

Areas & Counties Newsletter



Dear Secretary

Welcome to the latest edition of our monthly newsletter, as the golf season moves into full swing. As we seek to strengthen our communication activities and keep you and others fully up-to-date with our latest activities, we would be grateful if you could distribute the newsletter to the rest of your committee and relevant club members.

CLUB FORUMS THIS SUMMER

We are currently making plans for club forums at various locations this summer, with Area and County officials and club representatives to be among those invited to attend. This will see more consultation on our strategy, including preparation for the reviews of our committee and Board structures linked to our articles. Please look out for further communication to come.

Activity is being seen at Area and County level with regard to amalgamation, with a mix of club consultations taking place and committee groups starting to explore potential amalgamation. There are a couple of groups that have reached out to us for support and we will continue to facilitate these requests as and when the respective associations request our input. We know each Area and County is progressing at their own speed, so if any Area or County would like to discuss the issue or seek support please contact Karin Sharp at The Duke's office in St Andrews.

MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS COMBINE TO BENEFIT AM-PRO TRANSITION

Building on our media announcement with Stephen McAllister last month to help drive new investment for Scottish Golf, last week saw an exciting new support package announced designed to ease the transition from amateur to professional golf for Scottish players. This new initiative will harness the combined support of key stakeholders, Aberdeen Asset Management, SSE Scottish Hydro and Bounce Sports Management, as well as ourselves.



The launch at Edinburgh Castle generated excellent media coverage in national press, as well as BBC & STV coverage. Indeed, the story led the BBC golf website home page on the evening of the announcement.

[> View more information](#)

With the Scottish Golf Support Limited programme for young professionals coming to an end, we are under pressure with our funding, via **sportscotland**, as you know. We have therefore been continuing to make representations regarding the value and significance that golf has to Scotland. With the news last week of the Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland report on the value and economic impact of golf tourism in Scotland (£286m per year), this research is another significant aid to represent what golf can deliver for Scotland. At a time when resources are tight, we need to be able to show the value of golf to Scotland and this research gives significant insight and data to help with this case.

MARKETING WORKSHOPS: PLACES STILL AVAILABLE

Our Club Marketing Workshops are well underway, under the theme of 'Marketing on a Budget', with our team on the road. Workshops were held at Scotsraig and King's Acre last week, with Bathgate, Deeside and Haggs Castle to follow. Places are still available at these workshops should you be interested. Clubs have benefited from our insights and experience, providing them with practical tools, ideas and good practice case studies in the ever increasing modern world of marketing and communications.

[> View dates and venues](#)

PING SCOTTISH MIXED CHAMPIONSHIP

The PING Scottish Mixed Championship is a unique new addition to the domestic handicap amateur calendar in 2017, as we brings male and female golfers together in a fun-filled format for all ages and abilities to add further value to club membership. We're looking for more clubs to host a qualifying event for this exciting competition so please assist if you can.

The free-to-enter championship is open to all golf club members in Scotland holding an official handicap, from juniors to seniors. Golfers can compete in a mixed event at local club level (stableford format), with the top 40 club pairings nationwide going forward to the Grand Final over the superb Queen's Course at Gleneagles.

All clubs running a PING Scottish Mixed Championship qualifying event will go into a prize draw with one lucky club winning a superb prize package from PING and Scottish Golf.



[> View more information](#)

SCOTTISH GOLF MEMBERSHIP CARD OFFERS

As the new golf season is well underway, we are keen to grow the number of clubs offering preferential green fee offers to Scottish Golf Membership Card holders via the online Members Clubhouse. With 57,000 golfers now registered for the Members Clubhouse, this platform provides a great opportunity for clubs to market with us. We would be delighted if you could please highlight this opportunity to clubs on your travels.

Some of the key benefits to participating clubs include: Generating additional visitor green fee income; raising the profile of your club among fellow golf club members in Scotland and adding value to being a member of a golf club in Scotland. We have created a promotional resource (link below) to help clubs better understand the benefits.

[> Scottish Golf Membership Card | Promotional Resource](#)

WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM IN PIPELINE

As you may be aware, The R&A and USGA are working with golf's handicapping authorities to develop a single World Handicap System for the game. More than 15 million golfers in over 80 countries presently have a handicap, currently delivered through six different systems around the world. The aim of the proposed handicap system is therefore to adopt a universal set of principles and procedures that will apply all over the world.

[> View more information](#)

It was good for me to meet partners from The R&A and other golfing bodies at the recent R&A International Conference in St Andrews. The Conference attracted over 70 different golfing nations from across the world. This continues the theme that we will be more successful working with partners to achieve shared objectives.

SCOTS OFF TO STRONG SEASON START



The new season has seen strong starts from a number of leading Scottish amateur players. Craig Howie from Peebles and Drumoig's Connor Syme both gave their Walker Cup hopes an early boost with victories in the Craigmillar Park Open and Battle Trophy respectively. It's great to see Connor (10) and Robert MacIntyre (6), from Glencruitten, both currently ranked inside the top 10 of the World Amateur Golf Ranking.

Aboyne's Shannon McWilliam (pictured above), still aged only 17, has also been shining in the female game after her second-place finishes at the Scottish Girls' Open in Montrose and the Helen Holm Scottish Women's Open at Royal Troon & Troon Portland. Let's hope Scottish players continue to impress!

SCOTTISH GOLF ANNUAL REVIEW

As a reminder, I'm delighted to advise that Scottish Golf's Annual Review for 2016 was recently published, with hard copies handed out to attendees at our Annual Meeting & AGM.

The Review outlines all of our activities for 2016, including across our pillars for Finance, Effective Organisation, Participation, Clubs & Facilities, Workforce, Affinity and Performance. All the winners from our various events in 2016 are also featured, as well as key numbers across our work being brought to life. Further coverage of our numbers via infographics is currently being promoted on our social media platforms and in e-newsletters.

[> View Annual Review](#)

On behalf of Scottish Golf, thank you for your continued support and I look forward to seeing many of you across the country as the season continues.

Blane Dodds, Chief Executive