



Junior Section Report 2020

2020 proved to be very challenging for everyone in so many ways and our junior section was no different. Despite the difficulties, there were a lot of positives though and overall, our season was successful. The golf industry saw something of a resurgence once we came out of lockdown and our junior section grew in number from 60 to 90 by early September. We usually see growth once the season starts but this was a great boost.

Despite being forced to begin our junior coaching sessions later than usual, continuing into September worked well. This was partly because unfortunately a lot of our juniors were not able to move on to their winter sports such as hockey, rugby and football due to Covid restrictions.

Our delayed start also had to be staggered due to the need to limit numbers and households but eventually we were able to get everyone involved and had a great time. Our coaching was greatly enhanced by the full time inclusion of Allan Martin. Allan is a PGA Professional who contributes a huge amount to junior golf across the country. We are very lucky to have him at Muckhart and we thank him for his time. Our 'resident' PGA Professional, Heather MacRae was also involved later in the season and was, as always, very popular with the juniors. Having professionals such as Allan and Heather involved is a big boost for our juniors but it also gives our volunteer coaches extra guidance and knowledge.

Speaking of our wonderful team of volunteer coaches, we really have to thank them all for their patience and understanding as we grappled with the ever-changing regulations. Due to those, we also needed to ask a few parents to help and many did so willingly. Giving up a couple of hours every week to take care of our juniors is a big commitment and our juniors and parents should appreciate this.

On the competitive front, our senior players excelled themselves once again. Although there were no team events played, most of our Stage 3 players participated in club Gents' competitions where they acquitted themselves very well – Douglas Young, Alex Turlik, Luke Volland, Lewis Seath, Adam Roberts and Ben McLachlan all feature in the 2020 Gents' roll of honour. The highlight was Lewis' victory in the Gents' Matchplay Championship, which was a fantastic achievement.

The junior tournament calendar was dominated by Ben and Lewis who collected four trophies apiece, while Luke successfully defended the junior club championship. Freya MacColl won the Girls' Quaich.

The national junior calendar was lighter than usual but Ben, Lewis, Luke and Alex all represented Muckhart on the Scottish Junior Tour and the Stephen Gallacher Foundation Series. Notably, Lewis finished 3rd in the SGF U15s, Luke reached the last-16 of the SGF U18 Matchplay Championship, just losing out to the eventual champion and Alex won the Perth & Kinross County Gents' Championship. Alex has also been selected for the Wales U18 High Performance Support Squad for 2021.

Congratulations to all of our prizewinners.



We were able to hold a very small prize giving for Stage 3, which gave us a chance to bid farewell to long-term members, Jamie Fulton and outgoing Junior Captain, Douglas Young. Both will be missed in the junior section as they head off to university but we hope to see them back at the club soon! Alex Turlik will take over the Junior Captaincy in 2021 and Ben McLachlan will be his Vice Captain.

Finally, as everyone is aware, Chris and I are handing over the reigns to Colin Melville. We have really enjoyed our four years but are also looking forward to seeing Colin move the section forward with a new perspective and approach. We thank Colin for stepping up and will continue to support this fantastic part of the club whenever we can. The key to success is our juniors and they are all a credit to themselves and their parents. The atmosphere on Thursday evenings (during and after coaching) is brilliant and we are sure that this will continue under Colin's guidance.

We wish everyone an enjoyable winter and look forward to seeing you around. Just because there is no Thursday coaching doesn't mean that our juniors should stop playing and practicing – their membership runs all year!!

Rosemary Turlik
Junior Convener