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WELCOME



As I write, we're basking in sunshine in the North East – and what a difference it makes!

On the eve of this edition going to print, new English Amateur champions were crowned at Seaton Carew. The week proved a fantastic showcase of the Teesside links, and I'm sure all the competitors had a fantastic time in the North East.

Elsewhere, it's been incredibly busy and our

**CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS
ENTRIES ARE OPEN ONLINE
NOW AND THE EVENTS TAKE
PLACE AT LONGHIRST HALL
ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 15**

Teeing Off pages are packed with success stories – starting with a record-breaking win for 17-year-old Cameron Twynholm in the Northumberland County Championship at Matfen Hall. Martin

McCririck and Jess Hall have also won county championship titles, and there are lots more big amateur wins to cover from right across the region – including Andrew Minnikin's course record-setting performance at Cleveland, and lots of team golf successes.

The professionals have also been busy and it was fantastic to see Matty Lamb back in fine form – winning the Bedlingtonshire pro am title before going on to lift the national PGA

Assistants' Championship trophy. His NE/NW PGA colleagues have been incredibly busy too and we have a packed schedule of club pro ams and professional tournaments to cover.

Our columnists are in great form in this edition as well – from Chris Paisley working hard during his summer holiday in the North East, to Chris Simmons reflecting on a second top-10 in The Open for Matt Jordan, and Simon Olver taking a detailed look at data-driven greenkeeping.

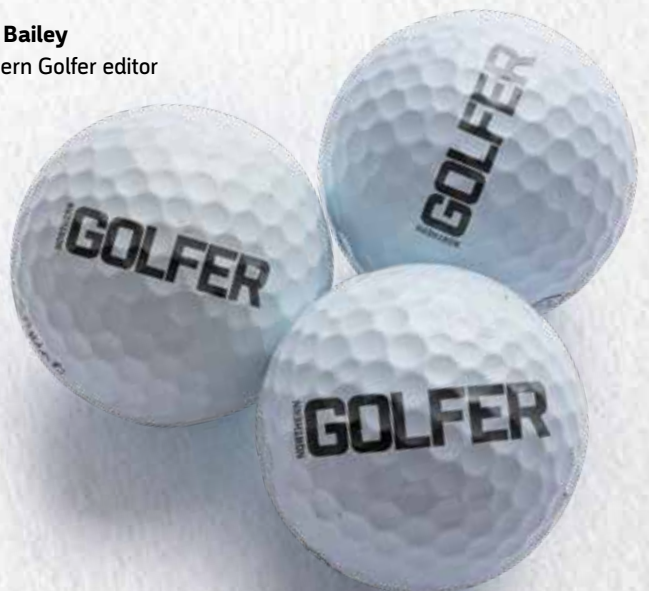
While Matt enjoyed his second top-10 at Royal Troon, Dan Brown returned to great form in Scotland – taking the lead in his first major and ultimately finishing in a tie with Matt to book his spot at Portrush next season. Catching up with Dan at his home club, Romanby, was brilliant and our conversation about his progress from mini tour player to DP World Tour winner is a real highlight of this edition, and our magazines so far this year.

Elsewhere, we've enjoyed a visit to the wonderful Barnard Castle Golf Club, and caught up with Rosie Belsham for A Round With. There's also lots of exciting Gear news, and Special Focuses on some of Cumbria's best courses, and The Inn Collection Group's Offshore in Lytham St Annes.

By the time I write my next welcome, we'll have three new Champions of Champions. Entries are open now online and invites will be with clubs by the time you read this. Please come and be part of the events if you qualify, they're a fantastic celebration of club championship winners.

Enjoy this edition, we'll see you in October.

Dean Bailey
Northern Golfer editor



Middlesbrough Municipal
Golf Centre, Ladgate Lane,
Middlesbrough, TS5 7YZ.

Tel: 01642 133101

Email:
service@rossjacksongolf.co.uk

RJG

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EDITOR

Dean Bailey
editor@northerngolfer.co.uk

CONTRIBUTORS

Alan Hedley 07570 797 566
ahedley@northerngolfer.co.uk
Ross Jackson
Shawn O'Neil
Simon Olver
Chris Paisley
Chris Simmons

GENERAL ADVERTISING

01661 845 024

ACCOUNT MANAGER

Gillian Corney – 07903 500 401
gillian@offstonepublishing.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY

Kevin Gibson & Nicky Rogerson
info@kgphotography.co.uk

COMPETITIONS & EVENTS

Dean Bailey
dean@offstonepublishing.co.uk

PUBLISHER Gary Ramsay
ACCOUNTS Pauline Davis

offstoneTM
PUBLISHING

OFFSTONE PUBLISHING Ltd
Bearl Farm, Stocksfield
Northumberland, NE43 7AL

Tel: 01661 844 115
Email: info@offstonepublishing.co.uk



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KATIE STEPHENS WINS ENGLISH AMATEUR AT SEATON CAREW



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IDDLBROUGH'S KATIE STEPHENS was crowned English Amateur champion after an incredible final

day of golf at Seaton Carew – as Harley Smith (The Rayleigh) lifted the men's trophy in Teesside.

The lead changed hands six times in the 36-hole women's final, as Katie overcame Shivani Karthikeyan (Peterborough Milton) in a fantastic battle. Neither player got more than two holes ahead throughout and in a dramatic finish, Shivani holed 25ft putts on the 34th and 35th holes before a mistake on the final hole gave Katie a hard-fought 2up victory.

"It feels surreal! I can't believe it, but it feels pretty good," said Katie. "I think the turning point for me was getting to the semi-finals as I'd never made it that far before. I felt pretty confident about my game all week, but I didn't want to get cocky!"

In the final, Katie lost a ball on the second to give Shivani the lead and was 2dn after a mistake on the sixth. She then managed to hole some crucial par putts and fought back to lead after 10 holes. Shivani then holed a 25ft putt for birdie to win the 11th. Despite Katie almost driving the 12th, she couldn't get up-and-down for birdie as her opponent stuck her approach to 12ft and won the hole with another birdie – her third win in a row.

The pair then exchanged holes before Katie made a par, birdie, par run late in the first round – including a 25ft birdie putt on 17. No holes were halved on the back nine in the morning, with the lead changing hands four times in the opening 18 holes.

After the lunch break, Shivani got caught in the rough on the first and Katie went 2up, but the roles reversed on the third to give the former the hole. Another errant tee shot on four allowed Shivani to level the match. Both players missed mid-range birdie putts on the fifth and then Shivani missed a 6ft putt to win the hole on the sixth. Katie had a chance to nick it on the seventh, but her putt lipped out and her opponent made her pay on the very next hole as she stuck one to 6ft and rolled it in for birdie.

The topsy-turvy nature of the match continued as Shivani found the sand

on nine and the match returned to all-square. The pair halved the next four holes, then Shivani was off target from the tee and Katie's par edged her ahead. Katie then got up-and-down on 15 to take a 2up lead with just three holes to play.

Shivani dug deep to rattle in two 25ft putts – first to win 16 with birdie and then to halve 17 – setting up a grandstand finish. She had to take a drop from the long grass after a wayward tee shot on the last, while Katie hit the green to seal a 2up win, marking an incredible week of golf in front of a great crowd at Seaton.

"After those putts [on 16 and 17] I was just telling myself, 'Try and keep up with her, don't make a mistake, don't give it away,'" said Katie. "She got in trouble off the tee, so it was about making par and keeping it steady."

Asked about celebrations, she added: "I'll definitely chill out as it's been a long week [with 10 rounds in eight days]. I'll spend some time with my family and just enjoy it. I'm going to have to try and find somewhere at home for the trophy as there's not much room!"

In the men's final, Harley found himself 7up through 13, but an unimaginable comeback from Will Tate (The Cavendish) saw him take the match to an extra hole – where Harley, who holed out for eagle from distance on the ninth twice on Sunday, sealed victory as Will hit his tee shot out of bounds.

Harley said: "It's an unbelievable feeling. With how the match started to the way Will played towards the end, it got very nervy, but I'm glad to be the English Amateur champion. The way he came back was unbelievable. At lunch I knew he was going to come out fighting and I knew it'd be a good game in the afternoon, but I kept telling myself to stay patient and keep chalking the holes off, but he just didn't let up. I was like, 'Is this guy ever going to go away?'"

Several of the region's best players made the latter stages of the event – which was co-hosted between Seaton and Hartlepool over the first two days of strokeplay before the leading 64 men and 32 women competed in matchplay rounds at Seaton. Hexham's Morgan Blythe made the last-16 in the men's event, while Ramside's Alex Stevenson reached the same stage in the women's tournament.

MCBRIDE AND ANDERTON WIN SENIORS' HONOURS



▲ Alan McBride (right) with Brian Aisbitt

▲ Steve Anderton and Kevin Cademy-Taylor

Alan McBride came through a three-hole playoff with defending champion Steve Findlay to win the Northumberland Seniors Championship at Longhirst Hall – as Backworth's Steve Anderton won the county's matchplay title.

With Alan (75-77) and Steve Findlay (74-78) tied after 36 holes at Longhirst, the players returned to the first, second and 18th holes for the playoff – with Alan winning the right to represent the county at the national Seniors' County Champion of Champions event at Woodhall Spa in September.

Alan also won the RW Johnson Decanter for the best gross score by a player aged 65 or over, while the Tim Bull Trophy – awarded to the player with the best nett score over the first 18 holes – went to Morpeth's Michael Brown after he shot a two under-par 71.

The top eight players – Alan, Steve Findlay, Kevin Cademy-Taylor, Ken Cairns, Michael, David Boldra, Paul Taylor and Steve Anderton – went on to compete in the Matchplay Championship for the Mike Fleming Salver.

Backworth-based Steve Anderton lifted the trophy – beating Alan 5&4 in their morning semi-final match before beating Kevin in the final after making birdies at the second, fifth, sixth and 11th holes to close out an impressive 8&6 win.



» Cameron Twynholm. Inset below: Cameron and Sandy

TWYNHOLM BECOMES YOUNGEST-EVER NORTHUMBERLAND CHAMPION

Morpeth's Cameron Twynholm came through a week of matches with experienced opponents to become the youngest-ever winner of the Northumberland County Championship.

Cameron, 17, beat James Conn in the event's 36-hole final at Matfen Hall to follow in the footsteps of his father – and caddy for the week – Sandy, who won the event 20 years ago in 2004.

In the final, James – who was also runner-up in 2022 – took an early lead with birdies on the first and third holes before Cameron fought back and won the next four holes – three of

them with birdies. At lunch, Cameron held a 2up lead and then won the 20th, 22nd and 24th holes to move to 5up. His lead was cut to three in the middle of the second round, but a win at the 32nd hole secured a 5&4 victory.

Cameron reached the final having qualified in a tie for 11th place after two rounds of strokeplay as Saley Hall's Angus Buchanan won the Renwick Medal as the leading qualifier. He then overcame three-time winner and defending champion Andrew Minnikin, two-time winner Mark Wharton, and 2024 county event winner Cameron Thoburn to reach the final of the event.



MINNIKIN WINS FIFTH STROKEPLAY TITLE

City of Newcastle's Andrew Minnikin came through a final-day battle with Harrison Sewell to win his fifth Northumberland Strokeplay Championship at The Northumberland.

Andrew shot a superb seven under-par 65 in the final round for a 12 under-par total (72-69-70-65) which saw him claw back Harrison's lead – winning by one from the 17-year-old.

Harrison (66-71-72-68) won the Under-18 Championship as the top junior on day one – leading the field by an impressive 18 shots.





▲ Martin McCririck (right) with Durham president Gerry Johnson

McCRIRICK WINS SECOND DURHAM CHAMPIONSHIP

South Shields' Martin McCririck clinched his second Durham County Championship with an extra-time victory over Seaham's Grant Dixon at Blackwell Grange.

In a scoring blitz over four rounds – which saw the players post 24 rounds under par as well as a hole-in-one and an albatross – Martin followed up his 2011 win in the event with rounds of 72, 70, 72 and 68 for a 72-hole total of 282, which saw him tie with Grant (72-67-73-70).

Martin could have won in normal time after he went to the turn in 30 in the final round after making four birdies. He picked up another on the back nine, but dropped shots at 17 and 18 as he shot 68. Grant meanwhile made a crucial

birdie at 16 on his way to a round of 70 to force a three-hole playoff.

In the playoff Martin, a three-time county order of merit winner, produced a superb shot into the second extra hole to make a birdie and shoot one under-par – one better than Grant.

There was a small consolation for the Seaham player as he recorded an albatross at the 10th, and collected the Nelson Jubilee Medal as the 36-hole leader.

Meanwhile, Consett's John Kennedy – who posted a total of 283 to finish third along with Ben Willis (South Shields) and the host club's Adam Rochester – made an ace at the fourth hole during the event.

MCENTEE WINS SENIORS' CROWN



Ian McEntee mastered a windswept Whitburn to win the Durham County Seniors Championship by the narrowest of margins.

Winner of the Durham matchplay crown over his home course, South Moor, in 2017, Ian put together back-to-back rounds of 72 over Whitburn's revamped course to lift the trophy.

Following a delayed start due to sea fret, 2018 winner and last year's runner-up John Kirkpatrick led after round one with a one under-par score of 69 – including three birdies to finish.

Following his opening 72, Ian produced a similarly steady second round including a bogey at the fifth and birdie at the 10th before two more bogeys at the difficult 11th and long par three 16th. At the 18th, which he'd birdied in round one, he made a vital par four as John bogeyed the last to finish with a 76 to finish one shot behind. Consett's John Kennedy finished in third place.



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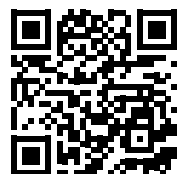
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DISCOVER MORE

CHARLOTTE WINS EUROS WITH ENGLAND GIRLS

ONGHIRST HALL'S CHARLOTTE NAUGHTON helped England win their first European Girls' Team Championship in 19 years at Gothenburg Golf Club in Sweden.

Meanwhile, Rosie Belsham and Jess Baker were part of the England women's team which won bronze in Spain, as the boys' team won silver in Austria.

The girls reached the match play stages of the competition before defeating Denmark 5-2 and Italy 4-3 to reach Saturday's final. Despite being 2-0 down to Germany after the morning foursomes, the girls were in scintillating form, winning four of their five singles matches in the afternoon to seal a 4.5-2.5 win.

"The team clearly played well all week, but the highlight has to be the comeback on the final day," said assistant women's and girls' performance manager India Clyburn. "From losing both foursomes to going on to win in the final, it took immense steeliness and self-belief, and an ability to hit great shots under big pressure. The girls are now part of history and have shown future teams that England can win at this level."

Meanwhile, the women's team picked up a bronze medal at Real Sociedad Hípica Española Club de Campo in Spain. They beat Italy 6-1 before going down 4-3 to France in the semi-finals. They then managed to see off Ireland 5-2 on Saturday to finish third in the European Ladies' Team Championship.

The boys' team also had a great weekend after picking up a silver medal in the European Boys' Team Championship at Diamond Club in Austria. Meanwhile, the men's team finished seventh in the European Team Championship at Royal Park in Italy.



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▲ Callum Moncur (left)



▲ Andrew Minnikin (left)



▲ Dan Fox



Heworth's Will Marshall shot a two under-par round of 69 to share top spot in the 2020 protour event at Woolley Park in Wakefield.

Will led the field alongside Lincoln's Rob Harris and Jack Brooks from The Mere, while Ramsdale-based Jack Trewitt finished in a tie for sixth place on one over-par.

SIMON LEE WINS WELSH MID-AMATEUR



Newcastle United's Simon Lee produced three excellent rounds in tough conditions to win the Welsh Mid-Amateur Championship at Aberdovey.

Simon, who won the men's Champion of Champions in 2008, shot rounds of 73, 71 and 74 to lead the field in Wales by three shots as Stand-based Gary Spann finished second.

Meanwhile, Jason Saunders (Windlesham) won the seniors' gross title, Darren Rix (Norwood Park) won the mid-am nett, and Danny Procter (Stockport) won the seniors' nett prize.

UP TO SCRATCH

Golfers from around the region have won men's scratch titles this summer – in event's close to home and further afield.

Darlington's Callum Moncur produced a superb second round performance to hold off home club favourite Nigel Ralph in the Keith Shivers Bowl at Heworth. The 2023 Junior European Open winner posted a first round 71 as Nigel shot 74. He followed up with a round of 69 – a score matched by Nigel – to finish on a two under-par total of 140 and win by three shots from Nigel and Martin McCririck (70-73).

City of Newcastle's Andrew Minnikin eclipsed the field to win the North Yorkshire and South Durham Championship at Cleveland. Andrew posted a first round of 63, two shots better than the previous course record, including an eagle at the second and birdies at six, seven and eight. He added birdies at 12, 13, 16 and 18 to take the lead with a nine under-par score. He then backed it up with a round of 66 in the afternoon to top the leaderboard by 11 shots from Gavin Nesbit and City clubmate Phil Ridden.

Phil also had to settle for second place in the Chester Bowl after a round of 69 saw him finish

tied with Northumberland county teammate Harrison Sewell and the home club's John Egglestone. Brancepeth's Dan Fox lifted the trophy with a round of 68.

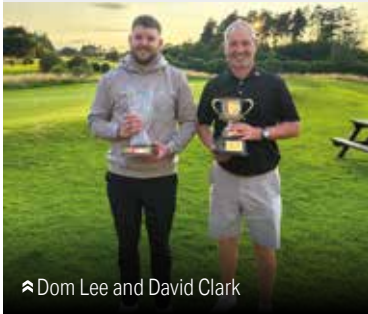
Yorkshireman Jack Maxey, from Hornsea, led the way in the Seaton Salver at Seaton Carew with rounds of 70 and 72, winning by one shot from Blackwell Grange's Adam Rochester (70-73) as Garforth's Jake Willis finished third with rounds of 69 and 74.

South Shields' Martin McCririck added the Ramsdale Scratch Trophy to his list of Durham order of merit titles with a well-crafted round of 73. The former order of merit winner saw his score matched by Whickham's Bryan Levy and took home the trophy with a better back nine score of 37.

Tyneside's Kris Rae led the field in his home club's scratch open by three shots, shooting a four under-par 66 as Seaham's Grant Dixon was second and City of Newcastle's Zak Laws was third.

Finally, Newbiggin's Craig Penny won the 54-hole open title at Montrose Links with a three-round gross stableford score of 111, which saw him lead the field by four shots.

CLARK CROWNED PGA CHAMP



▲ Dom Lee and David Clark

Morpeth-based David Clark won his third North East & North West PGA Championship at Sleafy Hall, as Dom Lee won the association's Assistants' Championship.

David, who won the event in 2017 and 2020, shot rounds of 66 on the Priestman course and 74 on the Hunting course for a four under-par total of 140 and a two-shot win over Mark Ridley.

Dom meanwhile won the assistants' event with rounds of 72 and 75, as Tom Robson finished second.

HARTSHORNE WINS NATIONAL TITLE

Teesside's Thomas Hartshorne had a week to remember at the Carris Trophy – finishing fourth overall and winning the Hazards Salver award as the top under-16 Great Britain & Ireland player.

Thomas, 14, finished the week on 10 under-par thanks to a four under-par 67 in the final round as Daniel Hayes won the overall event at Ormskirk with a four-round total of 16 under-par.



© Leaderboard Photography



▲ Alex Dixon (right) at Matfen



▲ Craig Goodfellow (left) at Whickham



▲ James Harper at Ramside



▲ James Wilson (left) at Middlesbrough



▲ Matty Lamb at Bedlingtonshire



▲ Tim Dykes at Prudhoe

ROBINSON WINS BACK-TO-BACK AS PROS SHARE TITLES

Close House's Simon Robinson won back-to-back pro am titles on the North East & North West PGA circuit, as professionals from across the region picked up winner's cheques.

Simon (pictured below) returned to winning form at Cockermouth, leading the field with a seven under-par round of 62. Four days later at Rockliffe Hall, he topped the leaderboard with a four under-par score.

James Wilson meanwhile added two more titles to his haul this season. He led the field at the Scrimger & Oakes Wealth Management-sponsored Middlesbrough Golf Club pro am by six shots with a five under-par score. At Teesside, he posted a five under-par score to beat Westerhope's George Cowan by a single shot.

Whitehaven's Jonathan Graham went bogey-free en-route to a five under-par round of 67 to win the Northumberland Golf Club pro am. Jonathan led the field and collected the £3,000 winner's cheque as City of Newcastle-based Alex Dixon finished second.

Alex meanwhile picked up the £3,000 winner's cheque in the West Nautical-sponsored pro am at Matfen Hall, leading the field

with a six under-par score as Thomas Rowland finished second.

Brampton-based Matty Lamb successfully defended the Bedlingtonshire pro am trophy, beating James Wilson on countback as both players shot five under-par rounds of 68.

Craig Goodfellow continued his winning form on the circuit too – triumphing in the Morpeth pro am with a bogey-free three under-par round. The win followed his success in the Hadrian Healthcare-sponsored pro am at Whickham, where he beat James Wilson on countback for the trophy as both players shot three under-par rounds of 68.

In the WaterAid UK pro am at Linden Hall – which raised almost £7,000 for the charity – Morpeth's David Clark, Consett's Mark Ridley, Blyth's Ross Crowe and George Cowan shared top spot with one over-par scores.

At the Tom Flowers Memorial pro am at Ramside Hall – which raised more than £2,300 for St Cuthbert's Hospice – Wynyard-based James Harper led the field with a three under-par total as Mark Ridley and Ken Ferrie tied for second place.

At Prudhoe, Penrith's Tim Dykes shot a winning score of four under-par, leading the field by three shots as Mark Ridley was second.





© Leaderboard Photography

SEWELL WINS N&D OPEN

Harrison Sewell added his name to the region's golfing history books by winning the Northumberland & Durham Open at Burgham Park.

First staged in 1950, the event brings together professionals and amateurs to compete over 36 holes. With rounds of 71 and 68, Harrison led the elite field by five shots with a five under-par total and became the first amateur to win the event since Chris Paisley in 2009.

Professional Craig Goodfellow finished second, while pros James Harper and Mark Ridley, and amateurs Phil Ridden and Andrew Minnikin, finished in a tie for third place.

The win followed Harrison's course record final round at the English U18 Championship at Hesketh to force his way into a playoff.

The reigning Northern Golfer men's Champion of Champions shot a final-round 64 to catapult himself into the playoff with Bramhall's Daniel Hayes and Colne Valley's Charlie Rusbridge as all three players finished on 11 under-par.

Harrison (75-69-69-64) closed with an eight

under-par round which included eight birdies. In the playoff, all three players parred the first before Daniel and Harrison found trouble at the par five 18th and Charlie made a comfortable two-putt birdie to win the event.

↳ Harrison Sewell (right) and Steve Harrison



AUGUST

- 12-16** English Senior Men's Amateur Championship at Brancepeth Castle
- 12-18** The Boys' and Girls' Amateur Championships at Alwoodley and Moortown
- 13-15** English Junior Champion Club at Woodhall Spa
- 18** Northumberland Junior U14 & U16 Strokeplay Championship at Whitley Bay
- 18** Northern Junior Golf Tour National Girls Championship at Dunstanburgh Castle
- 22-25** AIG Women's Open at St Andrews
- 30** Northern Junior Golf Tour Grand Final at Thonock Park
- 30-Sep 1** The Curtis Cup at Sunningdale
- 31-Sep 1** English Women's Champion Club at Hessele
- 31** Durham Clark Cup Final (Venue TBD)

SEPTEMBER

- 1** Durham Junior Clark Cup Final (Venue TBD)
- 4** NE/NW PGA Tour Championship at Brancepeth Castle
- 10** Northern Counties Seniors' Qualifying at City of Newcastle
- 13-15** The Solheim Cup at Robert Trent Jones Golf Club
- 15** Northern Golfer Men's, Women's and Junior Champion of Champions at Longhirst Hall
- 21-22** English Men's Champion Club at Stanton on the Wolds
- 24-26** NE/NW PGA Matchplay Championship at Sleafly Hall

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MATTY LAMB WINS PGA ASSISTANTS' TITLE »»



BRAMPTON-BASED MATTY LAMB lifted the Coca-Cola PGA Assistants' Championship trophy – and collected the £5,000 winner's cheque, a spot in the 2025 PGA Play-Offs, and a year's supply of Coca-Cola products.

Matty – who has just completed his second year of PGA training – shot rounds of 66, 70 and 64 at Farleigh Golf Club to lead the field by five shots on 16 under-par as Weston Super Mare's Alister Balcombe finished second.

"It feels really good – I was happy with my week, all week," said Matty – who joins a list of winners including Peter Alliss, Tony Jacklin and Barry Lane as well as Matty Webb, Jonathan Lupton and Craig Goodfellow.

"I wanted to win when I came and I achieved my goal, so it feels good. Shooting eight under-par in the final round was really good. I didn't expect it when I arrived in the morning with how windy it was, but I got off to a really good start. I was five under-par through nine, and then birdied 10 and 11. After that, I was quite far ahead so I felt

like I could play with a bit of freedom and enjoy it coming in. I felt like I didn't play as well yesterday, so it was nice to bounce back.

"Winning the tournament is going to help my confidence and I've got a lot more events to play this season. It was my first time at Farleigh and hopefully it won't be my last – I'd love to come back and play, though maybe on a calmer and sunnier day. Not only have the members made us feel really welcome, I think they've saved me a few shots looking for a ball in the rough as well. I can't thank the club enough."

MORGAN AND HASLAM WIN AT GOSWICK



▲ Holly Morgan and Holly Haslam
© The PGA/Kenny Smith/Getty Images

Lindrick's Holly Morgan won the Women's PGA Professional Championship with a six over-par score at Goswick – as Holly Haslam (Stock Brook Manor) took the Women's PGA Assistants' Championship title with a score of three over-par.

Morgan, who shot rounds of 76 and 74 in Northumberland, said: "It feels amazing, I honestly didn't expect to win it. I missed too many fairways yesterday but apart from that, I did play quite well. Today I decided I wasn't going to hit my driver at all and played very conservative, but as it happens it was the right thing to do.

"It's actually the first time I've ever played in this event, so it was really nice to come and play two rounds of golf as opposed to one. Everybody's so nice, it's such a friendly environment to be in and I had my mum on the bag who keeps me calm, so it's been brilliant."

Haslam meanwhile shot rounds of 74 and 73 to win the Assistants' Championship. She said: "I'm over the moon to win – I can't believe it, I'm super happy. I didn't expect it, but I was going to do my best and just see where I could go. I've been playing alright, so it just had to all come together at the right time and today was the right time!"



▲ Jack Friar



▲ Richard Robson-Crosby



▲ Chris Matthews



▲ Jack McCall

ON THE MOVE

Clubs around the region have made key appointments, with several PGA professionals on the move and a new head greenkeeper joining the team at Linden Hall.

Jack Friar, the reigning club champion at Alnwick Golf Club, has joined Linden Hall as head greenkeeper. Jack started his career at Percy Wood and has since worked at Burgham Park, Alnwick and Morpeth. He said: "The foundations are great at Linden, the layout is fantastic, and I can't wait to put my stamp on it. There's a lot of investment going into the course and facilities, and I want to get the golf course to its absolute best. We've got a strong team of six and I've already received really good support from the management team, so I'm excited to get into it."

Meanwhile, John Harrison and Richard Robson-Crosby have joined The Northumberland as the club's resident professionals. North East & North West PGA chairman John joined the club from Longhirst Hall, while Richard made the move from Ponteland.

Richard said: "I've really enjoyed being part of The Northumberland so far. The people are great, the facilities are fantastic, and there's already so much happening.

"It's great to be working alongside John. He was part of the county coaching team when I played for Northumberland as an amateur, so I know him well and it's been fantastic to pick his brain. The first two months have gone

by fast and I'm keen to meet more people at the club and bring more clients here to work on their game. Add in the club's beginner and junior programmes, and I'm excited about the busy schedule."

Just down the road, Chris Matthews has taken up the role of club professional at Gosforth Golf Club. Chris, who takes over from Grahame Garland following his retirement from that role while he will retain the role of secretary, said: "I've settled in great and I'm really enjoying it. It's been interesting getting things setup in terms of the shop and carrying on my coaching from nearly 10 years at Centurion Park. There's lots to develop here – including increasing ladies and junior participation, and working with one-to-one clients on their game."

Finally, Jack McCall has joined the Elite Golf Academies team and is now coaching at Morpeth Family Golf Centre. The third-year PGA trainee, who joined the team from Close House, said: "Joining the Elite team is a great opportunity to develop my skills as a coach, which is something I'm really keen to do. I've already learned a lot from Steve [Bainbridge] and it's amazing to be able to draw on his experience. I'm looking forward to doing more coaching, particularly with junior golfers, and building a reputation up here in Morpeth. I've also been getting some more practice in and will hopefully get in some good performances in PGA events this summer."



JESS HALL WINS SIXTH DURHAM COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

B

BISHOP AUCKLAND'S Jess Hall successfully defended the Durham County Ladies Golf Association

Championship, beating Emily Baxter in the final at Houghton-le-Spring.

In the delayed final, Jess beat Houghton-based Emily to win the event for the sixth time – adding to her victories in 2014, 2015, 2018, 2020 and 2023.

The final was decided by an excellent approach shot at the 17th from Jess after a close battle on the back nine as Emily made four birdies in six holes from the 10th. Jess meanwhile followed a rocky start by going five under-par for the final 13 holes. Emily's birdie run got her back to 1dn on the 16th tee, but Jess dug deep to win the 16th and her approach shot from deep rough on 17, to 6ft, proved the winning shot as she closed out the match 361.



DURHAM'S JUNIOR CHAMPIONS



Callum Brown and Millie Hixon with Durham president Gerry Johnson

Bishop Auckland's Callum Brown and Wearside's Millie Hixon were crowned Durham Boys' and Girls' champions respectively following the simultaneous championships at Wearside.

Callum led the under-18 boys' event with a two over-par total (71-73) as Heworth's Jonathan Scott finished in second place. Millie meanwhile led the girls' event with rounds of 81 and 76, beating Chester-le-Street-based Lucy Nimmo by two shots.

Meanwhile, the boys U18 nett title was won by Adam Dews Jr (Hobson), while Emily Holgate (Wearside) won the girls' nett trophy.

Playing over 18 holes, Thomas Suggitt (Ramside) won the boys' U16 gross title as Joshua Willey (Wearside) won the nett. Ollie Porteous (Rockliffe Hall) won the boys' U14 event as Charlie Hancill (Wearside) won the U14 boys' nett prize. In the girls' 21-plus handicap competition, Evie Goodman (Castle Eden) won the gross title as Theresa Anderson (South Moor) won the nett prize.

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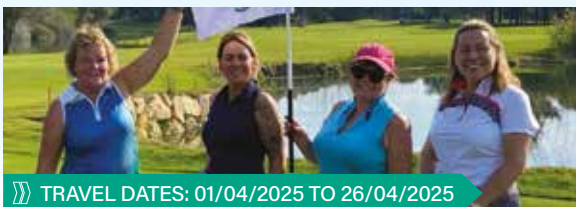


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^ The Bishop Auckland men's team



^ The City of Newcastle men's team



^ The Longhirst junior team



^ The Wearside junior team

TOP TEAMS HEADING TO NATIONAL FINALS

Men's and junior teams from Northumberland and Durham are heading to their respective national finals after winning county qualifying events.

In Northumberland, City of Newcastle's men's team led the qualifier at Newbiggin – with the team of Zak Laws, Andrew Minnikin and Phil Ridden shooting a six-round score of 455.

City of Newcastle will compete in the England Golf Champion Club event – which they won in 2019 and went on to be crowned European champions – alongside Durham champions Bishop Auckland.

On a difficult day for scoring, the Bishop team's 36-hole total of 453 (21 over-par) gave them a six-shot victory over the teams from Boldon and Durham City in the Durham Clubs Championship at Houghton-le-Spring.

James Glenn shot rounds of 75 and 73 as John Howarth shot 71 and 76, and Craig Wren shot 78 and 80 as the Bishop team went one better than their runner-up finish last season and booked their trip to the national final at Stanton on the Wolds on September 21-22.

Meanwhile, the junior teams from Longhirst Hall and Wearside are heading to England Golf's Junior Champion Club event at Woodhall Spa on August 13-15.

In the Northumberland Junior Teams Championship at Bedlingtonshire – the Longhirst team of Brandon Wright, Kaiden Wright and Erik Pettersson topped the leaderboard with 86 points in the best-two-from-three event.

In Durham's PD Cowell event – Wearside's Oscar O'Connor, Joshua Willey and Charlie Hancill retained the trophy at Brancepeth Castle with a one over-par team total, beating the Blackwell Grange team on countback.

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SUMMER HOMECOMING

A FAMILY SUMMER BACK IN THE NORTH EAST WAS JUST WHAT I NEEDED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEASON

I T HAS BEEN A QUIET PERIOD competitively since my last column, but that doesn't mean I've not been busy.

There has been a break in the Challenge Tour schedule and I've missed a few events in order to spend time with my family in the North East. When I have played, it has been frustrating. I seem to be in one of those runs where I am practising and playing well at home, but not realising that performance in tournaments. After a fast start to the year, I have stalled a little, but it feels like I'm close to shooting good scores again.

We decided to spend my daughters' summer holidays in the North East with my side of the family this year. As well as being home, we got out of the unbearable heat of the Orlando summer, and it has cut down on my travel time during the European-based part of the schedule. We're lucky to have an amazing family and I always cherish our summers here. The upside of living in a different country is that we make the most of our time together when we get it.

I've played two events while over here, but I've also had quite a few off weeks, which has been really nice. Getting the balance of working on my game and being a good father and husband right has always been difficult. Fortunately, I have a very special and understanding wife!

GETTING THE BALANCE OF WORKING ON MY GAME AND BEING A GOOD FATHER AND HUSBAND RIGHT HAS ALWAYS BEEN DIFFICULT. FORTUNATELY, I HAVE A VERY SPECIAL AND UNDERSTANDING WIFE!

THERE IS A CERTAIN SHARPNESS THAT CAN ONLY BE ATTAINED BY PLAYING

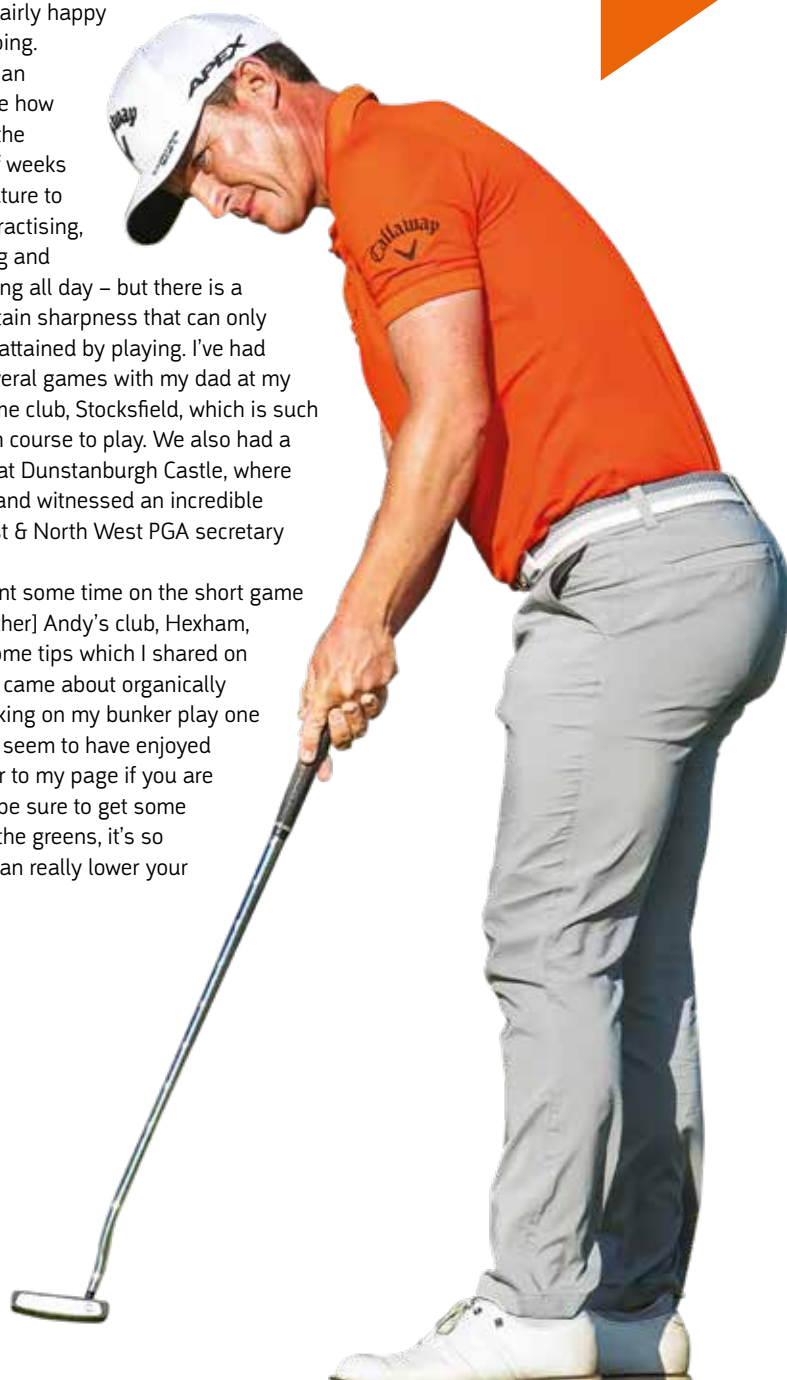
My practice has consisted of a bit of everything. The swing work I am doing with Nico [Andrew Nicholson] has been very consistent, and we're both fairly happy with how it is going.

I have made an effort to increase how much I play on the course in my off weeks too. It is my nature to end up practising, drilling and

testing all day – but there is a certain sharpness that can only be attained by playing. I've had several games with my dad at my home club, Stocksfield, which is such a fun course to play. We also had a game at Dunstanburgh Castle, where

I shot 65 and witnessed an incredible 63 by North East & North West PGA secretary Steve Harrison!

I've also spent some time on the short game area at [my brother] Andy's club, Hexham, and recorded some tips which I shared on Instagram. This came about organically while I was working on my bunker play one day and people seem to have enjoyed them. Head over to my page if you are interested, and be sure to get some work in around the greens, it's so important and can really lower your scores quickly.





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OUR OPEN STORY: CHAPTER TWO

CHRIS SIMMONS SHARES HIS EXPERIENCE OF CADDYING FOR MATT JORDAN AT ROYAL TROON

G

GOING BACK TO THE OPEN, and Royal Troon, was a fantastic experience.

My first major as a caddy was the 2016 Open at Troon, and eight years on the event is so much bigger in terms of infrastructure and experience.

It was great to be back at the big show of the British summer and while I can admit now that I was a bit out of my depth in 2016, going back as an established caddy allowed me to enjoy it properly.

While there's a lot going on, I must give a shout out to The Open Clubhouse for the players and caddies. For a temporary structure, it's incredible. The concierge, locker room, barber, café, dining... being in there is one of the best parts of the year.

The crowds were so big this year too, which made it so cool to be among the action on the weekend. Having played in lots of the quieter events outside of Europe, it's fantastic to have so much atmosphere. The roars are incredible when you're among those grandstands, while the oohs are equally loud when a ball trickles into a pot bunker.

On the course, this year was very much a working week, even more so than last year's Open. We've been looking forward to Troon for a long time and did our scouting trip well in advance. Using that as a starting point, we were totally dialled into the normal processes – unlike Hoylake where Matt was guiding me around a lot more given how well he knew the course. While my prep was the same for both events, he just didn't need it as much at Hoylake.

Last year was my best finish in a major

as a caddy, and it was a breeze compared to this year! We were knackered by Sunday night having had to concentrate non-stop in some brutal conditions.

Adding wind and rain to the difficulty of Royal Troon made it so hard, and we both had to be dialled in for every minute of every round. On Saturday, the weather was simply incredible – that back nine was as brutal as it looked! Several par fours were out of reach in two – we laid up at the 11th, hit four-iron into 12 rather than a flick wedge, and we couldn't reach the 15th. Add in being soaked through to our bones and it was one of the toughest days I've ever had on a golf course.

Matt did so well last year and while he didn't need to prove anything, I think it will do him a great deal of good to back up a top-10 in a major at his home club with one away from home.

He was buzzing to shoot four level-par rounds at The Open. Given the weather, it was an impressive result. It's also great to be booked into Portrush for next year, which I'm sure will be as incredible as it was in 2019. We've got some great vibes to take into the final part of this season too, and we're looking forward to building on a big week with another one.


CHRIS SIMMONS

Caddy for Matt Jordan on the DP World Tour



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NUMBERS GAME

LET'S DIVE DEEPER INTO THE DATA AND LOOK AT HOW WE GET THE GOLF COURSE TO ITS HIGHEST LEVEL

B

UILDING ON MY COLUMN IN THE LAST EDITION, which looked at how we use data to deliver long-term consistency out on the golf course, I

wanted to share some more insights into the type of data we collect and how we use it to improve our practices.

One of the most important things we track is the amount of growth on the course. How we do this is pretty simple – it just requires a jug to measure the volume of clippings in the mowers' catchers. By doing this, we get a picture of the growth rate and can measure it against growth potential (a stat we build using data such as temperature and moisture) to develop a programme of growth regulation and nutrition to deliver a healthy plant that performs well for golf.

While we have a lot of control, we can't influence the weather. It has the biggest influence on growth potential, so we monitor data including the soil and air temperatures as well as rainfall and the evapotranspiration rate closely. We continually adjust to deal with the weather – which is easier said than done these days!

Low growth leads to good greens for longer periods. If clipping volume begins to rise, we know we need to do some refinement. We'd start with a period of double cutting. If we have too much lateral growth, we'd look at micro-grooming and/or verti-cutting, or maybe just a brush to stand the grass up before we cut it.

This work all builds into how we meet our targets – from green speed to smoothness and firmness – and collecting data daily is key to that process.

At Ganton, we're looking for daily green speeds of 9ft on the stimpmetre; trueness and

smoothness no lower than nine out of 10 on the STRI visual scale; and firmness between 115-120 gravities, which is measured using a Clegg Hammer. All of this data is then entered into our system using a smartphone.

As well as these, moisture levels are a key consideration as this has a big influence on playing performance and plant health. Where our POGO will measure down roughly 2ins, we've just begun trialling the Soil Scout system on two greens, at depths of 100mm and 150mm. These devices give us updates every 20 minutes on things like temperature, salinity and moisture level – and can show trends across set windows allowing us to create programmes of watering, both with sprinklers and by hand. We also hope this will help us control grass types better, as we can limit the moisture closer to the surface where the meadow grass roots are, and keep it low where the roots of the perennials reach down to.

While we have a great deal of data, the key is understanding what it means and how to spot potential problems, then dealing with them. Grass grows and everything we do has an impact – good greenkeeping minimises inputs, both in terms of products and mechanical processes, and ultimately delivers a robust playing surface which stands up to our members' and visiting golfers' expectations.

SIMON OLVER

Course manager
at Ganton
Golf Club



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T

HE RULES OF GOLF TELL US to play the course as we find it and play the ball as it lies; and play by the Rules and in the spirit of the game.

If every player followed that second point, clubhouses would be quieter places. I hear it all the time, the well-known bandit, sandbagger, handicap manipulator... While clubs, handicap committees and England Golf have tools to deal with these individuals, proving someone isn't trying their best in order to inflate their handicap isn't easy.

When it comes to handicap manipulation, in all its forms, this is the hardest one to deal with. How can clubs deal with players who inflate their scores for several weeks, just to knock it round in eight under-par when there's a big prize up for grabs? Spotting these outliers in fourball betterball, even with the new system for identifying those who perform considerably better in this format, isn't easy either.

HOW CAN CLUBS DEAL WITH PLAYERS WHO INFLATE THEIR SCORES FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, JUST TO KNOCK IT ROUND IN EIGHT UNDER-PAR WHEN THERE'S A BIG PRIZE UP FOR GRABS?

While this scenario is difficult to deal with, spotting the players who make their handicap artificially low is easier. England Golf's checks on this – which identify and reject applications for the country's biggest events from players with too many general play scores which are better than their competition ones – appears to be working. At club level, these players aren't getting into any events they shouldn't and certainly won't be winning any time soon, so let's not dwell on them here.

Any handicap system, WHS or otherwise, is open to manipulation.

Holding an active handicap used to require playing in competitions, but today it only requires a login and someone willing to verify a scorecard. If an attester is of an equally unscrupulous disposition as the person gaming the system, we've got no chance – unless they're daft enough to attest a score at one club while playing another several hours away!

The only hope we have is diligent handicap committees with the strength to control those who seek to game the system. That's not an easy task, but it's essential to ensure golf remains competitive and fair.

Handicap manipulators are in a tiny minority, and most of us endeavour to play off the lowest handicap possible. It's up to us to stand up for the spirit of the game and let those who go against this tradition know they're not welcome in our events.

DEAN BAILEY

Northern Golfer
editor



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DATA-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE

»» IS STOKES GAINED WORTH WORRYING ABOUT?

S

TROKES GAINED is one of those things TV commentators bring up a lot, but what does it mean, and can it help club golfers improve their scores?

In as short an explanation as I can offer here (feel free to head off down the rabbit hole of understanding this in great detail if you wish) Strokes Gained uses a database of averages to compare the ability of golfers against a specific benchmark. Using your data against the benchmark, you can produce a positive or negative score for every area of your game and understand where you are gaining strokes on the average, and where you are losing them.

It's a great tool to really get into the detail of a round and break down performance in greater detail than you'll get from the four or five in the little box on the scorecard.

There are lots of tools to help you track this and a search through Google and the App Store will give you lots of options based on how much detail you'd like to get into.

What can be really useful is comparing your own data against the benchmark for your own handicap level, and to the level you would like to get to.

As you add more data points and submit more scores, you will generate values for your performance off the tee, approaching the greens, around the green, and putting – so you can see where your game stacks up in those categories and where you can get the most bang for your buck from practising, training or a combination of both.

The real gold for a lot of players is in showing you where to focus your time. For example, a 10-handicapper may work hard on their short game to get down to five, but the data tells us the difference between those two handicap levels in that category is 0.36 shots. Meanwhile, the difference in approach play for those two levels is 1.82 shots. Over 20 rounds, that's a difference of 36.4 shots!

Getting back to fitness, the great thing these stats give us from a personal training perspective is quantifiable data. Rather than a client saying: "I hit it shorter than everyone I play against" we can build a picture of what's really going on in their game, then create a programme to improve.

What that programme looks like will be different for every player, and will undoubtedly combine elements of on- and off-course work. I have no doubt gaining distance off the tee will be a priority for many people reading these columns, but some analysis of your whole game will lead to greater improvement in less time – which makes tracking your Strokes Gained a powerful tool in every golfer's bag.

SHAWN O'NEIL

Personal trainer and fitness columnist



FOLLOW SHAWN AT: [f](#) /shawnoneilfit

ROSS
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» GOLF TIPS



TAKE AIM

When you begin working on your putting and analysing how you read greens, aim the putter and make a putting stroke, it can be easy to tie yourself in knots and struggle to know where to focus your energy to make improvements.

Although it is the simplest movement we make with a golf club, the art of putting combines many facets – starting with how you analyse the route from your ball to the hole.

While there are lots of variations in how we move the putter and how it travels to the hole, we can demystify the reading of greens by having a consistent, quantifiable approach to green reading – as we achieve through the AimPoint system.

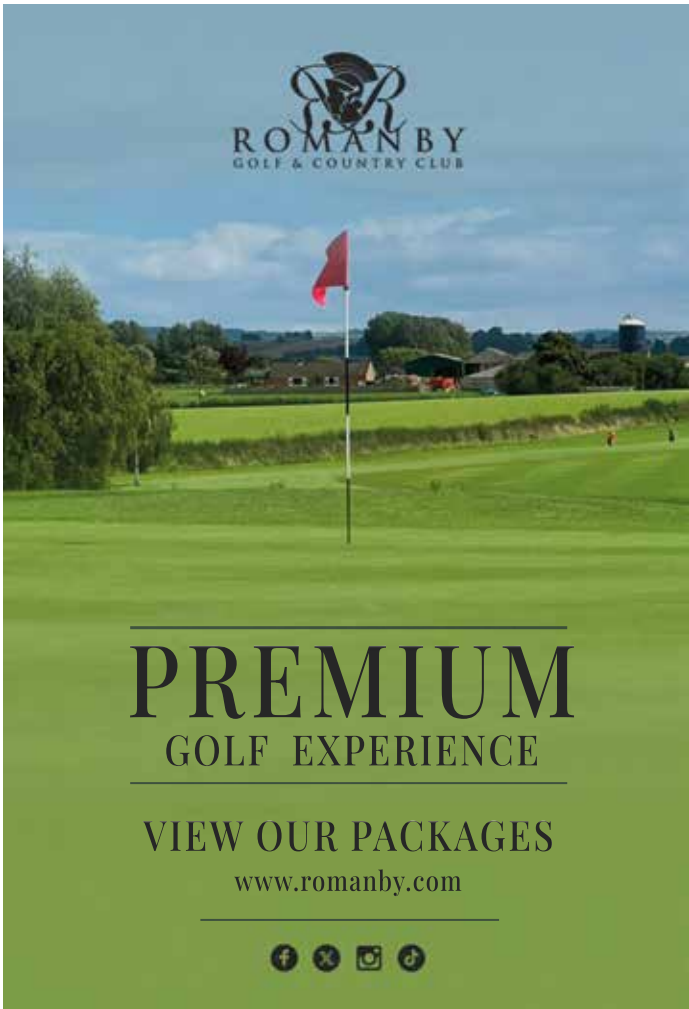
By learning AimPoint and the techniques which go into analysing greens effectively, free from biases and tricks our eyes can play on us when reading greens visually and subjectively, we remove so many variables.

In my experience teaching AimPoint, this process delivers measurable results for players at every level – from club golfers to professionals.

With a good read, we're 50% of the way to making the putt. Combine this with an effective putting stroke and you're on the path to holing many more putts and improving your scores.

Ross Jackson is an accredited AimPoint Golf instructor. To book a lesson, contact the team at Middlesbrough Municipal Golf Centre on 01642 133 101.

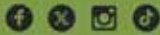
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AN OPEN BOOK

DP World Tour player Dan Brown on his major breakthrough at Royal Troon, winning on tour in his rookie year, and the ups and downs of professional golf at the highest level

FOR THOSE FOLLOWING FROM THE OUTSIDE, Dan Brown's progress may appear to have come easily in the last three years – but for the Romanby-based 29-year-old, it hasn't just been a case letting success come to him.

Having turned pro in 2017, it took four years for the Yorkshireman – an England international and English Amateur winner – to progress from the EuroPro Tour to the Challenge Tour. He went on to finish 30th in the Challenge Tour order of merit in 2022, just outside the cut-off to earn a DP World Tour card for 2023. With nothing to lose, he went to the Final Stage of Q School in Spain, shot 26 under-par for six rounds, and made the step up to the main tour.

"The progression has been quick since getting off EuroPro, and I suppose that might make it look like it's been easy," says Dan. "Every golfer, at every level, knows the game doesn't give you a steady trajectory. You have bumps, and I experienced that after turning pro.

I've then experienced it again this season with a knee injury.

"If you'd said I'd be where I am today, having been nowhere on EuroPro 18 months before I got my main tour card, I wouldn't have believed you."

Just four years after he took six months out of the game and contemplated leaving the professional ranks, Dan has become a well-established player on the DP World Tour – a world away from travelling around the UK on the mini tour circuit in his early 20s.

"There are really two key moments in that journey – moving coaches to Brian Ridley at the end of 2019, and deciding to take things seriously after Covid.

"Brian has been great for me, and I've made steady progress since making that change. I work in quite a simple way and he gets that. Once you get to a certain level, you're there technically and it's about building confidence. Brian has been great at doing that.

"Having finished 30-something on »

"I WOKE UP ONE DAY, LOOKED MYSELF IN THE MIRROR AND SAID: 'YOU'RE 25 YEARS OLD AND YOU'VE NOT GOT A LOT'. I'D ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A GOLFER, BUT I DIDN'T DEDICATE MYSELF TO IT. I MADE A LOT OF CHANGES AFTER COVID, GOT MY HEAD DOWN AND DID SOME PROPER HARD WORK."

EuroPro, I'd packed it in for six months and was looking for jobs in 2020. I woke up one day, looked myself in the mirror and said: 'You're 25 years old and you've not got a lot'. I'd always wanted to be a golfer, but I didn't dedicate myself to it. I made a lot of changes after Covid, got my head down and did some proper hard work."

That hard work led to a rapid rise through the ranks and on to a stellar rookie season on the DP World Tour in 2023, which included a win at the ISPS HANDA World Invitational at Galgorm Castle in Northern Ireland.

"Winning was obviously the big highlight of last season," says Dan. "I would never have imagined what happened last year. You believe in yourself, and think that you're good enough to be there, but deep down you always have questions. To win on tour, and get everything that comes with that, was amazing."

With the win came two years of playing status on tour and the chance to build the next stage of his career. Dan would go on to finish 50th in the Race to Dubai in 2023, make 24 cuts in 28 events including a top-10 finish in the co-sanctioned Barbusol Championship in the US, and play in the season-ending DP World Tour Championship.

"Being a winner, and securing my card, didn't hit me until I got to the Tour Championship. When I signed my card on Sunday, I burst into tears.

"I don't tend to show a lot of emotion, but it all came out when I could finally breathe at end of the year."

Building on that success in his second year on tour did not come as easily in the first half of the 2024 season, as a recurring knee injury hampered his performances. While Dan had two top-10s – in Mauritius in December and South Africa in March – he admits the first half of the year didn't live up to his expectations.

"The first few months of the season were good, and I was carrying on from last year," he says. "After Qatar in February, I had a few issues with my knee but kept on playing. I had an MRI scan just before going to Singapore and they found a cyst





Images above and left by Kevin Gibson, KG Photography

that gets inflamed and makes it painful to walk. I know it isn't going to get any worse, so it's just about being aware of it and changing how I rest and recover to manage it for the time being."

"I missed three events in Asia after that and had seven weeks off in total. That derailed me a bit and I just couldn't get going again," adds Dan, who missed six cuts in a row on his return.

Despite a mid-season dip in results, Dan knew good golf was not far away when we met in early July at his home club, not far from his home in Bedale.

"I'm more comfortable now for sure, and I feel like I belong," he says on his second year on tour. "I'm also a better player now. It can be hard for people looking at scoreboards to see how close the margins are out there. Having played through the levels, I'd say DP World Tour level is very different to everything else – there aren't many times you get away with a mid-level shot.

"I was a good amateur, but turning pro was a big change and I didn't expect it to be. Having moved from Challenge to DP, I'd say the jump is

almost as big again. The courses are harder and the level you have to be at on every single shot is higher. Add in playing against the best players in the world and it becomes quite easy to miss a few cuts when you're not right on it."

While his game wasn't where he wanted it to be, Dan had the highlight of his 2024 season to look forward to – The 152nd Open at Royal Troon.

Having qualified at West Lancashire with a five under-par total, he played the Scottish Open at Renaissance in the preceding week – making the cut and finishing 61st – before heading across Scotland to Troon with his brother and caddy, Ben.

Struggling for form since the spring, Dan found some of his best golf under the biggest spotlight – holding the lead at The Open and ultimately finishing in a tie for 10th place to book his place at Royal Portrush for the 153rd Open next year.

He took the lead on day one following a brilliant six under-par round, then shot 72 on day two to share second place with Justin Rose >>>

going into the weekend. Playing with overnight leader Shane Lowry on Saturday, the pair were tied for the lead after 16 holes – before a bogey, double-bogey finish in the toughest conditions moved Dan into the fourth-last group for the final round alongside world number one Scottie Scheffler. On Sunday, he followed an up and down front nine with a solid level-par back nine to finish the tournament at even-par alongside Adam Scott and Matthew Jordan – as Xander Schauffele shot six under-par on the final day to win his second major of the year.

“If you had told me I’d finish in a tie for 10th at the start of the week, obviously I would have been very pleased,” he said following his final round. “It’s nice to have a good result under my belt again.”

Having returned home for the short break in the DP World Tour schedule, and taken a couple of days to reflect on his performance, he adds: “I’m obviously delighted with the result and it’s great to get a chance to go again at Portrush next year.

“I feel like I could have done more if I’m totally honest. I struggled all week with the wind off the right side on the front nine, but I can hardly complain! It was fantastic to have that experience.

“I tend to be really chilled out, so being in contention at The Open didn’t get to me. You can put yourself under loads of pressure every week, and build a game of golf up to such much more than it is, but you have got to be able to get on with it.

“We play with big names every week and while it’s of course going to be different when it’s Shane Lowry or Scottie Scheffler next to you on the first tee on the weekend of a major, it’s all about getting on with it and focussing on your own game.”

Dan posted an opening round 65 in one of the last groups of the day – a round he admits is still a bit of a blur – then held his own with some of the world’s best and found the form he had been searching for.

“I just kept rolling with it on Thursday, not thinking too much,” he says. “I was just trying to not get in my own way and overthink things – just sticking to the gameplan. A couple of long putts went in and the wind dropped late on, but playing in near-darkness made the last couple of holes more interesting.”

After a steady round on Friday, Dan found himself in the final group on Saturday in the worst weather conditions.

“I was a bit unlucky to not be leading into Sunday to be honest,” he says after bad breaks on the first and 18th saw him have to play shots standing in bunkers while his ball lay on the fairway. “It was a bit disappointing to grind it out and then finish bogey, double-bogey. Who knows what happens if I’m in one of the last groups?”



“Sunday was just a struggle with the wind off the right on the front nine again. I didn’t start well and played myself out of it, but I’m happy with how I ground it out and got the top-10 – and having had the chance to play with and learn a bit from the best player in the world.”

The result at Troon lifted Dan to 56th in the Race to Dubai and gave him the result he had been searching for this summer.

“It’s exciting to be looking forward again,” he says. “I want to stay sharp at home while we have a few weeks off, and then be raring to go again in Prague. I’m ready to kick on and get some more results in the second half of season.

“I’m not a big goal setter – I did that in the early years of my career and not meeting the goals was quite damaging mentally. I’ve learned all you can control is the next golf shot and my focus is just on getting better across the board. From there it’s a case of just letting the results come.”

It can be easy to boil a golfer’s performances down to just numbers, but they tend to tell very little of each individual’s story. As Dan says, golf is not consistent, and progressing presents many peaks and troughs. The skill all the best players possess is making the most of the peaks and shallowing out the troughs. If you can come off six missed cuts and then turn in a top-10 finish in your first major, you’re onto a winning formula.

Image above:
© Luke Walker/R&A/
R&A via Getty Image

Image right by
Kevin Gibson,
KG Photography



“BEING A WINNER, AND SECURING MY CARD, DIDN'T HIT ME UNTIL I GOT TO THE TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP. WHEN I SIGNED MY CARD ON SUNDAY, I BURST INTO TEARS. I DON'T TEND TO SHOW A LOT OF EMOTION, BUT IT ALL CAME OUT WHEN I COULD FINALLY BREATHE AT END OF THE YEAR.”



CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS 2024

CHAMPIONS HEADING TO LONGHIRST

MEN'S, WOMEN'S AND JUNIOR CLUB CHAMPIONS FROM ACROSS THE
REGION ARE HEADING TO LONGHIRST HALL ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 15



THE NORTHERN GOLFER CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS events will once again bring the golf season to a close this year, with all three tournaments taking place at **Longhirst Hall on Sunday September 15.**

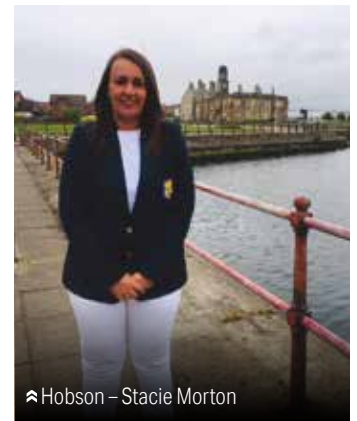
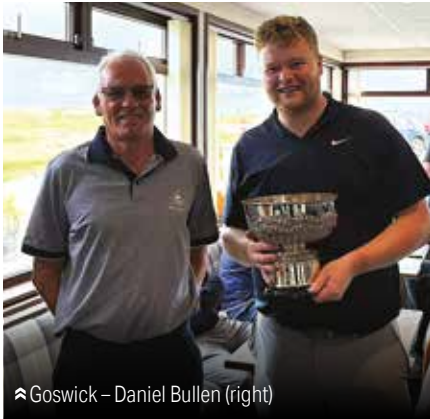
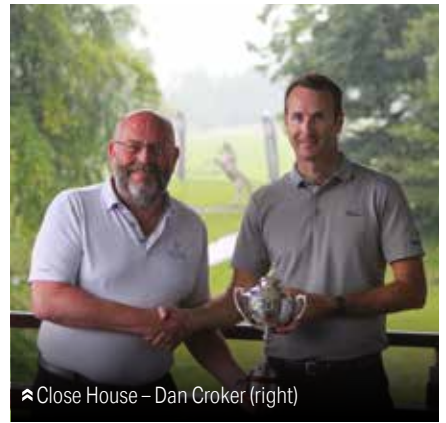
The events – for men, women and juniors – will take place over Longhirst's Dawson Course and entries are open online now.

Open to reigning club champions, there is no charge for competitors for the 18-hole tournaments, which bring together elite fields of amateur golfers from clubs in Northumberland, Co Durham and Teesside along with selected clubs in the Borders, Cumbria and Yorkshire within Northern Golfer's circulation area.

The region's best amateur golfers have lifted the trophies since Northern Golfer launched the junior event in 2015, following the success of that tournament with the launch of the ladies' event and the relaunch of the men's Champion of Champions in 2017.

The 2023 events saw The Northumberland's Harrison Sewell add his name to the long list of men's champions – which goes back to the 1960s – as Seascale's Abby Roper led the field to win the women's title, and Tynemouth's Freddie McKenna won the junior title.

**TO ENTER, HEAD OVER TO
WWW.NORTHERNGOLFER.CO.UK/CHAMPIONS**



AS WE LOOK AHEAD TO THIS YEAR'S EVENTS, HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF SOME OF THE PLAYERS WHO'VE EARNED THEIR PLACES IN THE FIELD...

- **Allendale** – Jamie Brown won the men's championship with rounds of 72 and 77
- **Alnwick** – Jack Friar led the field in the men's event by four shots with rounds of 75 and 74
- **Arcot Hall** – Liam Ruffell won the men's championship
- **Bedlingtonshire** – Ben Brown successfully defended the men's title with rounds of 72 and 75
- **Bellingham** – John Roberts followed up a bogey-free 68 with a round of 71 to win the men's championship by a single shot
- **Bishop Auckland** – Wayne Hewitt lifted the men's trophy for the third time with rounds of 75 and 68
- **Blackwell Grange** – Adam Rochester won the men's event for the seventh time with rounds of 69 and 73, as Sally Ann Connor was crowned ladies' champion with rounds of 82 and 85
- **Burgham Park** – Gill Smith won the ladies' event by a single shot, while Stephen Dodd won the men's title by the same margin
- **Castle Eden** – Chris Brown shot rounds of 71 and 72 to win the men's title by a single shot
- **Close House** – Dan Croker won the men's title with a total score of 147 over the Filly and Colt courses
- **Consett** – 16-year-old Jessica Dorritt successfully defended the ladies' title
- **Durham City** – Alex Robinson successfully defended the men's title
- **Gosforth** – Richard Wilson led the field in both the gross and nett men's events
- **Goswick** – Daniel Bullen captured the men's championship trophy for a fourth consecutive year with rounds of 72 and 74
- **Hobson** – Stacie Morton won the ladies' championship for the 11th time



⤴ Ponteland – Russell Hayhoe (right)



⤴ Prudhoe – Ben Lloyd



⤴ Ryton – Greg Lee (left)



⤴ Ramside Nick Mansell (right)



⤴ Newcastle United – Michael Burrow (right)



⤴ Seaham – Grant Dixon (left)



⤴ Seahouses – Anne Locke and Mark Dawson



⤴ Seaton Carew – Hughie Hamilton (left)



⤴ Whickham – Tanya Stephenson (left)



⤴ Whickham – James Simpson



⤴ Westerhope – Mark Russell (centre)



⤴ Tyneside – Roger Martin

- **Morpeth** – James Lingard captured the men's championship trophy
- **Newcastle United** – Tour caddy Michael Burrow won his first men's title, following up a four under-par 68 with a round of 75 to lead the field by nine shots
- **Ponteland** – Russell Hayhoe lifted the men's trophy
- **Prudhoe** – Ben Lloyd won the men's event with a two-round total of 141
- **Ramside** – Nick Mansell lifted the men's championship trophy with a 463 win in the event's final
- **Ryton** – Greg Lee won the men's event
- **Seaham** – Grant Dixon lifted the men's trophy with a score of one under-par
- **Seahouses** – Mark Dawson won the men's title, while Anne Locke won her 24th ladies' title
- **Seaton Carew** – Club vice-captain Hughie Hamilton, 54, lifted the men's club championship trophy for a record ninth time – 23 years after his maiden win in 2021 – with rounds of 80 and 70
- **Stocksfield** – Sam Wilkinson won the men's title with rounds of 73 and 70
- **Teesside** – Jayne Demoily won the ladies' title, while Dan Norman won the men's event with rounds of 73 and 66
- **Tyneside** – Roger Martin shot rounds of 75 and 73 to win the men's championship title, while Janet Burdis won the ladies' event
- **Westerhope** – Mark Russell won the men's trophy by five shots with rounds of 73 and 70
- **Whickham** – James Simpson topped the leaderboard in the men's event with rounds of 71 and 68, while Tanya Stephenson was crowned ladies' champion
- **Wilton** – Jack Evans led the men's field with a total of 144 giving him a five-shot margin of victory

COURSE PROFILE

BEAUTIFUL BARNARD CASTLE

DEAN BAILEY PROFILES THE TRANQUIL PARKLAND LAYOUT AT BARNARD CASTLE GOLF CLUB





P

LAYING GOLF OFFERS SO MUCH – from a chance to compete to those days when you escape from work and truly relax in a beautiful setting.

Having explored most of the golfing landscapes in our part of the world, I can confidently place the tree-lined parkland of Barnard Castle Golf Club among the most tranquil places to play golf in the North East. From the warmth of the welcome to the quiet Durham landscape on which the golf course sits, this is a place where your golf shots should be the only thing you're worried about. Wonderfully presented by Davy Cuthbertson and his team, the course is set out on rolling terrain at the southern end of Co Durham, with streams cutting through the course while almost all of the greens are set against backdrops of tall trees or unbroken nature as far as you can see.

The club dates to 1897 and today its course – remodelled extensively in the 1990s after the club began renting additional land – measures 6,438 yards with a par of 73 from the white tees.

The short opening par four, just 282 yards, requires a long-iron to the top of the hill and then a short pitch to a green just beyond a stream. While there are no bunkers here, you must stay straight off the tee with a steep slope left and trees right, while a confident pitch is required when the pin is at the front.

The par five second measures just 472 yards and is in reach in two for some. Those taking aim at the tiny green in two should be wary of the approach bunker some 30 yards short on the right side, and two more traps flanking the putting surface.

The first of a stunningly situated set of short holes, the third may be the prettiest of the lot with its vast green wrapped around a single deep bunker at its front right corner. A small pond and overhanging tree sit left of the green, and tangling with these must be avoided.

Accuracy is the order of the day at the 351-yard fourth hole. An iron is all that's required from the tee with a bunker on the left side and a stream crossing the fairway some 290 yards from the tee. The stream edges closer to the green as it reaches its left side, while a single bunker guards the front right corner of this elevated putting surface.

Playing back in the opposite direction, the fifth also presents a generous landing area for a tee shot with an iron. Be wary of the stream some 270 yards from the tee if you hit driver here. Two bunkers protect the corners of the dogleg, which turns to the left to reveal the green. The putting surface is narrow, features a false front, and is flanked by two more bunkers.

The 534-yard par five sixth features a generous fairway which invites you to hit driver before positioning your second shot. The green features a deep left bunker and two more traps on its right side, including a hidden one at the back.

The 400-yard-plus seventh is a stern test. The tree-lined fairway turns slightly left while the elevated putting surface is set against a backdrop of trees and thick rough. You'll find bunkers at both front corners.

Set in a clearing, the par three eighth is a delightful short hole where the pin position dictates the strategy. When playing its full length, which can be close to 200 yards, the centre of the vast green is best, while good players can take closer aim when the pin is in the more accessible right side, away from the front bunker.

A sub-500-yard par five follows at the ninth. Finding the fairway is essential if you wish to play over the valley in the fairway, which has a stream at its base, toward the bunkerless green complex which slopes away from the centre in every direction.

The 424-yard par four 10th is an important hole to keep your score going. Played into the prevailing wind, the tree-lined fairway turns slightly left before it reaches a tiny, incredibly narrow green with a large runoff area to its right side and a deep bunker at its back right corner.

Played through a corridor in the trees, the 165-yard par three 11th demands an accurate shot with four bunkers surrounding the front edge of the green.

A bunkerless, short par four, the fairway narrows considerably as you approach the green at the 12th. The trees block a straight route to the green, while the stream edges closer to the right side of the playing area as you progress from the tee – getting within a couple of paces of the right side of the green.

A pair of par fives, measuring 537 and 474 yards, follow. At the straight-away 13th, three bunkers lie on the right side of the very generous fairway. A fourth blocks the route of balls looking to bounce up to the green from the left side, and a fifth sits on the right side of a very small green. At the 14th, long drives are rewarded with a bounce down the hill and a great chance to reach the green in two.

The 368-yard 15th presents another good birdie chance when played sensibly. Avoid the fairway bunkers – one left and two right – and you'll get a great look at a small green well beyond the stream that has no other defences.

Three demanding tee shots bring the round to a close – starting with a fairway wood or driver on the 16th which must favour the left side to leave an unobstructed view of the green at this dogleg-right par four. The green has no bunkers, but the stream is close to the front edge and the target is small.

The signature 17th follows (see opposite).

At 211 yards, the 18th is a tough par three requiring good ball striking and accuracy. Shots which come up just a little short can get a friendly bounce, though be wary of the two bunkers cut well short of the putting surface. The green runs away steeply on its right, left and back edges, making up and downs to save par here tricky.



OUR VERDICT

A stunning, traditional English parkland course which feels far removed from the hustle and bustle of the outside world, Barnard Castle is simply a joy to play.



Signature HOLE

Having played over streams throughout the round, the narrow strips of water present their biggest test at the 338-yard 17th. Splitting the fairway in two from 170 yards out, players must decide how close they want to get to the stream with their tee shot. A straighter, riskier shot is rewarded with less chance of finding the water – just inches from the right of the green – with your second shot. Those who are cautious from the tee must be very accurate with their second shot in order to avoid the water short and to the right of their path to the putting surface, and the out of bounds to the left and beyond as they play into the green.



CONTACT

Barnard Castle Golf Club
Harmire Road, Barnard Castle, Co
Durham, DL12 8QN, tel 01833 631 980
www.barnardcastlegolfclub.org

YARDAGES

WHITE TEES – 6,438 YARDS (PAR 73)
YELLOW TEES – 6,066 YARDS (PAR 73)
RED TEES – 5,438 YARDS (PAR 73)

FEATURES

- Welcoming clubhouse with excellent food
- Practice green, nets and two hitting areas
- Pro shop with buggy and trolley hire



A ROUND WITH

ROSIE BELSHAM

ENGLAND AND GREAT BRITAIN INTERNATIONAL ROSIE BELSHAM ON
TRAVELLING THE WORLD, COLLEGE GOLF, HER FAVOURITE ON-COURSE
MEMORIES, AND LOTS MORE







OSIE BELSHAM'S golf career has been well-documented in the pages of *Northern Golfer* – from becoming the youngest-ever Northumberland county champion to winning the junior Champion of Champions event in 2018.

Having completed her four-year golf scholarship at Baylor University in Texas earlier this year, and struck up a partnership with Matfen Hall as she competes in the biggest amateur events this summer ahead of turning professional at the end of the season, we caught up with the 22-year-old in Northumberland to find out more about her incredible golf experiences to-date...

1 How much golf do you get to play?

As much as I can! I try and take one day off each week, just to reset, but other than that I'm playing and practising every day. Matfen Hall is my main base now and the facilities are amazing. Everything I need is here and the whole day is gone before I know it. I still play a lot of social golf at Whitley Bay with my mum and dad too.

2 How did you get into golf?

Me and my mum started at the same time, doing the junior and café golf programmes at Whitley Bay. We both played a lot of hockey, which helped early on. We're still super competitive between ourselves and with my dad, and all of us play off single figures.

3 Which is your favourite course in the North East?

I love Bamburgh Castle, where I won the county championship, but my favourite in Northumberland is Alnmouth. I love it there, especially the holes with the sea views and the par three down by the beach.

4 And further afield?

My favourite place is The Alotian Club in Arkansas – it's so special to play golf and spend time there, and the view over the valley is amazing. Kapolei Golf Club in Hawaii, where I won my second individual title in college, is also so much fun.

5 What's your best score?

My lowest score so far was nine under-par in the second round of the Bridget Jackson Bowl at Handsworth. My most important round would have to be the last round in Guadalajara when I won my first college event. I've never been so nervous yet so clam, and I want to find that feeling in a big event again.

6 Which is your favourite golfing memory?

Winning the European Teams Championship

at Conwy in Wales with England in 2022. I was out last against Italy in the final and I'll never forget running up to celebrate with the team when Lottie [Woad] holed the putt for us to win. I love the team matchplay environment and it'll definitely be something I miss when I turn pro.

7 What about your most embarrassing moments on the course?

I don't think I've done anything too bad, at least that I can remember! I've turned up to the first tee without my putter a few times, but I've always had someone there to get it from the hotel room for me.

8 Do you have any golfing superstitions?

I'm not superstitious, but I do have a routine that works for me. I have to wake up at least three hours before my tee time, no matter when it is, and I have to tee off with at least four tees in my pocket.

9 What are your strengths on the course?

My short game is a real strength, I can chip it inside 6ft from anywhere! I'd like to think I'd be people's pick for chipping when they're building their perfect golfer.

10 And your weaknesses?

My wedge play is something I need to work hard on to stay sharp. It's so important and while it's always been OK, it needs to be a really good part of my game to score well every week.

11 Which is your favourite club in the bag?

My custom-built PING PLD putter, which was made for me at college. It doesn't have a name from PING, so I call it Plod.

12 Who is your best golfing friend?

I like to compete against my dad the most as he's the only person who can get in my head. For playing together, I'd say any of the girls in the England squad. I've grown up with them and we're all good friends.

13 What would you be doing if you weren't playing golf?

I majored in kinesiology at college, but I'd probably be playing another sport like hockey.

14 Who is your favourite golfer?

Suzann Pettersen is my golfing idol. She set out a list of goals, achieved every one of them, and then went to live a more normal life. It's amazing to be able to say you ticked every goal off your list.

15 Which golf event do you enjoy most?

I'd love to go back and have one more run at the national finals with Baylor. I played in them





“SUZANN PETERSEN IS MY GOLFING IDOL. SHE SET OUT A LIST OF GOALS, ACHIEVED EVERY ONE OF THEM, AND THEN WENT TO LIVE A MORE NORMAL LIFE. IT’S AMAZING TO BE ABLE TO SAY YOU TICKED EVERY GOAL OFF YOUR LIST.”

four times, but never got that perfect run where I was fit and playing my best. I'd love to have one more go with the team.

16 Who do you admire?

My assistant coach at Baylor, Carly Ludwig, had a big impact on me. She gave me such a bigger picture of life, and taught me not to live and die by what I do on the golf course. She's got so much experience and is so open to sharing it to make golfers better people as well as better players.

17 Which three people would join you in your dream fourball?

I'd pick Seve Ballesteros as I love his golf courses and I'd want to challenge him out of a bunker; John Daly as I think he'd be really fun to play golf with; and Charley Hull as she's one of the best players in the world.

18 If you could have one mulligan, when would you have used it?

I'm not sure I've played enough to pick one shot – you'll have to ask me again when I retire!

LOOKING AHEAD: **SUMMER 2025**

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GEAR NEWS

GEARING UP



New equipment continues to catch our eyes this summer – including new drivers from Titleist and wedges from Callaway, plus junior clubs from PING. We also have new putters from Scotty Cameron and TearDrop, and lots more from brands including Garmin, Fujikura, Golfstream and Abacus. There's even more on the latest releases over at www.northerngolfer.co.uk

IN THIS EDITION

- Titleist GT drivers
- Callaway Opus and Opus Platinum wedges
- PING Prodi G junior clubs
- Scotty Cameron B3 Triple Black Design LTD putters
- Garmin Approach Z30 smart laser range finder
- 2024 TearDrop putters
- Fujikura VeloCore+ shafts
- Golfstream Vision Brake EBS trolley
- Abacus Sportswear shorts



GRAND DESIGNS

Titleist GT drivers
RRP: £579

Titleist has launched three GT driver models – GT2, GT3 and GT4 – each engineered to deliver total performance without sacrifice.

GT2 is designed for speed and forgiveness across the face with a higher-MOI setup. GT3 is designed for fine-tuned speed and control, maximising distance and optimising flight; and GT4 is a low-spin, 430cc driver designed to eliminate excessive spin and deliver a fast, penetrating trajectory.

Each driver features a Seamless Thermoform Crown comprised of a proprietary Matrix Polymer. This ultra-light material allows engineers to place discretionary mass in the optimal locations for each model, providing greater speed and stability with GT's Split Mass Construction.

Refined aerodynamics increase clubhead speed, while a new Speed Ring and VFT face contribute to faster ball speed across the face. Finally, new face graphics are designed to frame the ball squarely at address.



BLACKOUT

Scotty Cameron B3 Triple Black Design LTD putters
MSRP: \$750

Scotty Cameron has launched a special run of B3 Triple Black Design LTD putters with the classic, playable blades featuring a Tour Black finish along with a black shaft and black grip.

The putters are available in four models – Newport 2, Newport 2 Long Neck, Santa Fe and Catalina – with each modern head shape featuring tour-inspired dual-milled face technology.

The Tour Black finish comes from a PVD treatment applied to the 303 stainless steel putter head. The putter's topline is manually misted, and the face and sole are hand-buffed before its application. The chrome shaft carries the same Tour Black finish, and the putter is completed with a black Pistolini Plus grip.



TOUR ACCURACY

Fujikura VeloCore+ shafts
RRP: \$350

Fujikura has added its 2024 VENTUS Red and VENTUS Black shaft options to its VeloCore+ collection.

VENTUS Red is designed for golfers seeking a mid-high launch and mid-spin profile, with the premium bias core material construction promoting greater energy transfer.

The VENTUS Black is designed for golfers with faster swing speeds looking for a low launch and low spin profile.

GREATEST OPUS

Callaway Opus and Opus Platinum wedges
RRP: £179 (Opus) £229 (Opus Platinum)

Callaway has announced its new family of Opus and Opus Platinum wedges, featuring Spin Gen Face technology.

The new technology has three key elements – more grooves on the face, an offset groove-in-groove design, and an aggressive face blast to increase spin on partial shots. The Opus wedges also feature a higher toe peak, greater radius in the leading edge, and easier hosel transitions throughout a wide range of loft and sole grind options.

The wedges are already a popular choice on tour and have been in the bag for three major victories – two for Xander Schauffele and one for Yuka Saso.

Opus wedges are available in two finishes – brushed chrome and black shadow, along with a custom raw option.

Meanwhile, the Opus Platinum wedges fuse advancements from metal injection moulding and tungsten weighting to improve launch control, and are available in blue and chrome finishes.



TAKE AIM

Garmin Approach Z30 smart laser range finder
RRP: £389.99

Garmin has released its Approach Z30 laser range finder – the latest addition to its golf ecosystem.

The device introduces Range Relay, which sends distances to a compatible Garmin smartwatch or the Garmin Golf smartphone app. Once the target has been locked in, the ranged distance and a laser range arc will display on the paired device to give players a visual indication of the pin position and everything in play around it.

The Approach Z30 also allows players to view distances to the front and back of the green, and see how far each shot should play with slope adjustment.



ONE VISION

Golfstream Vision Brake EBS trolley
RRP: £599 (18-hole battery)

The new Vision Brake electric trolley from UK-based Golfstream is packed with premium features, including an electronic braking system and a one-click folding mechanism.

The trolley folds down to just 59x28x86cm and features a distance control function allowing it to be sent off to the next tee, while the electronic braking system ensures it only creeps slowly down steep slopes. An 18-hole lithium CaddyCell LifePO4 battery is supplied as standard, while a 36-hole battery option is available too.

FIT FOR PURPOSE

PING Prodi G junior clubs

RRP: Various

Engineered with the score-lowering technologies of its adult range, PING has launched the next generation of its custom-fit, custom-built Prodi G junior clubs.

Along with performance improvements throughout the set, the company is introducing WebFit Junior – a web app that recommends club specifications and set makeup following a questionnaire.

The custom-engineered set is comprised of 10 clubs and two putter options – a 15° titanium driver, 22° fairway wood, 28° hybrid, perimeter-weighted irons (6-9, PW), specialty wedges (54° S & 58° H) and tour-proven putter models (Anser and Tyne H).

The lightweight clubs can be ordered in any combination, and two sizes of the Hooper Prodi G carry bag can be purchased separately.

The proven technologies applied to the new Prodi G range include thinner, more flexible faces to increase ball speed in the metal woods, and irons engineered with lower CGs for more distance and higher launch. The iron's custom tuning ports allow for precise swing weighting during the custom-building process, while two lightweight graphite shafts are optimised for length, weight and balance to match junior swing speeds.



ROLLING OUT

2024 TearDrop putters

RRP: £239.99

TearDrop has rolled out a new range of putters for 2024 featuring Roll-Face technology – a unique design that helps get the ball rolling more quickly and avoids the skid and bounce that compromises accuracy and distance control.

First formed in 1992, TearDrop enjoyed huge success with its putters on the professional tours on the back of precision milling and Roll-Face technology. The latest range includes three models with an anti-glare black oxide finish – the TD-1 blade and TD-5 and TD-7 mallets.



RAISE YOUR GAME

Abacus Sportswear shorts

RRP: from £70

Swedish apparel brand Abacus Sportswear has launched a new range of shorts.

Using the same technology found in its range of trousers – including four-way stretch and breathable, lightweight fabrics – the collection aims to deliver maximum comfort and a stylish look.

For men looking to make a bold statement on the fairways, the eye-catching Huntingdale shorts are available in a choice of nine vibrant colours. Meanwhile, the Kildare shorts – and women's Camargo and Elite City shorts – feature four-way stretch and Drycool technology.



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» SILLOTH ON SOLWAY GOLF CLUB

The star attraction of the Cumbrian coast, the links layout at Silloth on Solway Golf Club makes stunning use of the natural terrain to present one of England's finest courses. Designed in 1892 by David Grant and developed by a number of architects throughout its history, including Dr Alister MacKenzie and Willie Park Jnr, the course is framed by sand dunes strewn with gorse. Ranked 46th best in GB&I and 18th best in England by Top100golfcourses.com – this is a must-visit for any golfer for the views across the Firth, the sunken dell greens, and the challenging bunkers. **Silloth on Solway Golf Club, Station Road, Silloth, CA7 4AE**
tel 016973 31304, www.sillothgolfclub.co.uk



» APPLEBY GOLF CLUB

The golf course at Appleby is situated just off the A66 and was designed by Open champion Willie Fernie. It features dramatic shapes and undulations throughout its 5,986 yards, with heather and bracken creating a real test of accuracy. The course sits atop sandstone, which creates firm conditions and keeps the course playable year-round – a rare trait in the land of the lakes! The signature 15th was voted 98th in GB&I's best golf holes and its features include Hilton Beck, the out of bounds fence, and a concealed green.

Appleby Golf Club, Brackenber Moor, Appleby, CA16 6LP
tel 017683 51432, www.applebygolfclub.co.uk



» BRAMPTON GOLF CLUB

Brampton features panoramic views of the Lake District mountains, the North Pennines and the Southern Uplands of South West Scotland. One of the region's best heathland courses, and close to the Northumberland border, the layout was designed by five-time Open champion James Braid and today measures 6,418 yards from the back tees. The club was included in Golf World's Top 100 £65 & Under GB&I 2023 list and the panoramic views from the clubhouse, which include the par three first hole, are stunning. The first is one of nine holes on the clubhouse side of the road, while the other side features the more rugged, quirky and spectacular holes. The eighth is the stand-out hole with its elevated tee offering views for miles around and a great look at the short par four. Meanwhile, the glacial lake of Talkin Tarn provides a beautiful backdrop to a number of holes.

Brampton Golf Club, Tarn Road, Brampton, CA8 1HN
tel 016977 2255, www.bramptongolfclub.com



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» SEASCALE GOLF CLUB

Situated on the west coast of Cumbria, five miles south of Whitehaven, the links of Seascale are a delight in calm conditions and an exacting test when the wind blows in from the Irish Sea. Founded in 1893, the course was designed by Willie Campbell and George Lowe, and remains a traditional English links test with spectacular views of the Isle of Man and Scotland to the west, and the mountains of the Lake District to the east. The tee shot at the ninth, played towards the sea, is a real highlight of every round. A regular in top-100 lists and ranked among the world's best links courses, those who haven't visited Seascale before should add this to their list of courses to play as soon as possible. Those who have visited before know the challenge, and will undoubtedly be keen to tackle it again.

Seascale Golf Club, The Banks, Seascale, CA20 1QL, tel 01946 728 202, www.seascalegolfclub.co.uk



» CALDER HOUSE HOTEL

Just metres from the links of Seascale, the Calder House Hotel offers a warm Cumbrian welcome, a cracking breakfast, and stunning views from a number of bedrooms as well as the bar and restaurant. The beer garden is a wonderful spot to share stories from your rounds in the summertime, plus there's free parking and wi-fi. A range of en-suite rooms are available, and golfers are made incredibly welcome on every visit.

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Photos by Gary Lisbon





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THE WEST COAST OF ENGLAND is blessed with fantastic ground for golf – from the Open rota courses of Royal Lytham & St Annes and Royal Birkdale to the likes of Southport and Ainsdale and Hillside.

For those travelling across the country to test their skills against these formidable layouts, or perhaps visiting courses which lie a little further inland, Offshore in Lytham St Annes is the ideal spot to unwind and recuperate.

The inn sits between the links of Lytham and St Annes Golf Club, host of 11 Open Championships, and the Irish Sea. Royal Birkdale, host of 11 Opens and venue for the 2026 event, is within an hour's drive. Meanwhile, St Anne's Old Links, Fairhaven Golf Club and Blackpool North Shore Golf Club are just a short drive away; with Hesketh, Hillside and Southport and Ainsdale just a little further south.

The site of the former Carlton and Lindum hotels, Offshore has been completely refurbished by the Inn Collection Group, with the team bringing their tried and tested pub with rooms concept to the spectacular location on the promenade overlooking St Annes Pier and the Ribble Estuary.



There are 98 rooms here, including many with sea views, and 19 single occupancy rooms with en-suites – perfect for travelling groups with a couple of light sleepers, or noisy ones! There's also free wi-fi to check your scores.

For those returning from the course in the evening, pub classics and excellent fish dishes will ensure every hungry golfer is well catered for – while the Sunday lunch comes highly recommended. Breakfast is hearty and served as early as 7.30am every day for those heading to the course early. The views aren't bad either – with the floor-to-ceiling windows in the pub affording stunning views of the Irish Sea which can't fail to inspire you to head outside. Meanwhile, the outdoor terrace is the perfect place to enjoy the sunshine and share stories from the day's round late into the evening.

Dinner, bed and breakfast packages at Offshore start from £129 per person. To book your stay direct, visit www.inncollectiongroup.com/offshore





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WHICH COURSE WILL HOST THE 2024 SOLHEIM CUP BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE USA?



HOW TO ENTER

You can enter via our website at: www.northerngolfer.co.uk

Alternatively, you can post your entry to: **Competitions, Northern Golfer, Unit 5b, Bearl Farm, Stocksfield, Northumberland, NE43 7AL**

You must include your address and telephone number.

Closing date for entries: September 26, 2024. Usual competition rules apply – available on request. Winners will be published in our next edition.

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GOLF FOR FOUR AT NEWBIGGIN GOLF CLUB

The links at Newbiggin on the Northumberland coast have stood the test of time. Designed by Willie Park Junior, the rolling fairways, sand dunes and North Sea wind make for a proper test of golf.

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Congratulations to our competition winners from the Jun/July edition:

Burgham Park - Michael Shepherd of Darlington • **Bellingham** - Ian Potts of Stockton • **Flamborough Head** - Jonathan Aisbitt of Blyth

FROM THE

BUNKER



WELCOME TO YOUR READER FEEDBACK PAGE. WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR LIKES AND DISLIKES, FUNNY GOLFING STORIES, AND YOUR FUNDRAISING ACHIEVEMENTS. EMAIL EDITOR@NORTHERNGOLFER.CO.UK AND YOU COULD STAR IN OUR NEXT EDITION.



Lily Hartley has continued her success on the Northern Junior Golf Tour, winning three times this season and earning a spot in the tour's National Girls Championship at Dunstanburgh Castle this summer.

Lily, who was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour at the age of three and is the daughter of PGA professional David Hartley, has led the scoring in three nine-hole under-14 girls' events – at The Northumberland, Brancepeth Castle and Cleveland.

Meanwhile, this year's Lily Hartley Charity Golf Day at her home club, Hobson, raised £2,800 for the neurosurgical ward at the RVI in Newcastle.



Boldon-based husband and wife Mick Turner and Christine Smith recorded their first holes-in-one within seven days of one another on the par three third hole at their home club.

Mick, who plays off a handicap of 27, was first to make an ace on Sunday June 9. Playing off the yellow tees, he hit a seven-iron to make his hole-in-one. Chris, who has a handicap of 11.7, made her ace during the club's PING 4BBB competition on June 15 on the same hole – playing off the red tees and hitting a nine-iron.



Graham Lambie



Sam Eggleston

Congratulations to Sam Eggleston (third), Geordie Brown (eighth), Gordon Lambie (fifth) and Kristian Atkinson (10th) on making holes-in-one at Alnwick in the space of five weeks in May and June.



Cameron Thoburn (left) and Connor Graham (right)

Westerhope's Cameron Thoburn and Connor Graham teamed up to win the Hadrian League Challenge Cup at their home club.

The event sees teams of two – one gross player and one nett player – compete for a combined score, and Northumberland county player Cameron led the gross scoring with his round of 75 as Connor finished second in the nett event with his score of 74.



Richmond captains Lee Coward and Anne Rose enjoyed successful captains' days, with both raising money for charity.

Lee's captain's day was won by Keith Wright, with members coming together to raise £800 for Prostate Cancer UK. Meanwhile, on her captain's day, Anne raised £120 for Lupus UK and Garget Walker House in Richmond, increasing her fundraising total for the year to more than £2,000.



Following our Round With interview with Andrew Scrimshaw and Martyn Jobling in the last edition, Richard Hannam sent in this picture showing Andrew's favourite golfing memory – his last putt as an amateur in the Champion of Champions at Close House in 2011.



Wooler

More than 200 golfers took part in the first Northumberland 27 event – hosted by Alnmouth Village, Warkworth and Wooler golf clubs.

The 27-hole event was won by Michael Storey and Keith Ormond with a fourball betterball score of 64 points. Les Johnson and Eric Laidler finished second, two points back, beating David Coates and Simon Williams on countback.

The event will return on Monday June 23, 2025.



Tyneside Golf Club's Marie Curie Golf Day raised a fantastic £6,650 for the charity. Geoff White and Alan Bright are pictured handing over the cheque following the event earlier this summer.

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