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13

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EDITOR'S NOTE AND CONTENTS

At last the big yellow thing in the sky is making a more frequent appearance as the season gets under way and lets hope the weather is set fair for months to come.

To get you in the mood this month's magazine is packed with news and information from across the region.

We take a look at some of the big tournaments due to be played on some of the North East and Yorkshire's best courses.

A new series featuring Sharon McKee's bid to become a golfer gets under way with a visit to Alnwick. Follow her progress every month.

Some big names are holding charity days - as part of our support for them Steve Cram and Glenn McCrory give us a fascinating insight into their own golfing worlds including some interesting anecdotes.

We feature some of the individuals in both the professional and amateur world who are making waves in the golfing world - if you are one of them and we have not yet featured you then please get in touch.

Many of you - including me - will be rabbits often caught in the headlights of low handicappers during medal rounds. So you especially will enjoy our report on the growing popularity of the North East Rabbits Golf Association.

Speaking of wildlife, one reader got quite an unusual surprise while playing a County Durham course, resulting in a tasty treat for a member of his family - turn to From the Bunker on page 62 to find out more.

The Match Play pairs is finally drawn and if you have entered you can find out who you are playing on page 4 while on the opposite page the North East's newest Tour pro, Chris Paisley, looks proudly on as dad Eddie drives off Stocksfield's centenary celebrations in style.

Whatever your handicap, wherever your club, we wish you all a very successful summer season.

Don't forget to send us your news, views and results. It's your magazine. Enjoy it and we'll see you next month.



04 MATCHPLAY PAIRS

The first round draw

04-23 TEEING OFF

Reports from around the region including Callum Tarren's impressive start in the US and Hexham's Foursomes win.

24-25 STEVE CRAM

The Jarrow Arrow talks about the COCO golf day and his own golf



28-29 GLENN MCCRORY

The former world cruiserweight champion talks golf and J Douglas Edgar

30 LADY GOLFER

Sharon McKee plays her first round of golf

50 COMPETITIONS

Great prizes for you to win

56 TIPS

Improve your chipping

62 FROM THE BUNKER

Readers stories and pictures



Paul Robertson, editor

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FRONT COVER

Emma Brown is looking for a gold medal in the European Ladies Championships

24 BILLINGHAM COURSE REVIEW



40 DRIFFIELD COURSE REVIEW



54 LONGHIRST COURSE REVIEW



Northern Golfer Match Play Pairs **1st Round**



The 2013 golf season is now upon us and the draw has been made for our popular Gents Match Play Pairs Competition – competitors should have received notification of their 1st round matches.

In total, 91 teams from our circulation area have entered, all hoping to get their hands on our coveted trophy.

There are to be 27 matches in the first round and anyone not receiving a notification has been lucky enough to get a bye into the second round.

Distance measuring devices are permitted providing they conform to R&A rules.

It is the responsibility of the home teams to contact their opponents and to provide three dates for their match of which one must be on a weekend.

Paul Corney, Tournament Organiser at Northern Golfer said: "Last year, the very wet summer did cause a number of problems but those who entered were very patient and understanding and the tournament was concluded within the time frame.

"Hopefully this summer will be much better, it certainly couldn't get any worse, and I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the competitors the very best of luck."

This years semi-finals are to be played at Tyneside Golf Club week commencing September 2 and a week later, the final will be staged at Stocksfield Golf Club.

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1. Tony Rudd (5) & Hugh Thompson (11) (Durham City)
V Brendan Murphy (12) & Adam Murphy (19) (Tynedale) | 8. Allan Williams (3) & Kevin Dyson (10) (Hartlepool/Seaham)
V Stuart Graham (13) & Neil Hirst (7) (Beamish Park) | 15. David Wailes (5) & John Wailes (13) (Bedlington)
V Richard Reay (15) & Neil Smeaton (10) (Stocksfield) | 22. Fred Lewis-Bynoe (9) & Ken Vickers (9) (Teesside)
V John Harvey (14) & Andrew Bell (9) (Hartlepool) |
| 2. John Bownas (12) & I. Marrs (13) (Hartlepool/Wearside)
V Colin Betham (15) & Terry Forth (12) (Seaham) | 9. Douglas Ellison (9) & Richard Mellor (10) (Slaley Hall)
V S. Bell (16) & C. Walton (8) (Hobson) | 16. Paul Stonehouse (12) & Robert Mabin (13) (Consett)
V Ben King (4) & Michael King (3) (Bellingham) | 23. Stephen Fawcus (17) & Darren McCaig (4) (Whickham/Hobson)
V John Stevenon (10) & Jeff Hird (11) (Stocksfield) |
| 3. Alan Slater (13) & Ian Robinson (3) (Ramside Hall)
V Shaun Coyle (9) & Ian Robinson (3) (Wynyard Hall) | 10. Steve Slater (3) & Mark Pollard (5) (City of Newcastle/Newbiggin)
V Paul Crawford (15) & Ian McIntosh (5) (Hetton le Hill) | 17. Steve Buxton (10) & Dave Smith (17) (Romanby)
V Nigel Ord (13) & Bryan Bovil (15) (Oakleaf) | 24. Richard Stevenson (7) & Bruce Robson (8) (Ravensworth)
V Kevin Riley (9) & Philip Carney (12) (Newcastle United) |
| 4. Kim Steward (7) & Tom Philipson (11) (Hexham)
V David Jenkinson (15) & Tony Curry (12) (Roseberry Grange) | 11. Ian Telford (13) & Graeme Wigham (12) (Matten Hall)
V Malcolm Peart (24) & Gary Stokoe (10) (Stocksfield) | 18. Gary Stoker (6) & Trevor Smith (10) (Close House)
V Kevin Natrass (17) & Paul Hook (11) (Mount Oswald) | 25. John Hann (2) & Nick Goodman (15) (Mount Oswald)
V Anthony Lawlor (8) & Stuart Vickery (17) (Chester le Street) |
| 5. Alec McCoy (17) & Derek Hicks (15) (Consett)
V Jeff Shield (18) & Dave Jones (9) (Durham City/Castle Eden) | 12. Ray McCarthy (16) & Michael McCarthy (17) (South Moor)
V Stewart Gardner (6) & John Farrell (12) (Backworth) | 19. Kevin Ord (19) & Callum Barker (17) (Mount Oswald)
V R. Hughes (22) & S. White (15) (Chester le Street) | 26. Alan Swann (13) & Darren Swann (4) (Hobson)
V Craig Fryer (14) & Michael McSkelly (9) (South Moor) |
| 6. David Gray (14) & Steven Gray (14) (Saltburn)
V Brent Morfoot (17) & Ian Fawcett (10) (Woodham) | 13. Michael Rutter (7) & Paul Socks (20) (Ryton)
V David Bridge (6) & Stewart Flatt (South Moor) | 20. David Airey (9) & Darren Thompson (9) (Arcot Hall)
V Bill Sydney (16) & Malcolm Harrison (14) (Parklands/Birtley) | 27. David Hornsey (6) & Barry Cranston (10) (Slaley Hall)
V Rory O'Connor (3) & Sam Oliver (4) (Bedlington) |
| 7. Peter Tracey (15) & Peter Clayton (18) (Bedlington/Arcot Hall)
V Ariff Khan (16) & Saleem Akram (14) (City of Newcastle/Gosforth) | 14. Fred Howie (7) & Jimmy Hayes (17) (Wynyard/Billingham)
V Bob Bowman (12) & Ian Cox (16) (Hetton le Hill) | 21. George Longthorn (15) & John Bowes (19) (Crook)
V Richard Briggs (10) & Stan Fielding (12) (Bishop Auckland) | |

All remaining competitors have a bye into Round 2

MATCHES TO BE PLAYED BY SUNDAY 2nd JUNE 2013



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Special season for father and son

Eddie Paisley has teed off Stocksfield's centenary in style now he hopes Chris can make it a fantastic year for the Northumberland club

There's only thing that would put the icing on the cake for Eddie Paisley in his year as centenary captain of Stocksfield.

And that's to see son Chris win in his rookie season on the European Tour. Too much to ask? Possibly not with Chris making a steady start to this first season on tour including a good finish in Morocco and making the cut in Spain.

But Chris took a quick break from the tour to join with his father and brothers Andy, head pro at Hexham, and Ric, who plays at Stocksfield as Eddie drove in as captain of the club with Ladies Captain Jo Blackburn and Seniors Captain Dick Forth in attendance.

All the captains drove in successfully and the drive-in set in motion the Braidwood Cup, with Chris following his dad round the course where he first honed his own skills. The tournament was won by Dave Fenwick with a fine score of 40 points, followed by Phil Armstrong and Garry Thomson with 38 points.

Chris, 27, who represented Great Britain and Ireland in the 2009 Walker Cup, is attached to Close House, and both clubs – along with Eddie – will be hoping for the big breakthrough this year but Chris's target will be very much keeping his card on his first foray in the big time.

Stocksfield have a full programme planned for their centenary year and have already published a centenary history and held a very successful sportsman's dinner attended by Chris and Andy and Matfen Hall's European Seniors Tour players and top coach John Harrison who took part in a question and answer session.

Other events on the centenary schedule include a Hickory Golf Club Day with British Golf Collectors Society on June 16 and matches against Tynemouth and Seahouses, whose centenary it also is while there is to be a Centenary Pro-am on June 21 and several centenary opens and competitions with the club's 100th anniversary dinner on November 16.

Over the years, the Stocksfield club have produced some fine players.



Eddie Paisley drives off at Stocksfield watched by Tour pro son Chris

Andrew, Chris and Chris McDonnell (now at the Royal Club in Bahrain) are previous County Champions – and for a time Walker Cup player David Curry was also a member.

It's a tough course, neatly tucked away in natural woodland with marvellous views, with a testing par of 70 combining tricky par threes and tough par fours.

The front nine holes are set in woodland with fairways carved through oak, ash, birch and beech, and there is an interesting mix of holes with doglegs in both directions, dissected in many places by several interesting streams. Stocksfield started

life as a nine-hole course in 1913 with just 100 members and moved to its present site in 1949. The course was extended to 18 holes in 1975 and it really is a game of two halves with the front nine carved through stands of oak, birch, beech and ash.

Not surprisingly, the nine requires good club selection and accuracy. The second half - the original parkland course - is more open and forgiving, but there's still plenty of danger, but at least it boasts stunning views across the Tyne Valley and the Cheviots and the Borders.



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Captains take the helm at Matten

European Seniors Tour Player John Harrison signalled the start of the new season at Matten Hall when he introduced new captains Neil Conway and Barbara Clayton.

The Matten Hall head pro will, no doubt, be combining a busy season with playing on the Seniors Tour, coaching top players including Ken Ferrie and running one of the bet golf operations in the North.

Not many set-ups can boast 27 holes, an excellent par three course and driving range in a stunning location with a clubhouse and a top-quality hotel.

The drive in was followed by a nine hole Texas scramble competition with Alfie Wood eagling the second to help his team including Jimmy Howarth, John Urwin and Doug Stuart to victory.

Matten golf manager Peter Smith said: "The course is in excellent condition for the time of year and everything is in place for Matten to have

another memorable golfing year."

Both Harrison and Ferrie will be hoping for the same as their season starts to really get under way.

Fourth place in the Spanish Senior Open was the highlight of Harrison's second Senior Tour campaign as he finished the year in 32nd position on the Order of Merit, a steady improvement from 41st position in his debut season.

It was a hat-trick of Harrisons on the Senior Tour, following in the footsteps of elder brothers Philip and Steve and he did play on the European Tour as did Phil experienced that has proved crucial in his coaching career with double European Tour winner Ferrie.

Harrison has been Ferrie's coach since the Ashington lad was 16 but there's more to him than that as he proves by winning regularly on the North and NE and NW PGA scene and more than holding his own on the Seniors Tour.



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Youth and experience combine to win trophy

Hexham relied on the experience of Martin Coup and the precocious talent of 15-year-old Matty Lamb to lift the first major trophy of North-East county season.

Lamb, who plays off scratch, and the 46-year-old Coup teamed up at Heworth as Hexham pipped Prudhoe at the first extra hole of the Northumberland final of the inter-county foursomes in the morning and then got the better of Durham champions Darlington 4 and 3 in the overall final.

Victory earned the pair an immediate call up to the Northumberland team for their county match against the Lothians at Prestonfield.

Last season, Foxton's Jake Storey won the England Under-16 championship, the McGregor Trophy, also captured by Jack Hermeston (City

of Newcastle) in 2011.

A winner of the Scottish Under-14 title and runner-up in the England Under 16 championship, Lamb has also been capped for England Under 16s and with Coup, a former PGA pro, eliminated Rothbury, Bedlingtonshire, Close House and Magdelene Fields in previous rounds.

In the Northumberland final, they were three down to Prudhoe's Shaun Philipson and James Curry but battled back to all square and it went to the 19th where Lamb holed a 35-footer for birdie.

In the Durham final, Darlington pair Andrew Wilson and Darren Tate beat Ravensworth's Joe Fraser and Jordan Bettis by one hole, but Wilson, a beaten finalist last year suffered the same fate when Hexham came through 4 and 3.

It was almost a double winning weekend for Lamb when he finished



Hexham's Matty Lamb (left) and Martin Coup with the Northumberland and Durham Inter County Foursomes Trophy

one shot off the leaders in the North and South Trophy at Morpeth.

The home club's Sandy Twynholm and Andrew Gibson (Northumberland tied on 147 with Lamb on 148, the title going to Twynholm with the better second round score.

And Lamb also missed out in the Northumberland Schools Championship at Prudhoe where he tied with Westerhope's Brad Robinson on 75, Robinson taking the title with the better back nine.

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Ken Gow with wife Jacqueline and daughters Samantha and Georgia at Cocken Lodge

Family driving force behind popular course

Club's motto is golf to be enjoyed and not endured and that's how it's meant to be

It's a real family affair at Cocken Lodge these days.

Kevin Gow and his wife Jacqueline took over the lease of the 18-bay driving range and nine-hole golf course on the outskirts of Durham City two years ago and progress has been remarkable.

Daughters Samantha and Georgia are now also heavily involved in running the popular complex which in itself is family owned with Lucy Holmes developing it from a caravan park to a USGA standard short course and floodlit driving range which has earned an impressive reputation.

It's no pitch and putt lay-out with two short par fours and the rest par threes. Quite narrow in places with water hazards, it is quite scenic and has a particular charm.

The shortest hole measures just 119 yards but you have to navigate the pond and the longest is a 261 yard dog-leg par four with trouble on the left and right - attempt to hit the green at your peril!

The course is extremely popular

with experienced and new golfers alike, it appeals especially to families as nine holes should only take approximately one and a half hours to play.

There is floodlit driving range which has 12 covered bays and six outdoor, which is getting a facelift this month with brand new top quality mats, and new golf balls being introduced.

The comfortable clubhouse which offers home-cooked food and is also popular with families. There are no stuffy dress rules and as Kevin says: "The only dress code we have is we ask people to dress sensibly. We don't turn people away in jeans and trainers as we want families and youngsters to feel welcome here as well as the regular golfer or someone just taking up the game."

That's evident in the offers with children under 18 (under 16s must be with an adult) paying just half rates while at the other end of the scale "Cocken Codgers" that's 60 years and over also getting half price rates on the course between 8am and 12 noon



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There's also a welcome for the experienced golfer with a PGA teaching staff including Doug Brolls and Ryan Ingram as well as Kevin, who has been based at Houghton and the Mayfair Centre and did teach at Cocken when based at Houghton.

The target is to maintain improvements in both course and clubhouse, offer quality teaching and also continue to make families, groups and parties welcome. Their motto at Cocken is "Golf is to be enjoyed not endured." Would that we all thought like that. **For more information check out www.cockenlodge.co.uk or email k.gow@gmx.com or telephone 0191 584 1053.**

School is top class

Walbottle trio Ben Crawford, James Wilson and Kieran Watson have clinched a place in the final of the National Schools Championship.

The trio made their local knowledge pay off in the Northumberland Schools Team Championships at Prudhoe – Ben and James are both junior members there while Kieran was a member at Close House.

There were 11 schools entered and Walbottle Campus finished top of the pile to go through to the National Finals on July 10 at Woodhall Spa.

James also won the under 16 nett prize while Matty Lamb, who partnered Martin Coup to victory in the Northumberland and Durham Inter-County Foursomes was playing for Hexham School and won the under 16 gross prize with Close House junior Bradley Robinson representing Kings School Tynemouth, won the overall gross prize.

England cap Lamb is a winner of the Close House Lee Westwood Scholarship along with Ramside Hall's Kat Hollins.

Last year Lamb won the Scotland Under-14 Championship and was runner-up in the England championship and both he and Kat get a year's free membership of Close House, free monthly golf lessons for a year and free-range balls plus a free Close House golf bag and cap and – more importantly – will get to meet Close House touring pro Lee Westwood.

Westwood's backing for junior golf is really expanding and the first events of the new Lee Westwood Golf Tour are now taking place.

The tour is made up of 13 different areas each of which have seven events taking place over some of the UK's best golf courses. Winning the tour area order of merit sees a player progress to the Tour Players Championship.



Callum Tarren (left) and Michael Curry show off Durham's new adidas team kit

Callum enjoying Stateside success

Durham's Callum Tarren has been making the headlines on the USA college golf scene.

Callum, twice a winner of the Durham County title when playing at Dinsdale Spa, is at Radford University in Virginia, and he was named the men's golfer of the week by the Big South Conference following his showing in the Battle at the Beach competition in South Carolina.

He led after two rounds but was unable to improve on his score on the final day and finished third but his career-best return over 54 holes was his third top 10 finish of the season and helped Radford win the team event.

Callum has been in good form for a while. He set a course record round of 64 at the Williamsburg Country Club on his way to a runners-up spot in the Joe Agee Invitational last September and recently he finished tied 18th at the Old Dominion OBX Intercollegiate

and tied sixth at the Davidson Intercollegiate before his Battle at the Beach success

"I've had a very steady start to the golf season," said Tarren. "I'm very happy with how I am playing and I'm confident I can improve on my individual results and get a win soon. It is important to keep yourself motivated and dedicated. My game feels solid at the moment which I am happy with. Now I'm looking forward to the next few events."

Callum played out of Dinsdale and Rockcliffe Hall before going to the USA where he is in his third year studying marketing and economics. He won the Durham County Championship in 2009 at Seaton Carew and successfully defended the title at South Moor in 2010. Last year he was the first Radford men's golfer since 2006 to be named in the Big South Men's Golf All-Academic Team.



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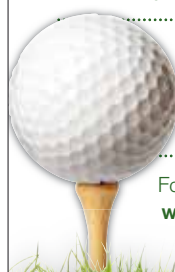
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Welcome to the leisure dome

Is this the future for family golf?

It may look like something from Space 1999 but the Golf Dome's arrival on Seaton Carew's sea front is very much present day and down to earth.

After an appalling 12 months for golfers struggling to find anywhere dry and warm, the Golf Dome is a godsend – the wind may have been whipping off the North sea but it was shirt-sleeve weather inside as enthusiastic golfers whacked golf balls down the driving range, practised on the chipping green or took lessons in one of the bays equipped with simulators while youngsters were enjoying themselves on the nine hole putting trail or trying out the

game with specially adapted plastic clubs. "We've had kids as young as three here," said PGA professional Craig Donaldson, who hails from Hartlepool and has coached in Italy, Spain and the South East.

Could it be the end of the four-hour (or longer) round or a full day at the golf course? Probably not for the dyed-in-the-wool golf fanatic and there are more than few of us out there, but for someone who wants to spend an hour or two having some fun with the family playing golf or simply putting in some much-needed practice in pleasant conditions the Golf Dome is very much the answer. "It's warm with a friendly comfortable environment and everyone

loves it," added Craig. "We're getting golfers of all ages and abilities in and I feel like it's working well so far."

"We're getting established golfers and beginners coming in to practise and also families looking to have fun. We're also getting a lot of special needs groups who really seem to enjoy having a go at the game."

The Golf Dome does offer club membership with special offers and incentives, but as Craig pointed out: "It's open to everyone. Experienced golfers and beginners, families, groups. Anyone can come in have a go."

"We have local pros like Graeme Bell using the centre as well as County players, England players and we're looking to gain Golfmark accreditation soon."

The highlight of the dome's facilities is its driving range and its green complex. The range has a crosshair target to track the flight of the ball and there's also a sand bunker and chipping range.

"Everyone is amazed when they try it. They can't believe the way the ball reacts on the greens," said Craig. "It's very realistic, fast, true and has some nice contours on it."

Four bays with GC2 simulators are available featuring more than 55 courses and they can also be used for practice, club fitting and teaching - Craig's team includes James Harper and Julie Welch - and there is a well-stocked retail area and licensed bar.

The Golf Dome is one of a pair - the other houses five-a-side football pitches - and it is part of a £7m leisure and new homes development put together by Brian Morton, owner of the nearby Staincliffe Hotel, who has been working alongside Craig on the golf side of the project.

For more information visit www.thesportsdomes.co.uk

Inside the dome at Seaton Carew





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Yee ha!

Take your partners for a Texas scramble at The Cyrenians' annual Golf Day

Golfers from across the region are 'clubbing' together for The Cyrenians ninth annual Golf Day to be held at the City of Newcastle Golf Club on Monday 3rd June.

The Texas scramble tournament is a firm favourite in the corporate golfing calendar and this year, The Cyrenians are hoping to attract even more teams than ever before.

Lindsay Peach, Fundraising Officer, The Cyrenians, said: "Fundraising events like the Golf Day are a great way to raise awareness of the charity as well as to raise vital funds towards our work. We are enormously grateful to those who've already signed up to take part but we'd also like to urge even more teams to come forward to support the day."

Teams of four cost £225 and teams can be all male/female or mixed. The 'John Thompson classic tournament' will include competitions throughout the day including nearest to the pin.

Lindsay added: "By taking part in events like our annual Golf Day, supporters can help us to continue providing our crucial services to

thousands of local homeless and vulnerable people each week.

"We support people from across the North East and Yorkshire who have problems with homelessness, addiction, offending and mental health issues to make positive changes in their lives. We help them to build their futures so they become stable and independent members of their community. It is only through the kindness of our supporters however, that we can continue to make this difference and we are really grateful for their support."

As well as refreshments and bacon sandwiches on arrival, after the tournament, golfers will be rewarded with a well earned hot lunch and a prize giving ceremony. There are also fantastic prizes to be won in the charities raffle.

To register a team, for more information and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Lindsay Peach on 0191 256 5040 or email: l.peach@tcuk.org.

For more information about The Cyrenians, please visit www.thecyrenians.org

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Unlocking funds to escape cancer

Durham Prison Officers organise charity day at Rockcliffe Hall in memory of 39-year-old colleague

Rockcliffe Hall will play host to a tournament aimed at raising fund for Prostate Cancer UK.

The tournament has been organised by Durham Prison officers and the North-East Prison Golf Society in memory of Gary Smith on July 3.

Dave Redford, who runs the NE Prison Golf Society, said: "Gary was an officer at HMP Durham who passed away to cancer in 2000 at the age of 39 and we decided this year to advertise the day and raise some money for a cancer charity and decided on Prostate Cancer UK.

"I currently have 50 players and would like to get to 80 for a shotgun start and there are some great prizes and it promises to be a good day at a top course."

Each golfer's entry fee will help boost

the fund and there will also be a charity raffle after the golf and Dave is hoping to hear from anyone who could donate four ball vouchers or golfing gear for the raffle.

"We currently have fourball prizes from Ramside, Wynyard, Tyneside, Rockcliffe, Scarborough North and South Cliff courses, Bedlington, Alnmouth Village, Alnmouth (Foxton), Wooler, Bishop Auckland, Saltburn, Sandburn Hall, Slaley, Consett, Garesfield, Sharpley and Warkworth.

"We're hoping for more and we're hoping to raise a lot of money," added Dave.

The entry fee is £60 with lots of prizes. Contact Dave Redford at HMP Durham 0191 3323671 or 07791524906 or email david.redford@hmps.gsi.gov.uk or d.redford67@sky.com



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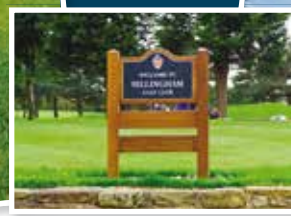
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That's my boy!

Long-standing Driffield member Robert Megginson followed in the footsteps of his father Tom when he took over as president of the East Riding Union of Golf Clubs.

Tom Megginson, also a Driffield member, was president exactly 50 years ago in 1963 – the year Robert joined the club as a 12-year-old.

Robert went on to become the club's youngest captain at the age of 34 and played a leading role in the late 1980s in the extension of the course to 18 holes as chairman of the "New Course Committee."

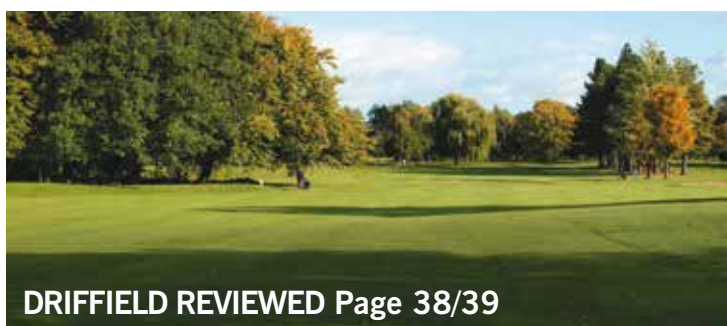
Robert also served as match and competition secretary for the ERUGC from 1987 to 1989 and is now chairman of the management committee at Driffield, an excellent

parkland course, held in high regard by golfers throughout the East Riding and beyond.

Robert said, "It really is an honour and a privilege to become president of the East Riding Union some 50 years after my late father held the position.

"I will do my best to promote the game of golf throughout the Union, especially at junior level – the future of the game – and to encourage clubs and club members to participate in its meetings, matches and championships.

"I would really like to see our strongest players, both seniors and juniors, available for selection throughout the season to give us a fighting chance to win the Yorkshire Inter District Leagues."



DRIFFIELD REVIEWED Page 38/39



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Youngsters have a hole lot of fun

Richmond Golf Club has been encouraging youngsters from the local community to give golf a go.

Fun 'tri-golf' sessions have been held in Richmond Methodist, St Mary's and Richmond C of E primary schools reaching out to over 150 children.

Richmond head pro James Hare said: 'It was great we were able to introduce new skills including putting, chipping and iron play to the children.

"As well as teaching new golf skills, we were also able to highlight the importance of fitness and sportsmanship to the session. We would like to thank Michael Layfield, Swaledale Schools Sports Coach for

arranging the sessions."

Juniors from the primary schools were invited to a free taste session held at the golf club in the Easter holidays and 17 juniors attended the session and had a great time playing fun golf games to learn the basics of golf.

Richie Bastow, Richmond's new Junior Coordinator said: 'Watching the juniors having lots of fun and trying their best is what it's all about. Golf is a fantastic way for juniors to socialise, gain confidence and acquire a range of essential life skills'. The club has yet again been awarded GolfMark High Achiever status, showing its commitment and enthusiasm to continue to improve junior participation and facilities



A great time was had by youngsters at Richmond

to ensure a fun, safe and healthy place to come to play. A new junior academy has also been set up and runs on Saturday mornings at the club on its three-hole junior academy course. Juniors involved are also undertaking a Golf Passport

Accreditation whilst being coached, to support them individually in their golfing development. Anyone who is aged eight to 16 and is interested in getting involved in golf, whatever their ability, should get in touch with Richie Bastow on 07411 636765.

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www.ravensworthgolfclub.co.uk



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Wed 5th June	Mid Week Mens Singles Open
Sat 15th June	Mens Invitation Day
Wed 20th June	Seniors Open (Over 55's)
Sat 29th June	Jubilee Mens Open
Sun 7th July	AM/AM
Wed 11th Sept	Mens Open
Sat 21st Sept	Tom Sellars Shield Mens Open

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Or email: secretary@ravensworthgolfclub.co.uk



« Jon Stacey will be coaching juniors at Rockliffe Hall

Master Class

Rockliffe Hall is launching a six-week junior golf programme this month.

It gets under way on May 19 and runs weekly until June 23 and features tuition and master classes from some of the region's top professional golfers.

The six-week course aimed at beginners who want to enter the game or learn more about it, will start with a basic introduction to golf with various aspects such as rules and etiquette covered each week.

All of the juniors taking part will get a work-book to complete to help with their understanding of the game.

Rockliffe head professional Jon Stacey said: "This new programme

has been set up in response to demand from people who have asked if we can run something aimed at young people who want to try the game for the first time.

"It's a great opportunity to get advice and tips from professionals and also try out golf on one of the best courses in the UK. The classes will be very informal and are for complete beginners who just want to give golf a go."

The six-week course starts on May 19 and runs between 1pm-2pm for five to nine-year-olds and 2.30pm-3.30pm for 10 to 14-year-olds and costs £80 per child for the full course.

For more details contact 01325 729980 or email golf@rockliffehall.com

Off to a flyer in N&D

Ravensworth Golf Club got their Newcastle and District League season off to a great start with an impressive 12-0 win over Arcot Golf Club at Ravensworth.

The first round of N&D fixtures took place on Thursday, May 2 with Tyneside Golf Club the other big winner – recording an 11-1 win over Gosforth Golf Club.

The rest of the first weeks results:

Prudhoe 11- 1 Backworth
Northumberland 9 – 3 Blyth
Newbiggin 8 - 4 City of Newcastle
Tynemouth 6 - 6 Morpeth
Whitley Bay 7- 5 Newcastle United
Westerhope 5 – 7 Ponteland

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Pulling the rabbits out of a hat

Dean Bailey reports on how a rapidly expanding league gives those with high handicaps a chance to win for their club

Playing for your golf club has long been the preserve of low handicappers but the North East Rabbits Golf Association (NERGA) is giving the biggest group of club golfers, those with handicaps of 16-24, the chance to represent their club and take a trophy home at the end of the year.

Set up three years ago NERGA has grown rapidly, with 23 teams taking part this season, stretching from Newcastle to York. Having grown from

just five teams, NERGA Secretary Martin Hill believes that the league's strength is that it offers benefits to golfers and their clubs, "The reaction we've received from both players and clubs is excellent.

"The players absolutely love it. The best thing for them is the opportunity to play courses they wouldn't normally go to. The team at my home club Dinsdale Spa were really excited when they found out we were playing three courses in the Newcastle area, and



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Stockton Golf Week 2013

Tues 30 July – Fri 2 August

Stockton's annual golf week tees off for the fourth time offering golfers of all abilities the opportunity to take part in a challenging four day golf event.

Tues 30 July - Teesside
Wed 31 July - Eaglescliffe
Thur 1 August - Billingham
Fri 2 August - Wynyard

Players are welcome in groups or as individuals and prizes will be awarded on each day as well as for the full 4 day competition.

If you would like further information on Stockton Golf Week please visit stockton.gov.uk/golfweek or contact Stockton's Visitor Information Centre on **01642 528130**.




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we're getting the same reaction from a lot of the clubs. "It's great for the clubs too; all the money we take on the day goes to the club plus anything they make over the bar or in the pro shop."

Last year Kirkbymoorside Golf Club in North Yorkshire won the NERGA Championship.

This year's championship will take place at Rudding Park, Huddersfield.

The league has struck a sponsorship deal with Cleveland Golf for this season and has agreed a deal to play the

Championship day at Rudding Park for the next two years, "We're very grateful to Rudding Park for their commitment to the final day of the season. It's great to have a top-class venue for our biggest day," Hill said.

The NERGA is always on the lookout for new teams and is aiming to become the largest golf league in the North over the next three years. "Our aim is to get another group of teams [eight] involved for the start of next season. From there we'd like

«This year there are 23 teams taking part in the NERGA.

Red Zone: Wearside, Parklands, Chester Le Street, Dinsdale Spa, Crook, Garesfield, Stocksfield

Blue Zone: Richmond, Thirsk and Northallerton, Romanby, Blackwell, Catterick, Malton/Norton, Darlington, Scarborough North Cliff

Green Zone: KP Club, Whitby, Forest Park, Kirkbymoorside, Filey, Easingwold, Bedale, Ripon

to get another eight the year after. I think we can get up to 50 or 60 teams in the next three years, making us the biggest golf league anywhere in the North," Hill explained. This season the 23 teams are split into three groups with each club hosting one event, on either a Saturday or Sunday. The events bring together 64 players, the 56 away players paying a £10 green fee. Teams of eight then take part in a singles stableford competition, with full handicap allowance, with the

top seven scores on the day counting towards the team's total. The winning club on the day receives 8 points, second seven and so on.

The top club in each group then take part in the NERGA Championship final. They are joined on the day by the leading points scorers from each of the 23 clubs who play for the Player of the Year title – won last year by Kirkbymoorside's Chris Knowles.

For fixtures and more information on the NERGA visit: www.nerga.co.uk.

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2013 Open Competitions

Friday 28th June

Texas Scramble

£40 per team, 28 max, 8 shots max

Prizes 1st to 5th - 1st £400 2nd £200 3rd £100

Sunday 7th July

Mixed Open

£12 pair - prizes 1st to 4th

Saturday 13th July

Hall Mason Open 4BBB

£25 pair, 28 max

Prizes 1st to 5th - 1st £300 2nd £200

3rd £120 4th £80

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Tuesday 26th July

Ladies Team Open

£24 team Prizes 1st-4th

Sunday 11th August

Gents Open 4BBB

£20 pair, max 28

Prizes 1st to 4th - 1st £300 2nd £200 3rd £100

Thursday 15th August

Senior Open 4BBB

£14 pair, Max 28, prizes 1st-4th

Sunday 15th Sept

Texas Scramble

£40 team, max 28, max 8 shots

Prizes 1st to 4th - 1st £400 2nd £200 3rd £100



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➤ Vince Guest

Special Guest makes his mark

Alan Hedley rounds up news of some of the region's pros

Teeside's Vince Guest used all his experience to good effect to win the PGA England and Wales (North) qualifying school at Normanton in Yorkshire.

The 45-year-old was three over par after four holes and "was making a right mess of it" before pulling his game around and signing for an opening level par 72.

In the second round he edged ahead and despite a lapse at the 16th, he signed for a 71 to finish one ahead of Jamie Ashworth.

The top 20 players qualified on 157 or better to join the 40 who got through at Bolton and will now be eligible to compete in all the North Region Order of Merit events this season.

George Cowan (Westerhope) was runner-up to Ashton's Kris Andrews at Bolton in the west qualifying to clinch a spot, but he didn't have to play in the final qualifying for the Europro Tour at Frilford Heath because he finished 38th in last year's Order of Merit.

He's joined on the tour by City of Newcastle's Phil Ridden who tied 15th at Frilford Heath on seven under while the likes of Close House's

Andy Scrimshaw, Hartlepool's Alex Wrigley, Morpeth's Steven Fawcitt and Bedlingtonshire's Mathew Webb all finished well enough to guarantee a number of starts.

Cowan's been on a bit of a run with a win the NE and NW PGA Spring Pro-am at Archerfield Links where he followed a level par 72 on the Fidra course with a magnificent three-under-par 69 on the Dirleton course for a one-stroke victory over Andrew Baston (Ponteland) and Martin Forster (Tynedale).

He was in the frame again when Jonathan Lupton (Close House) won the NE and NW PGA Pro Series event at the Wynyard Club.

In strong winds, Lupton posted a one under par 71 which was good enough to hold off a strong challenge from Graeme Bell (Eaglescliffe), Cowan and Mark Ridley (South Moor) all on 72.

Darren Pearce (Barnard Castle) aced the 15th at Seahouses with an eight iron on his way to 67 and victory in the NE and NW PGA Pro Series tournament there. It was the fifth ace of his career and just four days earlier he holed his three iron for an albatross two at Barnard Castle's par five ninth.



➤ Chris McDonnell

Chris McDonnell has left Hexham to become assistant at the Royal Club in Bahrain.

McDonnell's move left an opening which has been filled by Phil Waugh, who leaves Close House to become assistant to Andy Paisley - Hexham was Waugh's club as an amateur.

Twice Northumberland County Champion and an England Schools cap, McDonnell won the Slovenian Open Championship on the Alps Tour and is a former PGA NE and NW PGA Matchplay champion.

Following a spell at De Vere Oulton Hall in Leeds, Rob Booth is now attached to Crosland Heath with Richard Lambert.

The 28-year-old Booth turned professional when just 16 and was then assistant to Mike Ingham at Cleckheaton and a teaching professional at Stadium Golf before moving back to Bradley Hall.



EUROPEAN tour player and former French Open Champion Graeme Storm guested for the



Teesside Alliance in their pre-season warm-up game against the Teesside Union side at Rockcliffe Hall.

Flaxby has appointed Alex Douglas as their new professional.

Douglas joins Flaxby from Castilgon Del Bosca, in Italy, and has also had spells at Tandridge and Harleyford in the South.

Alex Belt has notched a win in the El Valle Open in Spain. A final round 66 saw him come through to take the 2,000 Euro top prize.

He then followed up by reaching the semi-finals of the Thomas Sabo Matchplay Championship losing 4 and 3 to Denmark's Victor Osterby.

Belt, the youngest-ever winner of the Northern PGA Championship when he triumphed at Burgham Park, intends giving it go on the Europro Tour this season and recently agreed a three-year deal to represent Snainton Golf on the Tour.

Meanwhile, Snainton's John Wells, a Great Britain and Ireland PGA Cup player, took the spoils in the Brough pro-am, with a level par 68 to win by one from Selby's Nick Ludwell and John Mellor from The Oaks Golf Club.



So Close for Wilson

Darlington's Andrew Wilson just missed out on a play off as Gary Hurley won the R and A Foundation Scholars Tournament in St Andrews.

Andrew, a member of the Northumbria University elite golf squad finished one shot behind Hurley and Craig Howie after both finished tied on 211.

An opening 68 saw Andrew leading the event but a second round 75 dropped him back into a three-way tie with Hurley and Craig and when both came in with four under par 68s, Andrew just failed to stay in the mix with a 69.

Hurley, from NUI Maynooth, clinched the title winning the first

hole of a sudden death play-off calmly rolling in a five foot par putt on the Old Course, and there was an Irish double when Paula Grant, the 2011 Irish Girls Champion, won the women's event by one shot from two-time winner and fellow Stirling player Kelsey Macdonald.

Northumbria's Ami Storey finished down the field with 76 79 and 78.

Wilson also recently finished runner-up for the second year running when he partnered Darren Tate as Darlington lost to Hexham's Matty Lamb and Martin Coup in the Northumberland and Durham Inter-County Foursomes Final at Heworth.

Jose's Seve plea

Jose Maria Olazabal has called on Europe's top players to commit to the Vivendi Seve Trophy before it's too late.

The Spaniard has called on his Ryder Cup stars including Rory McIlroy and Justin Rose to make space in their already packed schedules for the biennial match between Great Britain and Ireland and Continental Europe this October.

The last time the event was held in England, at Wynyard Golf Club in 2005, GB & I captained by Colin Montgomerie beat

Olazabal's Continental Europe 16.5 to 11.5.

The matches hold a special place in the Spaniard's heart, being named after his compatriot and long-time friend Seve Ballesteros.

"It would be a great shame if we lose this event. I would love to see the involvement for the top players for that event, their commitment would help in terms on sponsorship, TV and making it a bigger spectacle," Olazabal said.

A venue for this year's event is yet to be confirmed.

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A wildlife haven for good golfers

Alan Hedley takes a trip down the A19 and finds it's not the road to hell but a trip to an excellent course

It's no surprise Billingham has produced so many talented and exceptional golfers because this is quite an exceptional and challenging course.

It's not hugely long, but at nearly 6,350 yards, with undulating tree-lined tight fairways demanding accuracy and tricky greens demanding clear-thinking club selection, it's not surprising it has churned out a string of quality county players and professionals.

Based just off the A19, it's parkland and demands some stamina, but there is always the option of a buggy or powered trolley.

Because of its hilly nature, there are a number of blind shots but there are also some fine views over Teesside and the Cleveland Hills and thanks to the club's tree-planting programme, the course

is a real joy and haven for wildlife including foxes, geese, squirrels, birds and deer.

There's a splendid clubhouse overlooking the ninth and 18th greens with an excellent professional's shop run by Mike Ure and an extensive practice area and driving range.

Don't be lulled into a false sense of security by the gentle opening hole, which is a short par four. Hit it left and you'll be left with a short approach to a slightly elevated green.

The real business starts at the second, a classic risk or reward par five where avoiding the fairway bunker, the out of bounds and the ditch in the dip short of the green is key as is the tee shot at the third because it's blind!

There's no let-up with a tough par four (stroke index 2) next and an equally difficult par three



from an elevated tee to a smallish green with a deep greenside bunker.

There's some relief at six, a short par four which is reachable from an elevated tee to a green set at the bottom of the hill, but there are trees either side of green.

You need to be right at the next with out of bounds down the left and it's followed by a lovely par three played from an elevated tee to a long narrow green with a deep bunker at the front – don't be long though.

The front nine ends with a nice par five and a shortish par five gets the back nine under way and it's a good birdie chance if you make sure the drive is down the left.

Par is premium at the signature hole 11th (see Factfile) and there are chances at the 12th, which



«The course under the supervision of Frank Pennick progressed and the clubhouse opened on February 27, 1969.

is a par five, the 13th which is a right to left dog-leg to an elevated green and the short uphill 14th with the green set into the bank.

Again, the 15th is a par five and as it's under 500 yards, it must be considered a birdie chance but it is an undulating hole with a ditch at the bottom of the dip.

The finish is testing but not impossible with 16 being a similar par three to the 14th but more uphill and therefore one club more than 14 while 17 is a short but tight par four with a tree-lined fairway and it's not necessarily a driver.

The final hole is also not a long par four but it needs a straight drive over the valley to leave an approach to a well-bunkered smallish green...do not be long!

FACT FILE

CONTACT

Billingham Golf Club, Sandy Lane,
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CADDY'S TIP

DON'T assume it's always a driver off the tee. Make sure you keep it in play and out of trees!

SIGNATURE HOLE

The 388 yard 11th is just a classic par four which proves it doesn't need to be 400 yards plus to be a great golf hole. The pressure is all on the drive where you need to avoid the ditch running along the left and then on the approach which has to make it over the pond in front of the green.

« Billingham has always been user-friendly when it comes to junior golf so it is not surprising the club has been awarded the coveted GolfMark with the added distinction of High Achiever status. This is awarded to those golf clubs who have met additional conditions over and above the minimum standards required.

Of the 13 Durham clubs with GolfMark recognition, it is only the third one to be awarded the High Achiever status.

Billingham has won many county titles, team championships and national titles, including the Lytham Trophy.



ALAN HEDLEY'S VERDICT

It's a tough test, physically and mentally, but you'll walk off the Billingham course knowing you've had to find your A game to score well



Footballers unite for Sir Bobby

Stars tun out in force to support Foundation

North East football came together to raise funds for the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation.

Current and former players and staff from Middlesbrough FC, Sunderland AFC and Newcastle United were among the golfers swinging into action at the Sir Bobby Robson Celebrity Golf Day at Rockliffe Hall Hotel, near Darlington.

Organised by Sir Bobby's family, it is the third annual golf day in aid of the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and charity Patron and Middlesbrough chairman Steve Gibson was among

the high-profile guests. Others supporting the event included Boro's Tony Mowbray, Jason Steele, Nicky Bailey, Dean Gordon, Jimmy Warnett and Richard Smallwood, former Sunderland players Micky Horswill, Ritchie Pitt and John MacPhail and Newcastle United's John Carver, Steve Stone, Andy Woodman, Bob Moncur, John Beresford, Steve Howey, James Perch, Dan Gosling and Shola Ameobi.

Tony 'The Fridge' Phoenix-Morrison, who ran for 24 hours carrying a fridge at the weekend to raise funds for the Foundation, was also among the golfers. The granddad from Hebburn

Lady Elsie Robson with Shola Ameobi, Steve Gibson, Tony Mowbray and Micky Horswill

was celebrating his 49th birthday and received a special thank you from Sir Bobby's son Andrew.

Lady Elsie says: "This is always such a special day for my family and I because we're so involved with organising things. We meet so many wonderful fundraisers for the Foundation and it feels good to be one of them at this time of year.

"I love the way this golf day unites the north east football clubs. Bob would have been very touched by that.

"The support our charity receives from Sunderland, Newcastle and Middlesbrough particularly is wonderful and we really appreciate it. Especially as I know they're each coming to the end of a long football season."

Middlesbrough FC chairman, Steve Gibson, says: "It's fantastic to see all three North East football clubs so well represented. It's a busy time of the season for everyone but people made the effort to come out and that's a tribute to Sir Bobby and all his charity is trying to achieve.

"I'm very proud to be a Patron of the Foundation and it's fantastic that the people of the North East have been so supportive of it. It's raised over £5million now and that money's helping people with cancer in this region."

Newcastle United's Shola Ameobi says: "I'm very happy to support the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and especially on a lovely day like this. We're playing a bit of golf but today is about raising money and hopefully some awareness of the charity.

"Sir Bobby meant the world to me. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for him, his generosity, his kindness and his leadership. He was a mentor to me even after he left Newcastle. It's very important to me to do what I can for his Foundation."

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Happy 10th birthday to Jarrow Arrow's star-studded COCO day

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Steve Cram Celebrity Golf Day in aid of COCO. Dean Bailey talks golf and charity with the Jarrow Arrow

Steve Cram made the career move from athletics to broadcasting with ease, becoming a regular on the BBC and playing a key role in the London 2012 coverage. But, by his own admission, golf does not come quite as easy to the 52 year-old.

"I used to play a lot back in the 90s and towards the end of my running career. Since I've retired from running, life has taken over and I've had to start doing other things so over the last few years I've played less and less," Cram explained. "It is a goal of mine, over the next three or four years, to get out and start playing a little bit more."

Cram did, however, find time to play during his athletics career, which included a World Championship gold in 1983 and a silver at the 1984

Olympics in Los Angeles, "I started playing off and on when I was 19.

"When I was training a lot, getting out for a game of golf during the day was great. I played quite a bit and I was able to get down to about 14," he said.

With a golfing CV that includes the likes of Royal Melbourne and The Belfry, golf courses in the North East still have a special place in Cram's heart. "I still have a soft spot for my old club Morpeth. It's where I've shot most of my best rounds over the years.

"I tend to play a lot at Slaley, Matten, Close House and Hexham, but I've played a lot of courses in the North East. I do genuinely like Slaley. I first started going there when it was set up and I've always enjoyed it. The Hunting course is challenging but I really enjoy it.

"I think I've played the 18th well once.

► The line up from last year's event



I seem to get there with a good round going and then it all goes down hill.

"The idea of joining the local club just isn't appealing to me at the moment. Maybe in 10 years time I'll be able to play nine holes and then sit in the clubhouse with a pint and enjoy it a bit more," he explained.

Not a fan of the winter weather, Cram enjoys his golf most when he can play with his shorts on: "I do really need the sun on my back. One of my other favourite places is Desert Springs in Spain. I have a lot of friends there, Daley [Thompson] and Beefy [Sir Ian Botham] have places out there.

"The course is just cacti and rocks with these green swathes of carpet running through it. If I was going to hop on a plane and go somewhere it would be there," he said.

Cram has always had strong friendships with his fellow athletes and has found firm friends in other sportspeople through golf: "I've played with some good golfers over the years. One year in our golf day we allowed the sponsors to pick who they played with and one of them picked Beefy. He's a single figure handicapper and a really good player.

"The team were all high handicappers and perhaps not the best golfers and when Beefy finished he was a little frustrated. The following year I was at his event at Desert Springs and he did the exact opposite to me. He knows my level of golf and he paired me with three ladies – one was the lady captain and the other two were Trish Johnson and Becky Brewerton. They showed me up all the way round.

Of course Beefy kept winding me up and telling me there was a skirt waiting for me in the clubhouse," he explained with a wry smile.

"The COCO golf day has got bigger every year, which is great for us as a fundraiser but it's also a really good way of letting more people, particularly in the North East, know what the charity is and what we do.

"What's great for us is that the fundraising we do on the day carries on. The people who didn't know about us before become friends of the charity, come to other events or start giving or want to know more about other events.

"Our aim is that people want to come back next year and want to help us in other things we're doing," he said.

This year's event is at De Vere Slaley Hall on June 19.



« My fantasy four-ball? I love playing with Daley [Thompson] so he'd be in there. Someone I met a couple of times and I would love to have had a game with him was Seve [Ballesteros]. I think everybody would.

I'd quite like to play with Peter Alliss. I'm in broadcasting now and I've always liked his commentary. Playing with Peter would be good because he would find Daley incredibly frustrating – he doesn't know many of the rules, he can hit the ball a long way but he can also hit it three yards. I think he would be thoroughly entertained.

The Iconiq Steve Cram Celebrity Golf Day in aid of COCO takes place on June 19 at DeVere Slaley Hall.

Each three person team will be joined by a celebrity on the day – Headlined by five-time gold-medallist Steve Redgrave, the field also includes swimmer Mark Foster and Taekwondo gold medallist Jade Jones. After breakfast in the Claret Jug players will head out onto the fantastic Hunting and Priestman courses. The day will be rounded off with a

champagne reception, three course presentation dinner and entertainment.

Each player will receive a welcome pack including a bespoke Nike golf shirt. All money raised on the day will go towards combating the poverty preventing children from getting an education in remote regions of the developing world including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and South Africa.

Teams costs £600+VAT and tickets are available for the dinner. Contact info@extramile.com for more details.

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TV duo's talent contest

Ant and Dec may host some of the UK's biggest shows but do they have what it takes on the golf course?

Britain's Got Talent presenters Ant and Dec will find out if they have true golfing talent in front of a packed gallery at Celtic Manor this month.

Originally asked to present the trophy at Golf Live's Celebrity Cup, Ant and Dec are unable to commit as they have been nominated for two TV BAFTA awards and attending the awards ceremony in London on that evening.

They have instead agreed to play a much more active part at the star-studded event on the Saturday and attend the fund-raising Celebrity Gala Dinner at Celtic Manor in the evening.

The most popular double act on television will join Ryder Cup legend

Colin Montgomerie at Celtic and will put themselves under the spotlight in a 'nearest the pin' and 'straightest drive' competition. Colin said: "We're delighted that Ant and Dec are coming back to Celtic Manor to join in the fun, and especially pleased they will now be there in the evening to support The Elizabeth Montgomerie Foundation alongside the 24 Celebrities representing their countries, it's going to be a great day and a truly entertaining evening"

They'll be joined by Olympian Sir Steve Redgrave, Rugby World Cup winner Matt Dawson, model Jodie Kidd, comedian Rob Brydon and football legends Kenny Dalglish and Alan Hansen.



Ant and Dec

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Make a date

Harrogate attracts some of the biggest names in golf from both on and off the course, with the promise this year's will be the best yet

PGA Members are being urged to save the dates of October 8-10 in order to attend The Golf Show 2013, Europe's largest golf trade and educational event.

The event is returning to the Harrogate International Centre (HIC), Yorkshire, when it will once more bring together PGA Professionals, industry suppliers and high-profile guest speakers.

Now in its fourth year, the three-day show includes an exhibition of the latest products and services from the industry's top brands and regular

exhibitors from previous years include: Callaway, FootJoy, Nike Golf, PING, TaylorMade-adidas and Titleist.

The 2013 showpiece also sees the return of the Teaching and Coaching Conference, which was introduced in 2012 by popular demand to offer a focused setting for expert speakers on the business of teaching and coaching golf.

David Colclough, Head of PGA Member Education and Development, said: "The Golf Show has become one of the most important industry events to PGA Professionals



and I urge our members across the world to save the date in order to ensure they're available to attend."

John Davis, The Golf Show Event Manager, said: "The Golf Show management team has been busy preparing the agenda for the 2013 programme and PGA

Professionals will be able to book their place in early May when registration opens."

Nearly 1,300 PGA professionals attended the Harrogate event last year.

To find out more about The Golf Show 2013, visit www.golftradeshow.co.uk.

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McCrary's inspiration in his fight to conquer golf

*Dean Bailey talks to boxing legend
Glenn McCrary about his growing
obsession with golf sparked by two years
of research into another true champion*

Former world cruiserweight champion Glenn McCrary hopes to make a big impact on North East golf when he hosts the inaugural J Douglas Edgar Golf Day this summer. The event remembers one of the region's, if not the world's, greatest golfers 24 years to the day since the region's greatest boxer won the world title.

McCrary, a fixture on Sky Sports since his world title success, is bringing together local and international sportspeople as well as a number of television personalities for the event at South Moor Golf Club on June 3.

The golf day has come to fruition after two years of research into the life of J Douglas Edgar. Something of a forgotten star, Edgar's finest hour came at the Canadian Open where he claimed a 16-shot victory over a glittering field that included his student Bobby Jones.

His story was brought to McCrary's attention by North East sports journalist John 'Gibbo' Gibson. "Edgar's grandson got in touch with 'Gibbo' and he passed the story on to me. I was fascinated by it," says McCrary, adding: "It's great to think that one of the greatest records of all-time is held by a Geordie."

Generally McCrary, who is not a member of a golf club, plays at

the City of Newcastle Golf Club, where Edgar began his career as an Assistant Professional.

An occasional golfer, McCrary has played off and on for over 20 years and would give himself a rough handicap of 24 – despite having finished second to Willie Thorne in a golf day at DeVere Carden Park in the past.

McCrary is looking to dedicate himself to the game this year, "Being the competitive person that I am, I just really want to make the step and get into it seriously," he explains.

"It's a game where, in the past, I wasn't too bothered - it was just a celebrity thing. Now I've got the bug and I want to play whenever I can.

"I'd love to get to the stage where I'm playing a couple of times a week. One of the problems has been joining a golf club, in the past I've been all over the place going from one country to the next; I just couldn't justify it when I was never going to be there."

McCrary is confident that, with some practice and tuition, he can make a good go at golf. "I'd like to think I could get to single figures. I know what I'm like when I get into something, I get the bug and become obsessed. I'll probably end up as one of those people who spends six hours on the driving range every day."

Boxing and golf share a lot



GLENN MCCRORY

of common ground, as McCrory explains: "Golf is a very solitary game, there's only yourself to rely on. It's the same in boxing, there's nobody else to back you up, it's just you and you've got to find a way to win."

Sportsmanship also plays a big part in the two sports, "We've bashed the crap out of each other but if Lennox [Lewis] was to walk in now I'd get a big hug and [Mike] Tyson would do the same. Boxing is more like a brotherhood than many other sports," he says.

When it comes to tour golf McCrory harks back to his Irish roots. "Rory's my man," he smiles, adding: "a Belfast boy the same as my family. Aside from him, Tiger Woods is phenomenal."

"I was brought up in the era when Muhammad Ali was breaking through the barriers so many black athletes faced. He changed the sport of boxing, much like Woods did in golf."

"I love seeing anyone who is dominant in their sport. I remember seeing Johnny Wilkinson when I used to train with the Newcastle Falcons. We had trained in the morning, and again in the afternoon and as I was leaving at six o'clock Johnny was still there, still on the field with about 30 balls around him. That is why he is so great."

County Durham-based McCrory remains close to his North East roots and South Moor is a special place to him.

"My priest was a guy called Father Noel Fielding. He was in my dressing room and would bless me before my fights; he played at South Moor and was off scratch for a long time," he explained.

Father Fielding sadly passed away the year before McCrory won the world title but his name lives on at South Moor through the Father Fielding Trophy.

"It was his golf course so there's a big link there with me and my past," McCrory says.

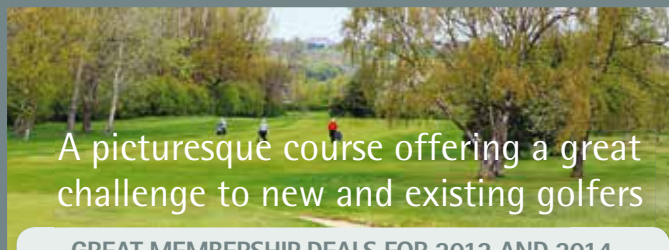
The J Douglas Edgar Golf Day takes place at South Moor Golf Club on June 3 with all the proceeds from the charity auction going to Cedars School, Gateshead.

Teams of three are priced at £600. For more information contact: glenn@glennmccrory.

► Fantasy Four-ball. J Douglas Edgar – he was a legend and the fact I've been to his grave and the spot where he died – I would love to have met him and had the chance to play with him, he'd be able to give me a lesson too.

Sugar Ray Robinson and Joe Louis. Back in the day golf was the sport for exercise, they'd go away to a training camp and the only thing they'd do was play golf all week. Sugar Ray Robinson could do everything – he could dance, he was good looking, I'm sure he'd be able to hit a good ball too."

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Tee for two – my starter's guide to golf

Sharon McKee, Lady Golfer of Northumberland, shares her experience of her first-ever round and how she has caught the bug

I have played crazy golf on holiday and read about Tiger Woods 'off course' antics - until recently that was the limit of my golfing knowledge.

I then inherited a set of golf clubs and though some may have called them 'out of the ark' I love their vintage solid look..

Spurred on by an offer we couldn't refuse for a round of golf for two on one of those voucher sites, myself and a friend equally lacking in golfing experience set off to play our first ever proper round at Alnwick Golf Club.

The day started off well, we didn't get lost on the way and we got complimentary coffee and a bacon butty in the club house. I briefly mentioned to the chap who welcomed us and gave us a card each that we had never ever done this before. He smiled and disappeared.

We prepared by watching out of the club house window, hoping to spot anyone else already playing to give us a clue of where the start was. Getting my vintage set out of the car, we saw a couple of men with golfing type slacks, jumpers and shiny new sets on wheels. We decided we'd follow them rather than risk their mirth by asking where the

start line was. They made it look quite easy and in a few minutes they were down a small hill, taking the flag out of what we knew by then was the first hole. After that they quickly disappeared and we decided we'd start a little bit closer to the flag, at the brow of the hill to give ourselves a chance, seeing as it was our first time.

There was some debate about which clubs to use – a solid looking wooden one was my favourite while my pal was frustrated that none of them were perfectly straight. Using different ones, we managed to hit the ball, after one or two 'practice' swipes, for what we considered to be a long way.

The disadvantage of my vintage set was that it wasn't on wheels so we had to carry quite a heavy load with us every time we moved. We decided this was just good exercise. My golfing buddy was good at hitting the ball quite far, I was better at was getting it in the right direction. When it came to having to take the flag out of the hole in anticipation we were quite giddy with our success so far. We dutifully filled in the score card, though were a little confused about which colour course we

were doing and whether it was the lady golfers option. The sheet reckoned it was a 4 par hole - we'd made it in 5 and 6. Rather proud of ourselves we picked up our baggage to head to the next one.

There was no one in sight, and we were back to the debate about where we should start the next one from. We walked past a rock, up a hill 'surely we wouldn't be able to get a ball up there' to an area near some smooth looking grass not too far from next the flag. It felt a bit close but we couldn't see anything that told us where to start from. This time the surprise was how difficult it was, even that close, to get the ball into the hole as it turned out to be on a slope.

There was a bigger hill in front of us leading up to where we guessed the next hole would be. At the top as we turned to admire the view behind us, the sky darkened and it started hailstoning. We'd come prepared with flasks and snacks (reckoning rightly it might be a very cold, very long day) and sheltered in some trees for a coffee break.

Waiting for the wintry weather to pass we calculated that we'd taken nearly an hour to get this far - given that there were 18 holes in total we were heading for a very late finish. After a warming cuppa we set off again, spotting the flag ahead – and then also spotting the men who had been in front of us. They were now walking back towards the club house along a parallel path - surely they couldn't have already finished?

After completing the third hole in what we considered quite impressive style and time we noticed there was another large rock – and it had a sign on it telling us how many yards away the next hole was. The penny dropped. That's where you start from.

We felt compelled to try and play properly so we started from the rock. The next flag didn't look too far away – but all the surrounding grass was quite overgrown, or 'rough' as we started trying to use correct terminology too.

Doing it 'properly' proved a challenge. Getting out of the 'rough' was extremely time consuming. We did wonder if there was hidden CCTV and we were providing comical entertainment for those in the club house. Eventually we finally 'did' the fourth and decided maybe to cut the course a little short..

I'm sure in other people's books we may not have had a successful round of golf but we enjoyed ourselves and on the way back were discussing how we should get some practice before booking another round - Golf courses of the north east.. you have been warned!



Sharon was so taken with her first golfing experience that she's enlisted the help of Grahame Garland, Secretary and Professional of Gosforth Golf Club, Newcastle in her quest to learn the rudiments of the game. Follow her progress in the next issue of Northern Golfer- it's sure to be an entertaining journey.



Graeme Storm



“

TOUGH TIMES

Rockliffe pro's trials and tribulations

”

The past month has seen me come up against some of the toughest struggles of my professional golfing career to date. It has involved a mixture of emotions from success through to disappointment,

Looking to build on my great result in South Africa, I began March with a two week tour of the Far East, starting in India. Rather than improving my game, I felt I had taken a step backwards and was left disappointed with my performance. I decided to go back to the drawing board and spent the following week on the driving range working on my drills and figuring out where I went wrong; ready to step up my game in Malaysia.

Prepared to give the game my all once I arrived in Malaysia, I received sad news about a close family friend passing away and decided to return to the UK to support my family. I withdrew from the tournament but after a couple of weeks at home, returned to the game with my next tournament in Morocco.

Fortunately my game got off to a good start on the first day; shooting a 68 and seeing my name shoot to the top of the leader board- my mind set had changed completely. The following day was a little tougher and I found myself fighting to make the cut, but I managed to negotiate the hurdle and went on to finish within the top 30 players for the second time this season; another great platform I aim to build upon for the next season.

Morocco has been a favourite venue for me since I won on the Challenge Tour back in 2004 which secured my card back on to the Main Tour. The course I played on during the Tour is one of the most prestigious courses in the world and is set within the palace grounds of the King of Mexico's residence. Following my success in Morocco, and with the Easter holidays upon us, my wife and I decided to take a break with the children for a few days near Southampton, which somehow involved a trip to Pepper Pig world. Not usually my sort of thing but we all enjoyed it. I also took the opportunity to put in some lessons with my coach at Rockliffe Hall; Head Professional Jon Stacey. He worked me hard on my skills and technique. And I played 18 holes on their championship golf course, which even after a tough winter was in magnificent form.

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EMMABROWN

England captain Emma Brown with England coach Steve Robinson

Emma's one of England's finest

Northern Golfer Emma Brown is captain of her country with a bulging trophy cabinet but as Alan Hedley discovered there is one championship where she is determined to strike gold

There isn't much in women's amateur golf that escaped Emma Brown, one of the finest players of her generation, except a winner's medal in the European Ladies Championship.

As Emma Duggleby (and then Brown) and a member at Malton and Norton, her individual achievements include winning British, English, European, South African and Scottish championships.

She also played in three Curtis Cup teams and in six European Ladies Team Championships where she went home with three silver medals and two bronzes.

England last won the title in 1993 before Emma's time and now captain of the England team, she would like nothing more than to be part of a gold medal winning side.

"I have a bronze and three silver medals in the championships. It would be nice 20 years on to get a gold," she said.

"I'm really looking forward to the championships. As a player you know what you expect from a captain so hopefully I will be able to help the girls as much as I can. It will be nice to be on the other side of the fence!"

Based at Sandburn Hall where she is club manager and works alongside pro Steve Robinson, who is also England ladies coach, Emma has stepped up to the role of England captain this year.

Vastly experienced as a player she hopes she will now provide the right support for her squad as non-playing captain. "It's more about giving them

encouragement and a supporting role, working with Steve (Robinson) to make sure they have their A game and prepare well.

"The players know it's up to them to stay focussed and believe they can do it. We've come close and we just have to concentrate as individuals and as a team and it's mine and Steve's job to help them win their matches and the championship.

"We have to see how it goes and how we plan out pairings depends on how the players are playing and performing. Steve and I have no say in team selection but he and I will decide the team order."

Hoping to be among those pairings will be Rotherham's Olivia Winning who has been long earmarked as an England player since she played for Yorkshire ladies at the age of 14 and entered the regional and national England set-up at 15.

Her impressive win in the Helen Holm Scottish Women's Open Strokeplay championship at Royal Troon last month where she led from start to finish will not be lost on the selectors.

From the Doncaster area, Olivia, 18, goes to Tulane University in New Orleans later this year and she hopes to be part of the England team at Fulford.

"While I'm not setting any particular targets, I would like to make it into the team for this event. That would be great especially as it is in Yorkshire and if it's anything like it is when it's county match week, the support will be fantastic," said Olivia. "We already have clubs booking coaches for supporters to come to the tournament." »

Coach outlines challenge for Ladies

Steve Robinson has underlined the task facing England in July's European Ladies Championship at Fulford

The Sandburn Hall pro, in charge of coaching England for six years, has some excellent players to work with including European number one Georgia Hall, Curtis Cup player Bronte Law, British strokeplay champion Sarah-Jane Boyd and English strokeplay champion Alex Peters.

"Most of our players have experienced winning and they know how to get across the line," he said, "but there are some great teams in the tournament.

"The standard of ladies golf in Europe is fantastic – Germany, Sweden and Spain will be real threats – and there are no walkovers in this tournament."

Sweden are expected to be the biggest threat as they seek a hat-trick of victories and Steve added: "What are our chances? The same as any other side. I can't guarantee we will win, but I can guarantee we will be prepared.

"It's my job is to prepare the team thoroughly and professionally. You can't ever control the winning, but you can control the preparation and we prepare to the best of our abilities.

"Victory is what we will be going for. If you don't have that aim you might as well not turn up.

"We will have a young team but we have a lot of promising players coming through and I'm not sure about an over-emphasis on experience. My belief is that if you are good enough then you are old enough. It's a great opportunity for some of our younger players to come through and shine.

"Fulford is a course that's been kind to me and I hope it's going to be exactly the same when England play there," said Steve who won the Yorkshire PGA Championship and Yorkshire PGA Masters there.

England Expects

England – and Yorkshire – expects a double victory on home soil this year when the men's Home Internationals and European Ladies Team Championships are held in the White Rose county.

Both tournaments will be at quality venues – the Home Internationals at Ganton and European Ladies at Fulford.

There will also be a strong Yorkshire and North-East presence at both events, certainly behind the scenes with Emma Brown captain of the England ladies team and Steve Robinson coach while Graham Walker is also coach of the England men's team.

The chances of representation at the sharp



end are looking good as well with Huddersfield's Nick Marsh and Bamburgh's Garrick Porteous – already a full international – both in with an excellent chance of making the England men's team and Rotherham's Olivia Winning, currently in the England Performance Squad, aiming, like Marsh to step up to their respective full England teams.

"The Home Internationals tournament is a massive event and all about national pride and rivalry," said England international Neil Raymond.

"Players from the four home countries play alongside each other in individual events week-in, week-out, during the year.

"But we play against each other in the Home Internationals and then it's all about bragging rights," added Raymond.

Raymond was joined at Ganton by England colleagues Porteous, Marsh and Jamie Rutherford to get a taste of the course and while home advantage will help, it's all about performance in a tournament played on a round robin basis where all four countries play each other with each match consisting of five morning foursomes and 10 afternoon singles.

England won three titles in a row before Scotland's triumph last year and they won the last time it was held at Ganton in 1989.

Entry is free to spectators for the tournament on August 14-16 as it will be when the best women golfers from 19 countries head to Fulford, York, for the European Ladies Team Championship on July 9-13.



➤ The England Ladies Squad

Graham Walker



England men's coach Graham Walker will be very much on home ground at Ganton.

Based at The Oaks club just south east of York for nearly 10 years, he's lead coach to the England squads and Yorkshire County Head Coach.

He's been with England for 13 years and has worked with each of the national squads during that time and has been influential in the careers of the likes of European Tour players Danny Willett, 2012 winner of the BMW International Open, Paul Waring and David Horsey.

Sheffield-born Graham has also been closely involved in Yorkshire County golf and during his 11 years with them, Yorkshire have won the English County Championship eight times, been Northern Counties champions for 10 out of the 11 years and recently completed a hat-trick of English County Finals wins.

"I don't have a vote on selection and I'm not on the selection pane, but I am asked for my opinion," he said.

"The beauty of the selection process is that we have a squad system. You have to take match play results into account but at the end of the day it's all about opinions. The players get a lot of support from England Golf. They represent England with pride."

Garrick Porteous



Garrick Porteous will be considered by many to be an England shoe-in for this year's Home Internationals.

The 23-year-old from Morpeth would be the last to subscribe to that view, but having played a significant role in England's European Nations Championship win in Spain as well as being in the Great Britain and Ireland team for the St Andrews Trophy, it would be a surprise if he didn't make Ganton in August.

Garrick is the first to point out there is a long way to go, starting with this month's Lytham Trophy, which is considered the unofficial British amateur strokeplay championship, but the Tennessee University graduate is rightly seen as England and Walker Cup material.

He shot 74 75 70 69 at Sotogrande as England regained the European Nations crown and was the only team member to count in all four rounds and he's just back from Australia where he finished sixth in the Australian Amateur Masters, the Lake Macquarie Amateur (ninth) and the New South Wales Medal (third).

"Australia was a huge boost to my confidence. It is a long season ahead, but things are moving in the right direction."

Having graduated from Tennessee with a BA in studio art alongside a very successful record in collegiate golf – he was captain of the team – Garrick has never forgotten his roots. "At an early age, I became a member of Bamburgh and it has been my home club ever since," he said. "I grew up in Morpeth, where I played both rugby and golf to county level, but at the age of 16 I represented England in golf and from there on in, golf has been the sport for me and my four years at Tennessee have really developed me as a person and a golfer. The greatest honour in golf so far is to have played for England Men's team in the Home Internationals.

Garrick knows England selection will be based on form, performance and results.

"It works and the best players seem to get picked," he said.

Nick Marsh



Yorkshire teenager Nick Marsh has emerged as a consummate talent over the last two years with wins at England amateur level and also successive victories on the professional Gecko Tour.

The 18-year-old from Huddersfield upstaged the professionals by winning successive tournaments as an amateur on the Gecko Tour in December in Spain.

Those victories capped a successful year for Nick who also finished runner-up in the McEvoy Trophy and the Boys County Champions Final and tied third in the Fairhaven Trophy.

He also reached the quarter finals of the British Boys Championship, captained Yorkshire to victory in the English Boys County Championship and was leading individual in the Canadian International Junior Challenge in which England won the team title for the fifth successive year.

Not surprisingly, he was picked for England in the European Boys Team Championships and also the Boys Home Internationals. Now stepping up to the full England side at Ganton in August is very much a target.

"Winning a big event is obviously what you want because you play golf pretty much as an individual, but playing in the Home Internationals is only just behind that," said Nick.

"If I didn't win a big amateur event this year but had a strong season and made the Home Internationals and played for England in my own county of Yorkshire that would be something pretty special. It's a great feeling and privilege to hear your name being announced on the first tee and to know you are representing your country. I experienced it at the Boys Home Internationals and it really makes you feel great."

Coached by Andrew Nicholson at Wynyard Hall, Nick decimated a quality field in December recording an eight-shot victory in storm-force conditions in the Welsh Open Youths Championship at Bull Bay and when England successfully defended their Boys Home Internationals title he was unbeaten in his six matches.

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Fondly remembered

Alan Hedley reflects on the passing of three popular county men

Three stalwarts of Northumberland golf Ken Doyle, Barry Rodger and Tim Bull have passed away.

I had the great privilege of getting to know Ken very well when he asked me if I would help Arcot Hall with their centenary history – a task made so much easier by Ken's diligent research.

He'd taken over the collation and collection of numerous photographs, Press cuttings, articles and memorabilia and made such a good job of it, the task of putting together the club history was infinitely easier than it might have been.

Ken held many offices at Arcot including that of club captain and served on most of the club committees for over 20 years and was also captain of the Society of Northumberland Golf Captains in 1979.

He was also a keen pilot and member of Newcastle Flying Club and he probably played more golf courses around the world than some professional golfers as he always took the opportunity to play when he travelled on business. Ken sadly passed away aged 89, in the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle with his wife Joan and daughter Christine were with him at the end.

Barry Rodger, who died from a heart attack aged 79, was a past

president, chairman and captain of Arcot Hall.

He was also Northumberland County President in 1995-96, chairman of the Northern Counties, a vice-president of Northumberland Junior Golfing Association, and involved in county golf for almost 30 years and he was a former chief executive of Northumberland County Council.

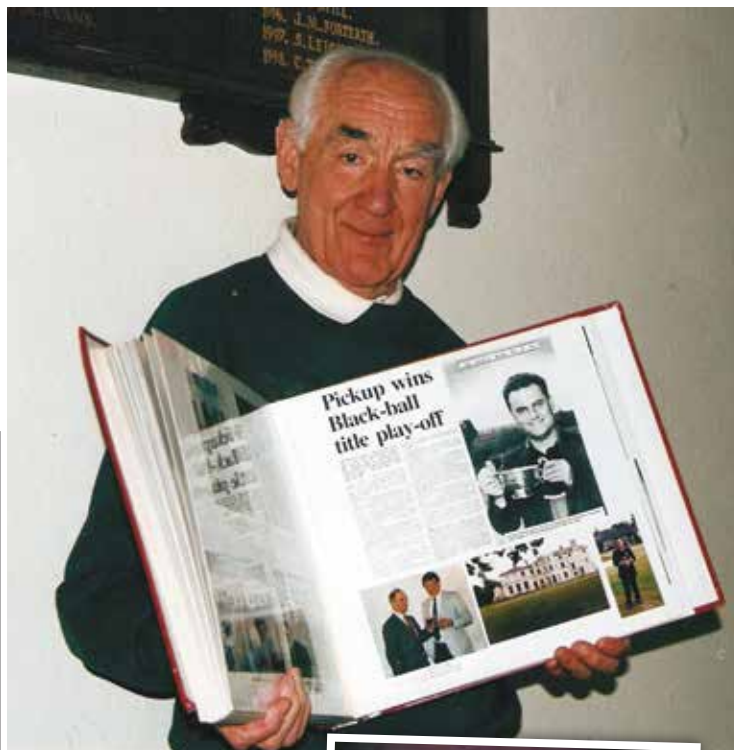
Tim Bull, who has died at the age of 70, was a member of both Arcot and The Northumberland Club.

A member of Arcot for several years, he played for the club's league team as he did when he became a member of Northumberland where he was a member of the greens committee and a frequent competition winner.

He was also a former secretary and captain of Northumberland County Seniors and, for two years, served on the main Northumberland County executive.

One of his many claims to fame is that he is probably the only North East player ever to have earned a mention in the Ottawa Citizen newspaper.

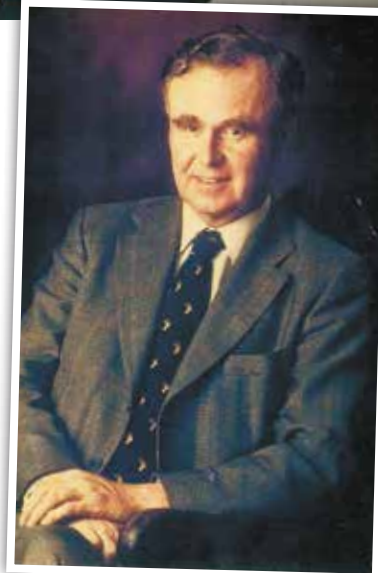
His moment of glory arrived during the British Amateur Championship at Formby in 1967 when he eliminated the eight-time champion and American Walker Cup star, Bill Cambell winning their second round match 4 and 3.



Ken Doyle with his Arcot Hall centenary records book



Tim Bull



Barry Rodger

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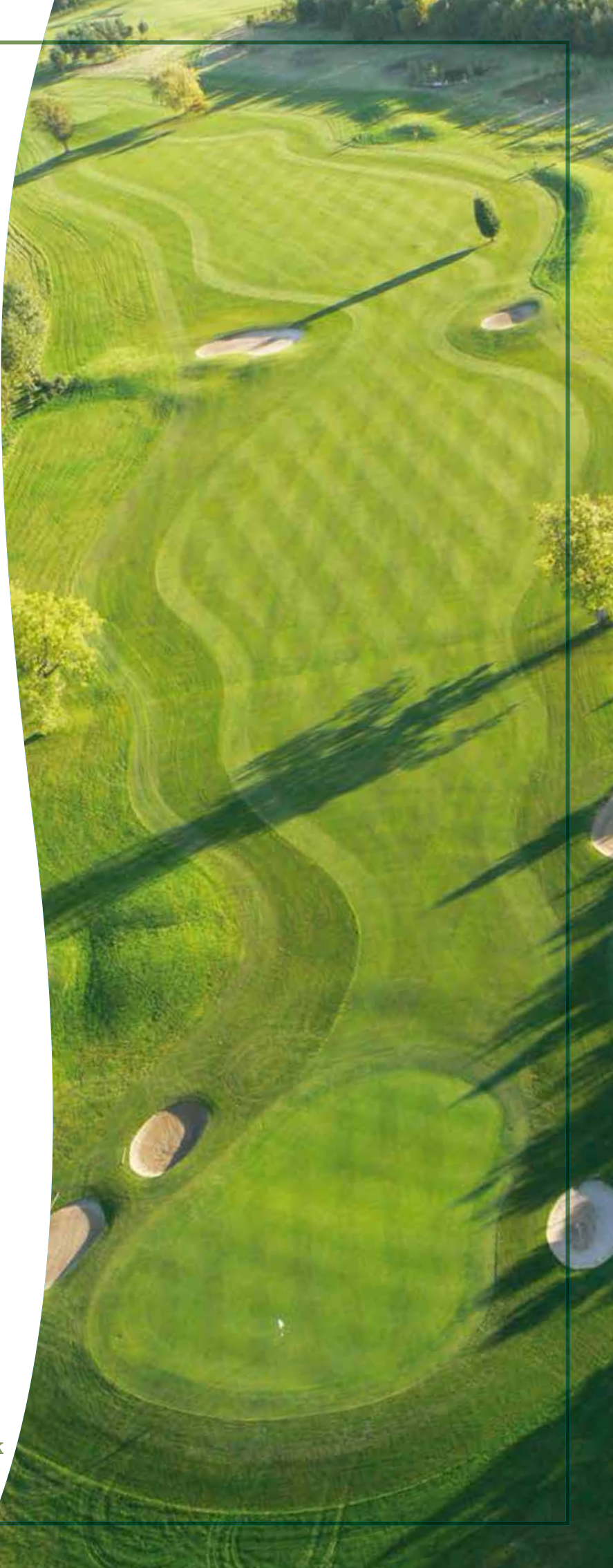
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Accuracy off the tee is key at Driffield

Don't let the trout catch you out. Alan Hedley discovers the delights of a course which could see you fishing for balls



Few courses can match Driffield for its natural setting and it's considered to be one of Yorkshire's finest parkland layouts.

At just over 6,200 yards and predominantly flat, it's not physically demanding but, with a par of 70, tree-lined fairways, ponds and a trout stream that meanders throughout, the course demands accuracy and is an excellent test of golf.

Water comes into play on holes seven to 11 and also 15 and 16 and a deft touch is needed to handle the greens.

It's not an easy start with a long 438-yard par four and the second is quite a tight dog-leg left - one of many on the course - and the most important thing at Driffield is accuracy off the tee and a solid short game.

After that fairly tough start, the next three are all fairly straightforward par fours, but you have to stay away from the bunkers, especially the case at the short sixth.

The water shouldn't intimidate you at seven but it might at eight as it runs down the left and there's also out of bounds over there.

The par five ninth is not overly long but it is

tricky and with water at various points on the left and trees down the right, position, as so often at Driffield, is key. The long par three 10th is virtually surrounded by water and the signature hole 11 follows (see Factfile).

There's some relief at the dog-leg, tree lined 12th if you avoid the four bunkers up near the green and same applies to 13 and the short 14th.

The short 15th is a little gem and is, in some minds, a candidate for the signature hole and it is a beauty at just 140 yards off the back tee and anything left will be in deep water, while anything right will be in the trees and then there's



➤ The clubhouse was replaced in 1980 but by 2000 larger premises were required and in 2001 major extensions and refurbishment costing £300,000 were carried out. Howard Clark the Ryder Cup golfer and TV commentator opened the new clubhouse in 2002. It has excellent bar facilities and a lovely restaurant and also boasts a first class pro shop overseen by Kenton Wright, a PGA Professional with over 26 years international playing and coaching experience.

an undulating green to contend with.

There's an excellent finish with a pinpoint drive needed at 16 – anything leaking right will be flirting with a long bunker and beyond it, water and anything left could be out of bounds. A straight drive will leave a short pitch to a narrow green, but it is a chance for a birdie before you finish.

The 17th and 18th are both narrow and longish par fours but, again, good tee shots will set up the prospect of a decent return, but you'll be happy with pars at both of them.

FACT FILE

CONTACT

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CADDY'S TIP

Don't always reach for the driver. Nine of the par fours are under 400 yards. That doesn't mean they are easy but you do have to be accurate and using your head, rather than the driver, sometimes will pay dividends.

SIGNATURE HOLE

The signature hole is the par five 11th with its three ponds and assorted streams running across and along the fairway.

« Drifffield is a Community Amateur Sports Club which means it is open to everyone and it's easily accessible from Hull, Beverley, York and the coastal resorts of East Yorkshire.

Founded in 1923 and initially sited on the east side of the town at Meadow Road, it moved to the current site on the Sunderlandwick estate in 1934. The estate was owned by the late Sir Thomas Ferens and provided for an 18-hole, parkland course, but during the Second World War the club gave up nine holes for agriculture in support of the war effort.

It remained as a nine-hole course until the early 1980's when it was progressively extended to 18 holes and the current layout was officially opened in September 1990. Drifffield also has a large practice area complete with two covered bays and a further practice area, with pitching green, nets and putting green close to the clubhouse with another putting green next to the first tee and was awarded the coveted GolfMark accreditation by England Golf.



ALAN HEDLEY'S VERDICT

Drifffield is perhaps the most beautiful course in the East Riding. Well manicured fairways, mature trees and true greens make it a delight.



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➤ Gordon Sinclair, Bill Hogg and Gordon Nicol

Lolly for ladies

Hoteliers provide welcome support for the new Scottish Ladies Open Tour

The new Scottish Ladies Open Tour has been handed a £20,000 boost. Three sporting hoteliers are to put up two £10,000 prizes for holes-in-one on the new circuit which will be known as the Paul Lawrie Golf Centre Scottish Ladies Open Tour.

Bill Hogg, Gordon Nicol and Gordon Sinclair are partners in ownership of the Atholl Hotel on the Aberdeen's Kings Gate while Gordon also owns the Dutch Mill Hotel in Aberdeen's Queens Road.

Bill, a member of Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, was a Great Britain and Ireland boy international in the Jacques Leglise Trophy match against the Continent of Europe when he was a teenager. He was also playing team captain for Scotland against England in the 1962 boys' international match.

Gordon, a Deeside Golf Club member, was also capped for Scotland at boy international level in 1971. Between the three of them, however, the sum total of personal holes in one is one!

"Gordon has had our only hole-in-one while on a golf holiday some time ago in Florida. I have never accomplished the feat even once despite plenty of near-misses" said Bill.

"I still live in hope that it will

happen one day but time is running out! Gordon is a very occasional player and, less surprisingly, has also never had a hole-in-one."

Paul Lawrie, who has had four holes in one in competition, certainly knows what it feels like to hit the jackpot. "I got one of my aces in the 2009 Irish Open and it won me 40,000 Euros. Not bad for just one stroke!" said Paul.

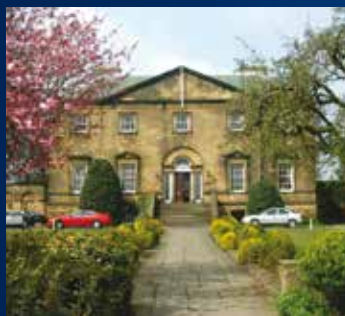
The odds against a hole in one being achieved are not as high as one might think. Actuaries at insurance companies who offer prize indemnification services have calculated the chances of an "average golfer" holing his or her tee shot at a par-3 is 12,500 to one. For a tour professional golfer, the odds come down to 2,500 to one.

The Paul Lawrie Golf Centre Scottish Ladies Open Tour - PLGC SLOT for short - is the brainchild of veteran golf writer Colin Farquharson. His co-organiser is Nicola Melville is the only PGA lady teaching professional at St Andrews.

Courses on the tour include Trump International Links, Deeside, Downfield, Carnoustie Burnside, Blairgowrie Rosemount, Fairmont St Andrews Torrance Course, The Duke's, St Andrews, Haggis Castle, Drumpellier, Craigielaw, Dalmahoy East.

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Tip Top Tees to welcome Open challengers

R and A chief promises the world's top golfers an enjoyable challenge in July at magnificent Muirfield

Muirfield is reckoned to be the fairest of the courses on the Open Championship rota. So it would have been surprising if there had been major changes made for this year's tournament in July and the only real change is that Muirfield has been lengthened by 158 yards with new tees on seven of the holes.

With a par of 71, the course will measure 7,192 yards when the world's top golfers pitch up on July 18-21 and R and A chief executive Peter Dawson says Muirfield will "challenge" them.

South Africa's Ernie Els won the Open when it was last at Muirfield in 2002 and Els is the defending champion after Adam Scott's late collapse at Lytham last summer.

The changes have been made

possible thanks to a land swap with neighbours the Renaissance Club which has enabled the ninth tee at Muirfield to be moved back 50 yards, extending the par five to 554 yards, with a new bunker on the right hand side of the fairway and some bunkers moved closer to the green.

"We are absolutely delighted to be back at Muirfield for the 16th time," said Dawson, a member The Northumberland Club in Newcastle. "The ground here is relatively flat and every hole seems to be going in a different direction, but we will be setting the golf course up to challenge these golfers.

"The rough has been cut down over the winter but will regenerate over the coming weeks. We will see the rough up and you are unlikely to win an Open Championship at Muirfield from the rough. The amount of rough is weather-

dependent, but we will get plenty.

"It's immensely popular with the players. Jack Nicklaus' comment about 'What you see is what you get' at Muirfield was perhaps directed at other links courses with blind shots and where more luck is involved."

Dawson has been forced, once again, to answer questions about the Open being at clubs with a men-only membership policy – Muirfield is such a club as are Royal Troon and Royal St George's, but Dawson insists any move to mixed memberships at men-only clubs would have to come from within those organisations.

In an interview with BBC Sport, Dawson suggested that the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews - and other exclusively male clubs which stage the Open - feel no need to change policy.

He estimates that only one per cent of the 3,000 golf clubs in the UK are single-sex organisations. He said: "50 per cent are men only and 50 per cent are women only. That's a fact that's not often reported."

Augusta recently admitted Condoleezza Rice and Darla Moore as their first female members, but Dawson insists it's much easier for women to play at Muirfield as a visitor than to play at the course that stages the Masters every year.

Dawson added: "I think many people out there think that the R and A run the golf courses in St Andrews and that no women can play. That's absolutely not the case. The courses are entirely public, run by the St Andrews Links Trust and around these courses there are five private clubs that share the public courses with visitors."

But Dawson admits there could be a perception that women aren't welcome at St Andrews and it seems the issue has disappeared at Augusta with a change in the rules.

"I don't deny my job would be made a lot easier if this issue didn't exist, that's self-evident," he said, "but one might choose to respect the wishes of members of these clubs, which are virtually unanimous in a place like St Andrews, that the status quo works extremely well for them.

"We are very aware of what people say. This issue is really quite small, although quite high profile. I think if we have this interview 10 or 15 years from now, we might be talking about quite a different scene. But that's for others to determine."

▶ The famous Old Course at St Andrews



Michael Tate in front of the 18th at St Andrews

Claret jug's trip to Edinburgh

The Open Championship and the famous Claret Jug trophy will visit the centre of Edinburgh at a special event celebrating the return of golf's oldest Major Championship to Scotland.

The Open in the Square event takes place in St Andrew Square from July 11-13, the week before the championship is held at Muirfield in East Lothian.

The public will have the opportunity to try golf, to receive some tips from PGA golf professionals, to play some of the great Open courses on EA Sports games consoles and to get their picture taken with the Claret Jug.

The event will also feature a golf simulator, a large screen showing some of the great moments from the Open Championship and artificial practice putting greens.

Alnmouth's Michael Tate, Executive Director of Business Affairs at The R and A, which runs The Open Championship, said, "The Open will attract tens of thousands of people to Edinburgh and East Lothian for the week of the Championship

but we wanted to bring a little bit of the Open into the City of Edinburgh and celebrate its status as Britain's biggest festival of golf.

"The Open in the Square will showcase golf and let the people of Edinburgh interact directly with the world's oldest Major Championship. It will be a great way for people to give golf a try and even to get their hands on the Claret Jug, an opportunity normally reserved for the legends of the game."

The Open in the Square event will run in St Andrew Square from 11am to 7pm and will be free and open to the public.

The 142nd Open Championship will

take place at Muirfield from July 14-21 July. It will be the 16th time the Championship has been played at the East Lothian links and some of the game's greatest champions have won there including Harry Vardon, James Braid, Walter Hagen, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino, Tom Watson, Nick Faldo and Ernie Els.



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Ryding high again

The magnificent 12 who pulled off the most dramatic Ryder Cup comeback of all time in Medinah are reunited for the first time since then this month

Europe's magnificent Ryder Cup team will be reunited for the first time on European soil since the "Miracle at Medinah" when all 12 players and their captain Jose Maria Olazabal tee up in the BMW PGA Championship this month.

The West Course at Wentworth Club will be the stage for golf fans to enjoy a belated celebration of that epic comeback when the 12 men and their captain go head to head in an attempt to capture the European Tour's flagship event in front of another huge crowd from May 23-26.

Led by Rory McIlroy and defending champion Luke Donald who is seeking to emulate Colin Montgomerie's record of three consecutive victories, the Ryder Cup heroes and their inspiring leader Olazabal, should guarantee an electrifying atmosphere at the Surrey venue.

Olazabal welcomed the news that his team will assemble at Wentworth and said: "Medinah was an unforgettable experience for everyone who was there, whether it was as a player, captain or spectator, and the

BMW PGA Championship is the perfect setting for the players to be reunited to show what they can do as individuals as opposed to the team environment."

McIlroy is relishing the chance to get together with his team-mates again even though, on this occasion, they are intense rivals chasing a record first prize.

"It will be great to have the team back together," he said. "It was such a special Ryder Cup, one that will have a special place in history, and I don't think anyone associated with that team will ever get tired of celebrating it."

And Justin Rose, who began the resurgence of his career when he made his first professional cut in the Great North Open at Slaley Hall, hopes he can step up to the BMW title after losing to Anders Hansen in a play-off in 2007 and tying second with another of the Medinah marvels Paul Lawrie last year.

"The BMW PGA is one of the best tournaments of the year and, for European Tour members, it's our big show, the one where we display what our Tour is all about so it's one that I think every player has an eye on throughout the year and one that we all get going for," said Rose.

➤ The 2012 Ryder Cup winning European side (photograph courtesy of Getty Images)

Golf: A European success



The dream of every European professional golfer is to represent their continent with both men and women coming together for the Ryder Cup and Solheim Cup.

Golf is unique as the only major sport represented by European teams and while success on the field of play represents the pinnacle in a sporting context, golf's success can be felt far and wide throughout Europe.

Golf: A European Success is an exhibition taking place at the European Parliament in Brussels from May 6-8, 2013, celebrating golf's contribution to Europe in economic, environmental, social and sporting terms.

Organised by the European Golf Association Golf Course Committee - a partnership of bodies across the golf industry including the European Golf Association, the R and A, the European Tour, European Golf Course Owners Association, PGAs of Europe, European Institute of Golf Course Architects, Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations, Club Managers Association of Europe - the exhibition will showcase golf's sustainability.

The exhibition highlights the sport's impact across Europe - from an economic perspective the golf industry contributes 15 billion to the European economy annually; from a social perspective 7.9 million Europeans play golf annually; and environmentally there are more than 6000 courses in Europe, up to 70% of the area of which can be used for habitat creation.

The Ryder Cup and Solheim Cups, both in European hands after respective victories over the United States at Medinah, Chicago, last September and Killeen Castle, Ireland, the previous year, will be on display to represent Golf: A European Success.

Woosnam sets sights on victory

Ian Woosnam is hoping his first visit to Mottram Hall is a winning one.

The 2006 Ryder Cup-winning captain goes in search of his first senior Tour title for two years when he competes in the ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship on June 6-9.

The ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship prestigious tournament takes place at the recently-renovated De Vere Mottram St Andrew venue for the first time, moving there after five years at Sleafy Hall.

Woosnam has finished in the top 15 in all four of his previous appearances in the ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship, which dates back to 1957.

His best performance in the event was tied 10th in 2009,

when Carl Mason took the title for the third time.

Woosnam's last victory was in the 2011 Berenberg Bank Masters and, after coming close to adding to his haul of four Senior Tour titles last season, the Welshman is determined to get his 2013 season off to the best possible start in Cheshire.

He said: "Although I used to live only an hour away in Oswestry, I never got the opportunity to play Mottram Hall so I'm looking forward to my first visit to what will be another new venue for the Senior Tour."

Last year's ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Champion at Sleafy Hall was Paul Wesselingh, who went on to finish fifth on the Order of Merit and was named the 2012 Rookie of the Year.



▶ Ian Woosnam (courtesy Getty Images)

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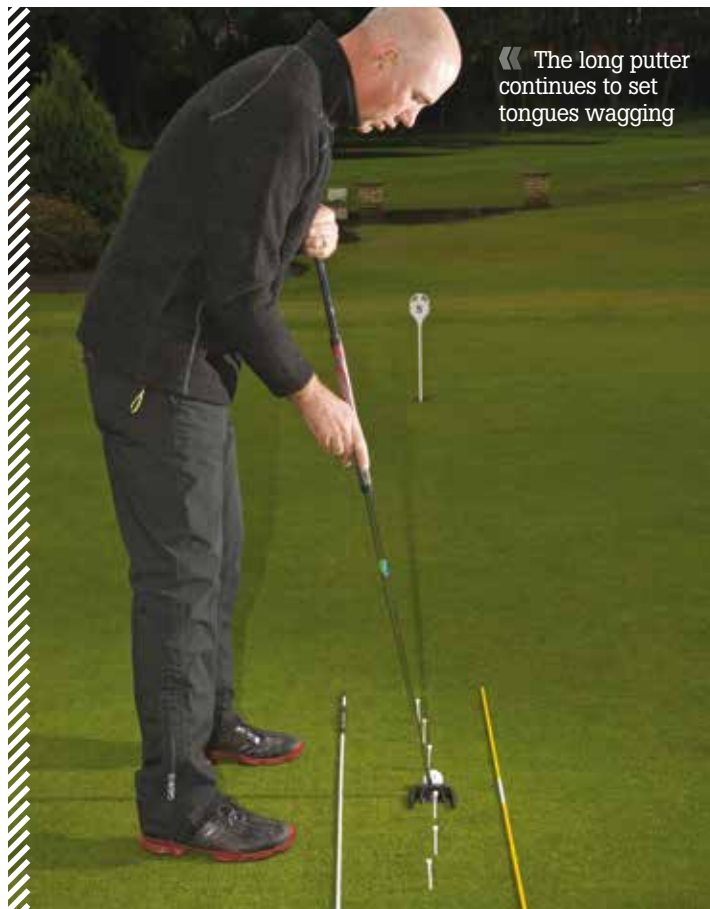
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« The long putter continues to set tongues wagging

Masters reignites long putter row

Alan Hedley reports on how Adam Scott has as many allies as those who disapprove after his long putter secured The Masters

The row over long putters rumbles on. Relations between the R and A, the USGA and the PGA of America have been a bit frosty following Adam Scott's Masters victory.

PGA President Ted Bishop described Scott's win as making it as "painful as swallowing a handful of nails for USGA and R and A officials."

The PGA and the PGA of America have made it clear they don't like the idea of banning long putters and in response to what Bishop, R and A chief executive

Peter Dawson said: "Some of the comment has been inflammatory and it's perhaps put rule-making onto the negotiating table. We've seen a campaign rather than comment. I don't want to inflame the situation, but I have been surprised and indeed disappointed and Ted knows my views."

Scott was the first to win a major using a broom-handle putter but Keegan Bradley (2011 PGA Championship), Webb Simpson (2012 US Open) and Ernie Els (2012 Open) all used belly putters for their victories.

Closer to home Yorkshire's Jodi

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Ewart - now Jodi Ewart Shadoff since her marriage - has been one of the few LPGA Tour players to use an anchored putting stroke.

"I've said this a lot of times, but all you have to do is look at my putting stats to know it's not a huge advantage," she said. "To be honest, if they do decide to ban it, it wouldn't be a huge issue for me. I'd have to spend a couple months really working out with a short putter, but it wouldn't be a huge deal for me.

"If they go ahead and do ban it, then I probably expect to use it and start making the switch in the

off season," said Jodi, who has used an anchored putting stroke since November 2011. "I did actually go back to the short putter in Malaysia at the end of last year for the first round. That didn't go so well. I actually hole more long putts with the short putter, but I'm very consistent with the belly putter within six feet."

It worked well enough for her share the first round lead in the Kraft Nabisco tournament before she slipped back but nevertheless finished in the top 10/20.

Many felt the Augusta win was

just reward for the way Scott dealt with the heartbreak of blowing a four-shot lead with four holes to play at the Open Championship last year.

However, there are many, myself among them who think using a long putter is infringing the rules of golf and while on the subject of infringing the rules, the one shot penalty for slow play imposed on 14-year-old Guan Tianlang at Augusta was heavy-handed and obtuse and smacked of picking on the player least able to defend himself.

Why not single out someone like the fidgeting Keegan Bradley, who must drive his playing partners nuts or Jason (takes all) Day, who was out of position in both his Saturday and Sunday rounds. Day is not alone in the pro ranks for his slowness.

And letting Tiger Woods off the hook didn't help either. Using rule 33-7 to waive the penalty of disqualification for signing for the wrong score has set a worrying precedent. Its use smacked of a desperate ploy to keep the world number one in the tournament. When it was brought in two years

ago, rule 33-7 was not intended to help a player ignorant of a clear rules infraction as was the case here. It was introduced to save a player who could not have known he had broken the rules i.e. something like a minor movement of a ball picked up by a high-definition or super-slow-motion television camera and the offence coming to light after a player has left the recorder's hut oblivious to the fact he has signed for the wrong score. It's a good job Woods didn't win, because he shouldn't have been in the Masters field at the weekend.

Double standards seem to abound with Vijay Singh cleared of doping by the PGA PGA Tour despite admitting using a banned substance.

Fiji's former world number one admitted he used deer antler spray, which contains small amounts of growth hormone. But the World Anti-Doping Agency told the PGATour it does not contain sufficient quantities to break the rules.

"The Tour deemed it only fair to no longer treat Mr Singh's use as a violation," said a statement.



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Florida style in Northumberland

Longhirst Hall's courses are tip-top and really test your ability as Paul Corney discovered fishing for balls

The brainchild of Ashington businessman, Tommy Dawson, Longhirst Hall Golf Club has come on leaps and bounds in recent years.

Built on a former opencast site, the original 18-hole 'Old Course' opened for play in 1997 and is still used each year throughout the winter.

The initial layout, created with a classic Florida-style design in mind, is sprinkled with lakes and water features and is home to numerous types of duck, geese and swans all sharing their new habitat with passing golfers. With a par of 73 off the yellow tees and measuring 6,398 yards, the Old Course stretches to 7,160 yards (par 72) from the gold tees and has been skilfully modelled to provide some of the most visually stunning holes in the country.

In total, 42,000 trees were planted for the opening and since then a further 10,000 have been added along with an additional 18 holes, thanks to the hard work of its Golf Director Graham Chambers and his staff.

Chambers explained: "Longhirst stems from the boss's visit to Florida. A number of different

people were brought in to look at getting the course constructed based on the Florida lakes types of designs. In 1997 the original 18 holes opened and that was followed by a second phase of construction of 11 holes which makes the Lakes Course as we know it now and the first half of the Dawson course.

"That was opened in 2002 and we finished off with a third final phase which was the second half of the Dawson Course. Hopefully we will be adding a covered driving range shortly which will give us a one stop centre with a number of club and academy membership options, along with various coaching options."

As for the two courses, the Lakes is a true test of accuracy, with tight fairways and an abundance of water offering a serious examination of course management for even the very best of golfers. The opening hole, a shortish par four is followed by a tough four-shotter. A good drive favouring the right side of the fairway and avoiding the bunker on the right should leave a 150-yard approach, played over water to a green that slopes steeply from back to front.

Played from the yellow tee, the third is a straightforward par five but from the medal tee, it is a monster of a par four where only the longest and straightest of hitters would dare contemplate going for the green in two.

With water all down the left and out of bounds to the right, the drive at the fourth is intimidating and the approach to a long narrow well contoured green with water on three sides, is not any easier.

The fifth and signature sixth are both par threes and to complete the front nine are three par fours where watery graves await any wayward shots. Holes 10 and 11 are fairly straightforward but take care at the 12th because the narrow fairway slopes dangerously towards the lake approximately 250 yards from the tee.

At 292 yards off the yellow tee, the 13th maybe reachable if you are brave enough but a sensible iron to the heart of the fairway should leave nothing much more than a wedge to the green.

The 14th is a fairly tough par three, played over water and the 15th is an even tougher one measuring 201 yards from the medal tee with water guarding the right side of the green.

Some relief at the 16th, a long par five and no water to contend with although watch out for the out of bounds to the left of the fairway.

And then it's the penultimate hole and the most talked about one at Longhirst - it can be a card-wrecker. Avoid the water from the tee and you are faced with a second shot to a narrow long green flanked by two ponds on each side and that's easier said than done, before moving to the 18th, another par five.

**CONTACT**

Longhirst Hall Golf Club Longhirst,
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« EuroPro events have been held at Longhirst since 2010, an indication of what the PGA think and a fourth tournament is to be staged there later this year. The club has planning permission to create another 18 holes but opted for a new clubhouse which was completed some six years ago.

FACT FILE

LAKES COURSE

GREEN FEES

Lakes Course – visitors
Pre 9am – £38, after 9am – £25,
guest – £14
Lakes Course – societies
Midweek – £18, Weekend & BH – £22

TOTAL DISTANCE

6900 yards (gold tees)
6101 yards (white tees)
5660 yards (yellow tees)
4991 yards (red tees)

FEATURES

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CADDY'S TIP

If you erratic from the tee, take plenty of old balls with you or invest in a ball retriever!

SIGNATURE HOLE

The 6th is a 147-yard par 3 with water surrounding most of the green. It's not quite the island green 17th at Sawgrass, but it tests the nerve in similar fashion.

FACT FILE

DAWSON COURSE

GREEN FEES

Dawson Course – visitors
Pre 9am – £30, after 9am
– £20, guest – £14
Dawson Course – societies
Midweek – £16, Weekend & BH – £20

TOTAL DISTANCE

7153 yards (gold tees)
6713 yards (white tees)
6446 yards (yellow tees)
5466 yards (red tees)

CADDY'S TIP

This course rewards good tee shots so it might be beneficial to sharpen up your skills with the driver.

SIGNATURE HOLE

The 5th is a par 4 measuring nearly 400 yards. A long tee shot is required to leave any chance of going for the island green in two. If you are not a big hitter, lay up in front of the water hazard and hope for a pitch and putt to save par. The Dawson Course, offers a more relaxing round but it still can be a real challenge if you're not on your game. The fairways are wider and more forgiving and the larger greens are more receptive. The par fours at five and 14 stand out, both demanding accuracy and a bit of nerve.

**PAUL CORNEY'S VERDICT**

Longhirst Hall offer golfers a spectacular challenge set against a backdrop of some of the most picturesque scenery you are likely to encounter anywhere in the country – these expansive Florida-style courses, with an elegant English touch are a unique concept and great fun to play.

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Win Golf For Four at Burgham Park

This championship parkland course is located in the lovely Northumberland countryside, 20 minutes from Newcastle and just a few miles north of Morpeth, just off the A1. Set in beautiful rolling countryside it is fair but challenging. Former Ryder Cup captain Mark James was part of the design team that developed the course in 1994, which has been constantly improved over the years.

For the chance to win, simply answer the following question:

Which former Ryder Cup captain was part of the design team?



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Founded in 1909, Moortown was designed by the world famous golf course architect Dr Alister MacKenzie, who also designed Augusta National, Cypress Point, Royal Melbourne and many other championship courses throughout the world. Well-known around the world as the host of the first Ryder Cup match on British soil, in 1929, Moortown is regarded by many as one of the country's finest inland golf courses. Over the past century the club has hosted many professional and amateur tournaments with winners that include Sir Nick Faldo, Bernard Gallagher and Sir Michael Bonallack, former Captain of the R & A, to name but a few.

For the chance to win, simply answer the following question:

Who designed the course at Moortown Golf Club ?



WIN GOLF FOR 4 AT WEAR SIDE GOLF CLUB

Nestling in the shadow of Penshaw monument on the southern side of the river Wear, lies one of the oldest parkland courses. It is among a small number of golf clubs in Britain that start with a par 3 and finish with a par 5 travelling away from the clubhouse. This demanding course guarantees to provide picturesque views, and a friendly welcome, giving you a memorable visit to the Golf Club.

For your chance to win, simply answer the following question:

What is Wearside Golf Club one of a small number of?



WIN GOLF FOR FOUR AT CHESTER LE STREET

Founded in 1908 with an initial layout of 9 holes, the course has been sympathetically extended over the years to achieve the existing beautiful 18 hole course, situated approximately one mile from the centre of the town on the eastern banks of the River Wear. The course is mostly parkland with forestry surrounding the majority of the eastern boundaries and the banks of River Wear for most of the western boundaries.

To win golf for four at Chester le Street simply answer the following question:
What year was Chester le Street Golf Club founded?

The weather is improving and our readers are still enjoying entering our competitions, over 600 received in our April issue.

THE WINNERS ARE:

Golf for 4 at Alnwick: Jeremy Cawley of Storrington, **Golf for 4 at Castle Eden:** Steve Spink of Huddersfield, **Golf for 4 at Driffild:** Gary Wing of Redcar, **Golf for 4 at Flamborough Head:** Paul Young of Gilesgate

Fears for Eleven Arches

The future of the Eleven Arches Golf Club looks uncertain after it was sold to the Auckland Castle Estate.

Stokesley-born financier Jonathan Ruffer paid £15m for the castle and its collection of Zurbaran paintings and has also purchased the 115-acre Eleven Arches course and driving range on the edge of Bishop Auckland.

It's believed the course and driving range are no longer operating and professional Chris Tyson has left and that the golf course, also known as Flatts Farm, has been bought to protect the views from the castle and park.

Whether there are any plans to maintain the course as a going concern are unclear but if it is permanently closed it will be the second golf course in the area to face closure with Mount Oswald in Durham City also facing extinction at the hands of developers.

The golf course opened in 2008 after being developed by former Newcastle United professional footballer Allan Barker and designed by Durham-based golf course architect Chris Stanton.

Its name comes from the visually imposing Newton Cap Viaduct and its dominating views to the South-West and it's close to Bishop Auckland town hall and Auckland Castle.

The castle was the seat of power in the North East and after the Norman Conquest, the Bishop of Durham was granted powers to act as a political and military leader and he was based at Auckland Castle, which is now home to many important works of art.

The par 71 course also has a 350 yard driving range with 14 bays and a former barn with planning consent for conversion into a clubhouse. The Castle has been opened as a visitor centre but whether there are any plans to keep the golf course is uncertain.



Chester-le-Street Golf Club

Memberships

A limited number of membership vacancies are available at competitive rates for anyone wanting to **get into golf**.

We are a Get into Golf Centre - for more details visit www.getintogolf.org or call the Club Secretary on **0191 3883218** or Professional on **0191 3890157**

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We're are running four one and a half hour coaching courses aimed at people new to the game of golf

Only £20 for four courses!!

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Course dates:

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Sat 1st June from 15.00 – 16.30 Sat 15th June from 13.30 – 15.00

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Beautiful Borders

Some of the nation's best golf courses are tucked into a very accessible area, writes Paul Corney





Covering approximately 1,800 square miles, the Scottish Borders offers visitors to the region a tantalising mixture of all the very best elements of the Scottish landscape.

From the rolling hills and moorland in the west, through gentle wooded valleys and towards rocky coastlines to the east, the combination provides an air of tranquillity and peacefulness.

There are well over 20 courses to choose from ranging from championship lay-outs at the Roxburghe and Cardrona to stunning parkland courses such as Woll and the Hirsell.

As for accommodation, the region offers many great places to stay – and a personal favourite is the

Collingwood Arms Hotel in Cornhill on Tweed. In 2007, this hotel received a 21st century makeover with award-winning architects collaborating with historians and local craftsmen to refurbish and reinstate period details and restore the Grade 11-listed Georgian building to its former glory.

The hotel stands on what used to be the main road to Edinburgh overlooking the River Tweed. A toll-gate once stood opposite, and the Collingwood Arms, named after Cuthbert Collingwood, one of Nelson's great admirals, still bears the words 'Post Horses' under its name on the façade announcing the coaching inn it once was.

But one of those rambling coaching inns it most certainly is not. A plain, reassuring stone

Stunning scenery

Hirsell Golf Club is described as the Augusta of the Scottish Borders. It is one of the region's many spectacular courses to be enjoyed by golfers of all abilities.

building with two rows of elegant sash windows, it feels more like a gentleman's residence, with a wide central hall and a well-proportioned library/sitting room leading off.

A couple of minutes drive north of the Collingwood Arms is

Coldstream and the home of Hirsell Golf Club which some describe as the Augusta of the Borders. Set in rolling woodland with thick shrubbery, fierce rough, water and other hazards in abundance the course offers a stern challenge to the accomplished while being sympathetic to the beginner.

A lot of work has been carried out over the winter months by the green-keeping staff and the course is in pristine condition.

Another great place to stay is the Auld Cross Keys Inn in Denholm. The village is situated 50 miles south of Edinburgh, and is only 16 miles from the border itself at Carter Bar. Hawick is the nearest large town.

Overlooking the village green, the Auld Cross Keys Inn enjoys an exceptional reputation in the area



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🏡 Kelso is a very attractive parklands course

for good food and excellent ales. The building was constructed in 1800 as a bakehouse, later becoming a coaching inn.

The attraction of the Auld Cross Keys is that it is central to many of the Borders golf courses.

A short drive west is Woll Golf Club, one of the most popular in the Borders. This par-70 beautiful parkland course, measuring 6,051 yards, follows the gentle contours of the Ale Valley and is surrounded by mature trees. Sited on the natural valley bottom, the course drains very well and is playable all year round.

In addition to the golf course, they have six luxury self catering properties in private grounds overlooking the course which visitors can play free of charge during their stay. The staff at Woll can also organise other activities such as clay pigeon shooting, trout fishing, horse riding and mountain biking. And there are also numerous walks and shopping opportunities throughout the Borders.

Other recommended accommodation to base your visit

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➤ Auld Cross Keys is centrally located for many of the Borders courses

to the Borders are the Royal Hotel at Jedburgh in the south and the Wheatsheaf at Swinton to the east.

Swinton is not far from the bustling town of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the Wheatsheaf run by husband and wife owners Chris and Jan Winsom offers cosy and comfortable accommodation with a friendly and attentive service. The bar is well stocked and includes a large selection of single malt whiskies and offers a choice of 18 different wines available by the glass.

Dining at the Wheatsheaf is delightful with all the food locally sourced. Be it Chicken Liver parfait with grape and apple chutney or sautéed lambs liver with onions and bacon served on a spring onion mash, to more modern internationally inspired options such as hot-smoked salmon with avocado and Greenland prawns on a mango chilli salsa, you are guaranteed a restaurant experience to savour.

The Royal Hotel is a former 19th-century coaching Inn located in the centre of Jedburgh is now a comfortable family run hotel and an ideal base to explore the tranquil countryside of the Scottish Borders. With 10 en-suite rooms including one family room, three doubles and seven twins, the hotel can accommodate up to 23 guests.

The Royal has been accommodating golfers for 25 years and offers two to five day golf breaks playing over a choice of 21 courses.

Close to Jedburgh, The Roxburgh is arguably still the premier club in the region. Owned by the Duke of Roxburghe, its championship-standard course was designed by the renowned golf course architect Dave Thomas and features deep bunkers, rolling greens and wide undulating fairways. The course has had the honour of hosting the Scottish Seniors Open.

And only three miles away is Kelso Golf Club, an attractive parkland course well known for the fine conditions of its greens and fairways. The original course was designed by Ben Sayers, then re-designed in 1930 by James Braid. The now mature 18-hole layout was opened for play in 1980.

Measuring 6,046 yards and a par 70, Kelso is very flat and makes for easy walking and if you play reasonable golf, you shouldn't have too much difficulty in playing to your handicap.

The clubhouse offers excellent facilities where a warm welcome is guaranteed. The tastefully designed lounge and refurbished dining room offers a range of meals from snacks to full three course lunch or dinner.

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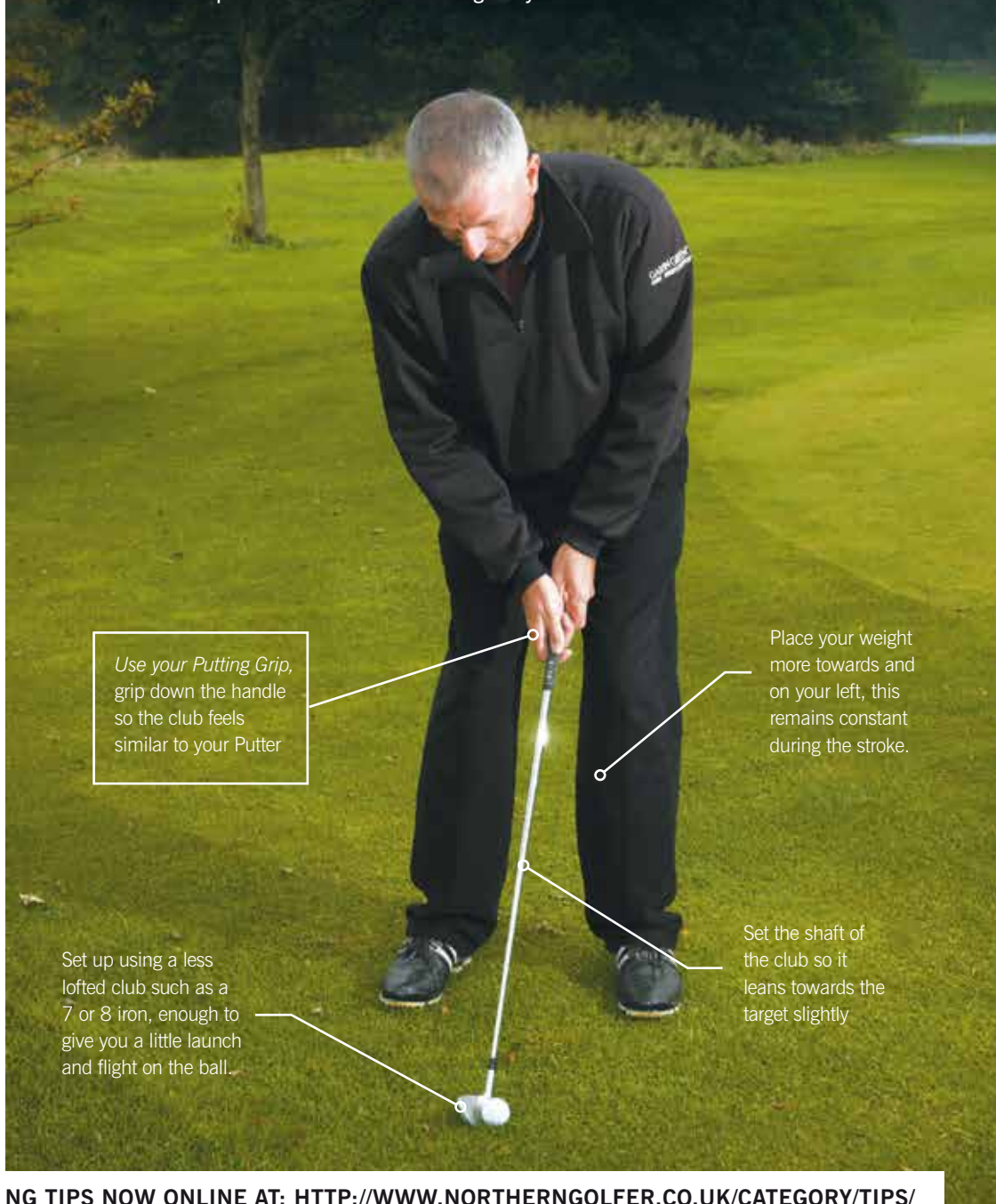
Practice, says our NG Pro, **Mark Stancer**

Spending time on your short game can really pay dividends in lowering your score. By developing the ability to see more options on how to play a particular shot you will be more confident about taking the shot on and it's outcome.

Here I talk you through the hybrid version of the ChipPutt. It's ideal for

approach shots from just off the green, where the terrain is favourable to run the approach shot in towards the target.

The ChipPutt really helps with the distance control as like the putting stroke there is minimal or very little wrist hinge. This controls the release in the club and gives you a more consistent outcome.



THE BACK SWING

Keep it simple, my backswing is simply a gentle turn of the shoulders, this keeps the wrists passive during the swing.



THE FOLLOW THROUGH

With my weight remain on my left, turn your shoulders through, keep it smooth just like a medium to long Putt.

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01287 676 216

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www.boldongolfclub.co.uk

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info@centurionparkwallsend.co.uk
www.centurionpark.com

City of Newcastle Golf Club

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Newcastle upon Tyne,
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0191 285 1775

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CASTLE EDEN

Nimmo Qualifier 13/4/13

- 1 D. Nichols.....65 Nett (CB)
2 M. Stubbs.....65
3 M. Edwards.....66

G. White Memorial 13/4/13

- 1 C. Muwanga & A. Shell.....46 pts
2 J. France & D. McGlen.....43 (CB)
3 M. Magee & B. Magee.....43

DUNSTANBURGH CASTLE

EWGA & County Medal 6/4/13

- 1 J. Robson.....76 Nett
2 A. Camozzi.....78
3 A. O'Neill.....79

Granlund Trophy 13/4/13

- 1 G. Peters.....37 pts
2 A. Camozzi.....32
3 A. O'Neill.....31 (CB)

Coronation Foursomes 20/4/13

- 1 A. Camozzi & D. Wilkinson.....33 pts
2 L. Tate & J. Watson.....26
3 G. Peters & I. Smith.....24 (CB)

Appleby Trophy,

EWGA County Medal 27/4/13

- 1 D. Wilkinson
2 L. Fishwick
3 A. O'Neill

NORTHUMBERLAND &
DURHAM ALLIANCEDunstanburgh Castle GC 20/2/13 -
Westerhope Cup

- 1 M. Forster & J. Kendrick (Tynedale)
.....39 pts (CB)
2 G. Cant & D. Matthews (Newbiggin)
.....39 (CB)

- 3 E. Easton & C. Wilkinson
(Bedlington&Hexham).....39 (CB)

Pro-Am

- 1 M. Forster & J. Kendrick (Tynedale)
.....39 pts

- 2 G. Cant & D. Matthews
(Newbiggin).....39

- 3 G. Vickers & R. Turnbull (Tyneside)
.....38

Bedlingtonshire GC 6/3/13 -

Chronicle Cup

- 1 R. Douds & S. Tool
(Bedlingtonshire).....80pts

- 2 M. Forster & J. Kendrick
(Tynedale).....78

- 3 A. Walton & J. Wright
(Durham City).....76

Pro's

- 1 M. Forster (Tynedale).....38pts
2 G. Cowan (Westerhope).....36

- 3 S. Ord (Wearside).....36

Newbiggin 27/3/13

- Durham City Cups

- 1 M. Forster & J. Kendrick (Tynedale)
.....40pts (CB)

- 2 E. Wilson & R. Almond (Woodham
& Wearside).....40 (CB)

- 3 B. Mabon & G. Armstrong
(Bedlingtonshire).....40 (CB)

Hardy Greenfield Trophy
(Pro-Am pairing)

- 1 M. Forster & J. Kendrick (Tynedale)
.....40pts

- 2 E. Wilson & R. Almond (Woodham
& Wearside).....40

- 3 A. Gunn & R. Turnbull (Tyneside)..
.....40

TYNEDALE

Prudential Trophy 31/3/13

- 1 M. Stonehouse.....39 pts
2 D. Roberts.....38

- 3 P. Plummer.....37

Captains Challenge 6/4/13

- 1 M. Stonehouse.....64 Nett
2 C. Marriott.....68

- 3 S. Plummer.....69

April Medal 7/4/13

Division 1

- 1 P. Carson.....65 Nett
2 E. Bell.....66

- 3 T. Elliott.....71

Division 2

- 1 M. Stonehouse.....66
2 R. Wright.....68 (CB)

- 3 B. Robinson.....68

Lee Cup Qualifiers 14/4/13

- M. Stonehouse (1) v G. Halkerston (8)
E. Bell (4) v J. Tallant (5)

- C. Varty (3) v R. Wright (6)
M. Lamb (2) v R. Kendrick (7)

Mercantile Trophy 21/4/13

- 1 M. Armstrong.....65 Nett CB
2 B. Passmore.....65

- 3 A. Pearson.....66

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from the *bunker*

Welcome to the reader feedback page where you can tell us your likes, dislikes and funny golfing stories as well make suggestions at to what you would like to see in your Northern Golfer

Send your Feedback to editor@notherngolfer.co.uk or via Twitter @negolfer Please include contact details and photos



NG: There was a birdie of a different kind to encounter during a competition at Woodham Golf Club near Darlington but it ended up in a tasty treat. Colin Vizor takes up the story

"George, Tony and I were playing in a Seniors Competition on Thursday 11th April. Our shots took us down the fairway towards a pond guarding the 13th green. As we approached the green a pair of Mallard ducks appeared walking together across the fairway a few paces away.

They stopped for a moment, the lady laid a lovely warm, clean pale green egg on the grass in front of us and they marched proudly off as if to say "Have this for your breakfast, you'll play much better tomorrow" !! Needless to say George gave it to his niece for her tea and it was delicious."

Has anyone else had a strange encounter on the golf course? – please let us know.



NG: Golfers from Beamish Park are used to champagne moments but some of them got a surprise when they visited Northumberland. Their stay at the Hogs Head Inn – named after the Tavern of Harry Potter fame – took the hotel past the 10,000 guest mark since it opened after nine months of trading.

Keith Liddell, director of hospitality operator Greensfield Moor Developments Ltd, which manages the 53-bedroom venture, said:

"The first few months of trading have been tremendous, beating all our expectations for accommodation as well as food and drink sales, while the inn's future bookings far exceed projected targets set."

Operations manager Sean Donkin presented bottles of champagne to the group of 15 golfers from Beamish Park Golf Club, who took the inn to its 10,000th accommodation guest milestone.



NG: It's always great to hear from our competition winners. This month Derek Lees from Prudhoe Golf Club has been in touch:

"Can I thank all at the Northern Golfer for the fourball I won for Fulford Golf Club. We played there on Monday 29th April, the course was fantastic and a great day was had by all. I've enclosed a photo of us standing next to the famous tree on the 17th hole which Bernard Langer climbed to play a shot."

Thanks Derek, why not enter our competitions on page 50 and let us know how you get on.

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