

# First and Fore-Most

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## A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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Another year at The First Tee has come and gone, and as coaches and volunteers, it was our goal every day to give our participants the summer they deserved. For many of our golfers 2018 was a year full of excitement, friendship and personal growth. From our Little Duffers, just embarking on their golfing journey, to our Eagle and Ace participants who are using the lessons they have learned to better themselves and their community. We are proud of the each and every one of our participants, and we cant wait to see what 2019 brings.

Written by Charlie Schuknecht, The First Tee of South Dakota Marketing Intern

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## GAVIN VAN ZEE MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

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On June 15th, Elmwood Golf Course was honored to host the 1st annual Gavin Van Zee Memorial Golf Tournament. The event was held in remembrance of Gavin, a fun loving eight year old boy who was involved in a tragic accident that took his life much too soon.

Word of the inaugural team scramble event spread through the golf community. Over 140 golfers signed up to show support for the Van Zee family and to give back to The First Tee of South Dakota.

Just a few weeks later, the Van Zee family presented a generous \$21,000 donation to The First Tee of South Dakota's scholarship fund to benefit future kids so they too can enjoy The First Tee.

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# LIFE SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

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Max Martin, an Ace participant at The First Tee of South Dakota at Elmwood, recently attended the Joe Louis Barrow Jr. Life Skills and Leadership Academy held from July 25 - 31 at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. The Joe Louis Barrow, Jr. Life Skills and Leadership Academy is focused on recognizing and rewarding exceptional teen participants in The First Tee for their accomplishments while enhancing skills that will help on and off the golf course.

“While at the Academy, I received golf and leadership instruction that incorporated the Nine Core Values. During the week, I had the opportunity to hone my skills while experiencing championship golf, career exploration, and dorm living.

I was able to meet many like-minded individuals at this camp who I will keep in contact for many years. On top of that, I met some of the best coaches in the entire First Tee network. I know I will cherish this experience forever and will always be thankful for all the opportunities The First Tee has given me.”

Written by Max Martin, Ace Participant



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## SECOND ANNUAL IRWIN CUP

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On August 6, the 2nd annual Irwin Cup was held at The Jewel Golf Club in Lake City, Minnesota. The First Tee participants from four states were invited to compete in a Ryder Cup style event, pitting players from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and South Dakota against each other in a winner-take-all tournament.



The 18-hole tournament was divided into 3 separate matches: six holes of scramble, six holes of champman and six holes of shamble, with each hole worth one point.

At the end of the day, Wisconsin came out on top with a team score of 50.5, followed by Minnesota with 33 points, South Dakota with 32 points and Iowa with 28.5 points.

The participants from South Dakota included Reese Jansa, Sophie Jansa, Cody Koepke, Jack Kray, Luke Martin, Max Martin, Shannon McCormick and Mattie Weidenbach.

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## FIRST DAKOTA NATIONAL BANK PRO AM JAM

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Every year golfers, and music enthusiasts alike, are brought together for the hottest event of the summer. The First Dakota National Bank Pro Am Jam, held at The Country Club of Sioux Falls, is a three-day Dakota Tour tournament that pairs local professionals with novice golfers for a weekend full of friendly competition. The event pitted Dakota Tour professionals against one another in a stroke-play tournament, while amateurs battled it out in teams of four.

The fun didn't stop there. Throughout the weekend the Pro Am Jam committee put on a variety of events, including the Ladies Pro Am, the Holmes Murphy Shootout, the Silver Bullet Two-Man Shootout and the Concrete Materials Chipping challenge.

To add to the excitement, the event hosted a variety of big-name musicians, with past guests including Florida Georgia Line, Rascal Flatts and Huey Lewis. As always, the Pro Am Jam went above and beyond in 2018, hosting Lita Ford, Smash Mouth, Brett Michaels and John Fogerty.

Event proceeds benefited the First Tee of South Dakota. Money raised throughout the weekend is used for scholarships, equipment, and educational materials for youth in our program.

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# LEAGUE DAY TOURNAMENT

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Every year The First Tee of South Dakota holds a middle-of-the-summer League Day tournament. This year the tournament was held at Elmwood Golf Course's East Course and Par 3 Junior Holes.

League Day is a great opportunity for many participants to get the feel for playing in a competitive tournament, while also meeting new people who share the same interest in golf. With perfect conditions, the golfers hit the course. 7-9 year old boys and girls played the Junior Holes, and golfers aged 10 and up took on the East Course.

In the 7-9 year old division, William Lockner and Mackenzie Matzen both took first place with a 23 and 39 respectively. In the 10-12 year old division, Camden Wollmuth took first place with a 53, and in the 13 & Older division, Luke Martin took first with a 49.

"Seeing the kids improve from last year, and even from the beginning of this summer is so much fun to see," said Kelli Sinksen, The First Tee of South Dakota's Program Director. "I think I speak for all of the coaches when I say that we are very proud of all of our participants."



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## COACH SPOTLIGHT: AMBER OLAFSON

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### **How long have you worked at The First Tee?**

I started coaching at The First Tee at Edgebrook in Brookings, SD. That was four years ago. It wasn't until two years ago that I started coaching here at Elmwood.

### **What have The First Tee participants taught you?**

Patience. Being able to adjust to each golfer's different personality and skill level really taught me how to be a better coach.

### **What is your favorite golf club in your bag and why?**

I would say my 56° wedge is my favorite club. Dedicating a lot of practice time towards chipping has really helped lower my scores.

### **What hobbies do you like to pursue outside of golfing?**

When I'm not golfing I like to play with my puppy, travel to national parks, and read. I LOVE Harry Potter!

### **What advice do you have for future The First Tee coaches?**

Get to know the participants on a deeper level than just being their swing coach. They have so much to offer and it makes the job so much more fun when you can connect with the kids.

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## FAMILY FUN NIGHT PAR-TEE

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As the final days of summer vacation were quickly approaching, and the beginning of a new school year loomed on the horizon, The First Tee Family Fun Night Par-TEE gave its participants one last summer hurrah.

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, The First Tee participants of all ages attended the Family Fun Night Par-TEE. Participants and their families played putting games on the practice green, hit Snag clubs and balls

on the driving range and showed off their skills in the closest-to pin-and longest putt competition on the Junior Holes.

The night came to an end with giveaways, pin prizes and ice cream. Lots and lots of ice cream. We appreciate all of the hard work and dedication our participants put into bettering themselves and their golf game, and the Family Fun Night Par-TEE is our way of applauding them on a great summer.



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## GOLFER SPOTLIGHT: ROWAN SEEMAN

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### **How long have you been in The First Tee?**

I've been in The First Tee for a few years. I just passed Par and I am excited to start Birdie next summer.

### **What is your favorite part about The First Tee?**

I like that we get to work on every part of our game. The coaches do a good job at encouraging us to always improve.

### **Which of the Nine Core Values means the most to you?**

Sportsmanship is the Core Value that means the most to me. It has really been helpful for me playing high school golf.

### **What hobbies do you pursue outside of golfing?**

I really like to play sports in general. Baseball is one of my favorite sports; I play first base.

### **What advice do you have for future The First Tee participants?**

Stick with it even when it's challenging. The First Tee really improved my skills and taught me so much about the game.

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## SPRING 2018 A/B HONOR ROLL

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The First Tee recognizes outstanding academic achievement of all participants through its A/B Honor Roll program. We are very proud to announce this semester's Honor Roll recipients.

Berdahl, Anabel	King, Connor
Bormann, Josephine	Martin, Luke
Bornitz, Anya	Martin, Max
Christensen, Will	McCormick, Shannon
Crichton, Alexis	Oien, Noah
Endahl, Grant	Prouty, Elyse
Farah, Emily	Pulford, Grace
Farah, Ian	Pulford, Jack
Harte, Jacob	Rey, Cooper
Harte, William	Roth, Grant
Henrichs, Ben	Schaefers, Cain
Henrichs, Luke	Schneider, Olivia
Jocobsen, Grady	Shemon, Isaac
Jansa, Reese	Sheridan, Jack
Johnsen, Aiden	Simpson, Kyle
Justice, Pia	Spindler, Keegan
Kendall, Daniel	Spindler, Maleiah
Kendall, Kaitlyn	Thompson, Taylor
Kendall, Madelyn	Tolly, Colton
Kidd, Parker	VanNieuwenhuyzen, Elijah
Kidd, Preston	Wagner, Colter

**Legacy Partner**

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Strengthening The First Tee's Impact in Communities

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## UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

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- Symetra Tour GREATLIFE Challenge (August 30 – September 2, 2018)
  - Sanford International PGA Champions (September 17 – 23, 2018)
  - Begin Submitting Fall 2018 A/B Honor Roll Report Cards (February 4, 2019)
  - Great Plains Golf Expo (March 2–3, 2019)
  - Registration Opens for The First Tee 2019 (March 5, 2019)
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## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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The First Tee is reliant upon charitable contributions to carry out our mission and is grateful to receive widespread support from those in the golf industry and beyond. A fundamental strength of The First Tee is the direct support it receives from some of the game's most respected and influential organizations. Their leadership has inspired others to embrace the mission of The First Tee.

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## THANK YOU

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To all of our dedicated sponsors, volunteers and coaches, The First Tee of South Dakota would like to thank you for all of your hard work and support. We appreciate the early mornings, the countless donations and the desire to make a difference in the lives of young people. Without all of you, we would not be able to put on such a great program.





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## CONTACT US

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If you have a great idea for the newsletter, or you if you would simply like to know more about the program, contact us at:

**[thefirstteesouthdakota@yahoo.com](mailto:thefirstteesouthdakota@yahoo.com)**

**[thefirstteesouthdakota.org](http://thefirstteesouthdakota.org)**

**605.367.7092 ext. 109 or 119**

**2604 W Russell Sioux Falls, SD 57104**

