversify the junior golf pipeline by creating critical development, competitive, and talent identification opportunities within each state for elite athletes aged 13-18. This program, launched in 2024 with seven (7) states, will continue to expand with the goal of all states having a team by 2033 after close collaboration between the USGA, the Allied Golf Associations (AGAs), the PGA of America sections, and relevant junior programs. Team Alabama is excited to join this nationwide initiative in 2026.

#### **Eligibility:**

- Players must be 13 years of age by January 1, 2027, and must not turn 19 years of age before July 19, 2027.
- Players cannot currently participate in organized team activities at a college or university.
- Players must have an active Handicap Index/GHIN with at least 10 scores posted and a minimum of five (5) competitive rounds within the previous twelve (12) months.
- Males must have a GHIN USGA Handicap Index at an AGA member club that does not exceed 2.9.
- Females must have a GHIN USGA Handicap Index at an AGA member club that does not exceed 5.9.
- Players must be citizens of the United States and legal residents of Alabama.
- All current USGA National Junior Team members are ineligible to participate for Team Alabama, and, while recognized as part of the USNDP, Team Alabama members are not members of the US National Development Team.
- Team Alabama will comply with AHSAA and AISA eligibility guidelines. Students/parents are responsible for consulting their school's Athletic Director(s) to ensure compliance.
- The Selection Committee reserves the right to exclude any player from the selection process regardless of his or her competitive performance for conduct determined unbecoming of a representative of Team Alabama.
- Team members must be an amateur under the USGA Rules of Amateur Status as well as comply with the USGA Rules of Amateur Status, USGA Anti-Doping Protocol, USGA Betting Policy and USGA Gender Policy.

#### **Selection Timeline:**

The 2026 Team Alabama Selection Committee will name up to four (4) boys and four (4) girls to Team Alabama annually on September 1 based on competitive performance in the 12-month rolling rankings calendar (September 1-August 31). Eligible players must earn their way onto Team Alabama annually. Once selected, athletes are part of Team Alabama between September 1, 2026, and August 31, 2027.

**Selection Criteria:**

The Committee will select Team Alabama using the Alabama State Junior Golf Rankings as of September 1 of the current year. The top four (4) boys and top four (4) girls in the rankings must meet the eligibility criteria and participation criteria below:

- Must participate in the Alabama State Boys or Girls Junior Championships.
- Must participate in the Alabama State Amateur or Alabama Women's State Amateur.
- Players failing to qualify for the Alabama State Amateur do not meet this participation criteria.
- If eligible, participate in the Alabama State 13 and Under Junior Championships.
- Must participate in a USGA Junior Amateur or US Girl's Junior Qualifier.
- Exempt players in either the USGA Boys Junior or USGA Girl's Junior must compete in the Championship-proper.

\*Any player registered to compete in a required Championship and subsequently Withdraws or No Shows for any reason does not meet the participation criteria to be eligible for selection.

The Selection Committee will consider additional factors relating to the athlete's sportsmanship, including, but not limited to, the athlete's: work ethic; attitude; desire to be part of Team Alabama; coachability; ability to represent the State, Alabama Golf Association, and Alabama-NW Florida PGA Section; and to be a positive teammate.

To aid in player evaluations, the Committee may gather additional information from other Allied Golf Associations, golf courses, coaches, and other similar entities with knowledge of an athlete's performance, demeanor, and capabilities.

The Alabama Golf Association and the Alabama-NW Florida PGA Section will provide apparel, in-person athlete development, additional one-on-one guidance, counseling, coaching and competitive opportunities.

Once selected to Team Alabama, athletes are part of the US National Development Program for the term of membership (September 1 – August 31). The USNDP will provide benefits and recognition for Team Alabama participants. These benefits may include recognition on the USGA/USNDP website and social media, streamlined USNDP grant applications, exemptions into AJGA events, and access to the official USNDP statistical platform and athlete development resources. Read more about the USNDP [here](#).

The USNDP offers a Grant Program for junior golfers with financial need, whether they are members of Team Alabama or not. Learn more [here](#).

## **Team Alabama FAQs:**

### **Who is on Team Alabama?**

The 2026 Team Alabama Selection Committee will name up to four (4) boys and four (4) girls to Team Alabama annually on September 1.

### **When will Team Alabama be named?**

Team Alabama will be named annually on September 1 based on competitive performance in the 12-month rolling rankings calendar (September 1-August 31). Once selected, athletes are part of Team Alabama between September 1, 2026, and August 31, 2027. Players must earn their way onto the Team each year.

### **What are the benefits of being on Team Alabama?**

The Alabama Golf Association and the Alabama-NW Florida PGA Section will provide apparel, in-person Athlete Development, additional one-on-one guidance, counseling, coaching and competitive opportunities.

### **If an athlete is a part of Team Alabama, are they automatically a part of the USNDP?**

YES! Once selected to Team Alabama, athletes are part of the US National Development Program for the term of membership (September 1 – August 31). The USNDP will provide benefits and recognition for Team Alabama participants. These benefits may include recognition on the USGA/USNDP website and social media, streamlined USNDP grant applications, exemptions into AJGA events, and access to the official USNDP statistical platform and athlete development resources. Read more about the USNDP [here](#).

### **If an athlete is a part of Team Alabama, are they automatically on the National Junior Team?**

No, the National Junior Team will be for a select and relatively small number of athletes compared to the number of athletes on State Junior Teams and is selected solely by the USGA.

### **Who is on the Team Alabama Selection Committee?**

At least seven (7) individuals who represent golf's governing bodies and organizations in the State of Alabama will comprise the Selection Committee:

- Alabama Golf Association
- Alabama – NW Florida PGA Section
- USNDP Team Alabama Head Coach

### **I have further questions. Who should I contact?**

Contact Hall Upshaw, USNDP Team Alabama Captain ([hall@alabamagolf.org](mailto:hall@alabamagolf.org))