



Francis Xavier Emmet (1900 – 1982)

It is difficult to believe that when we see the number of junior golf programs today, one man had a vision in 1927 and single-handedly brought it to fruition.

“Mr. Junior Golf,” as Frank Emmet was affectionately known, laid out and helped build the nine-hole golf course at Georgetown Preparatory School. This is where the program began in 1927 and where the first Schoolboy Tournament was held in 1934. In May 1983, one year after Frank Emmet’s death, the event was renamed the Frank Emmet Schoolboy. The 70th renewal will be held at Mount Vernon Country Club in June, 2004.

The Junior Golfers of Washington was the name given to the local program started by Mr. Emmet. After the Second World War, the program had grown to a very large and well-respected organization that conducted several summer tournaments. Mr. Emmet helped start many such programs nationwide. In 1947, he approached the United States Golf Association about starting a Junior Amateur Championship. The USGA approved the idea, with Frank Emmet as a charter member of the organizational committee. The event began in 1948. The second competition was held at Congressional Country Club and in 1949 and the tenth at Manor Country Club in 1957.

Mr. Emmet always stressed the importance of education to the boys. “By studying hard during the school year you earn the chance to play golf in the summer instead of going to summer school.” After many years of refusing any kind of honorarium, he did agree in 1977 to allow his name to be part of a scholarship program. In October of that year, there was a dinner at Indian Spring Country Club attended by nearly 500 people. Much of the cost of the evening was donated and the bulk of the collected funds started the Frank Emmet Scholarship program. In keeping with his wishes about education, college scholarships were awarded to those who maintained academic excellence but were not necessarily the top golfers in the program. Through the summer of 2003 there have been approximately 75 grants. The grants are awarded the summer after the junior golfers’ high school graduation and are renewable through their senior year of college based on good grades and character.

It is almost impossible to know how many thousands of people have been part of the program. Many have gone on to become head professionals at our local clubs. Friendships begun as junior golfers have resulted in golfers playing together for years as adults in member guests and two man team events. Whatever were the abilities of these young people, there is no question their lives benefited from a wonderful and caring man.

Upon Frank Emmet’s death in May of 1982, Bob Riley, who had worked closely with Mr. Emmet, took over the leadership of the junior program. In order to bolster administrative support, in the fall of 1997 the program was merged into the Washington Metropolitan Golf Association where Mr. Riley served as Executive Director. Under the auspices of the WMGA, the program continues to flourish with the running of five major junior championships every summer.