

Herald Sun

South-East

Child golf prodigy's hopes for a fourth world junior title up in the air after Golf Australia refuses to help

- by: Troels Sommerville
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Karl Vilips has his sights set on defending his world junior crown, but that's looking a long way off, due to lack of funding. Picture: Michael Klein

Source: Leader

KARL Vilips is a triple golf world junior champion, but his struggling family can't afford flights to defend his title and Golf Australia has refused to help.

The 11-year-old former Dingley boy, who's family has fallen on tough times, has had his funding application to Golf Australia for airfare to the USA rejected.

Dad Paul, who lost his job and home, said Karl won't only miss the chance to defend his title, he'll miss the opportunity to take up a fully-funded scholarship at the Hank Haney International Junior Golf Academy in the US.

Mr Vilips, is on a disability pension and he and Karl are currently in temporary accommodation.

HAVE YOUR SAY: Should Golf Australia tip in for Karl? Do you think the organisation does a good job of nurturing young talent? Have your say below or email

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[subject=Karl%20Vilips%2FGolf%20Australia](mailto:troels.sommerville@news.com.au?subject=Karl%20Vilips%2FGolf%20Australia))

But Golf Australia chief executive Stephen Pitt said the organisation received numerous requests for funding each year and examined them on a "case-by-case basis using a range of criteria".



Karl Vilips is every bit the pro, even out of the bunker. Picture: Michael Klein

"With limited funding, not all of these requests are successful," he said.

The devoted dad is upset Golf Australia rejected the funding.

"It really makes it tough for players like Karl to get and stay motivated," Mr Vilips said.

"It made me feel really sad as a parent."

Mr Vilips said his son was destined for great things, but implored Golf Australia to help him succeed.

"Here you have the world's best 11-year-old and they won't give him anything," he said.

"No kid in the world has ever matched what Karl has done at this particular age."

"There doesn't seem to be any latitude for thinking outside the box in that organisation.

"You just feel you're knocking your head against the wall when you're dealing with them."

Golf Australia states on its website that it aims to identify and develop talented golfers 'as early as possible'.

'The overall vision of the Golf Australia High Performance Program is to identify as early as possible Australia's most talented golfers and give them the best possible opportunities and world-class resources to fully develop their potential on and off the golf course,' it states under the heading 'Golf Australia High Performance Program Vision'.

To help Karl, visit karlgolf.info (<http://karlgolf.info>)
