



Golf tourney attendees to fill local lodging facilities

By Charles McMahon

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PORTSMOUTH — A major golf event scheduled for later this summer is expected to bring a surge of visitors to the Seacoast that could cause a major drought in the city's available lodging.

According to Becky Brown of Montagne Communication, the U.S. Golf Association and the Golf Club of New England will host the 2012 U.S. Junior Amateur Championship from July 16 to July 21.

The major sporting event at the Stratham golf course is expected to feature 156 of the world's greatest golfers under the age of 18.

Brown, who is working as the spokeswoman for the Golf Club of New England, said the event is estimated to bring in more than 3,000 spectators, not to mention the players and hundreds of their relatives.

In order to accommodate the players and their families, Brown said organizers have ensured 1,750 rooms nights have been blocked off at Seacoast hotels and motels for the weeklong event.

The rooms have been reserved at Hilton Garden Inn, Residence Inn, Portsmouth Marriott, Homewood Suites, Anchorage Inn, Holiday Inn, America's Best Inn, Best Western and Wynwood Hotel in Portsmouth.

"Players, families, coaches, spectators, etc., will all be in the area for the week and be spending their dollars in the Portsmouth area," she said.

Brown said the fact that Portsmouth has so many hotels played a large part in why the championship is being held on the Seacoast.

The news that so many people would be in the Portsmouth area during that week was welcomed by local Chamber of Commerce officials.

Valerie Rochon, tourism manager for the Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, said the influx of people during that week will surely fill up the various hotels in the city.

"It will take up most of our capacity," she said, adding that it may be difficult for the casual traveler to find a room during that week.

Rochon said the fact that rooms will be filled during mid-week is also a fantastic feat. She said, in the middle of the summer, even during mid-week, many of the hotels are nearing capacity to begin with.

"This is a huge draw," she said. "The Juniors Championship is huge. Just to have something of that caliber come into this area is a huge (boon) for the Golf Club of New England. To have something like this in our neighborhood is fabulous."

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