

2022 AGM Junior Convenor Report

Introduction

2022 has been a season to remember for a number of reasons – with the Junior Section enjoying success both on and off the course. Overall our membership figures decreased slightly from last year, but this is in the context of fees being collected (something we hadn't done as robustly previously). We celebrated achievements in both Scottish Golf GolfSixes and Junior Flag initiatives and further developed the delivery of local provision. We launched our Club Rental Scheme, organised a trip to the 150th Open at St Andrews and enjoyed our first social event at Halloween in the clubhouse. This report includes an update on Volunteering and Safeguarding, Membership, Scottish Golf Initiatives, Local Provision, Juvenile Golf, Club Rental Scheme, Social Media, Fee Structure, Fundraising, Acknowledgements and Summary.

Volunteering and Safeguarding

Junior Council has continued to meet over Microsoft Teams and this has supported planning and delivery of initiatives. Most members of Council are also members of the PVG scheme. We currently have 6 members of Junior Council excluding myself. We have further developed links and work with the Ladies Section who have again provided significant support to the Girls' Hub initiative.

Membership

We made slight changes to our categories this year in order to better align ourselves with Scottish Golf initiatives. The Junior category changed from Under 12 years to Under 13 years and Juvenile is now 13 – 17 years. Membership categories are determined by age as at 1st January each year. We currently have 71 Junior Members paid up and registered on our database (a decrease of 2 from last year):

- 21 Juveniles (13 – 17 years); and
- 50 Juniors (Under 13 years).

Included in the above figures are 14 Girls (2 Juvenile and 12 Juniors) – an increase of 2 from last year and meaning girls now make up around 20% of the Junior membership. The under-representation of girls is significant and the reason why we continue to prioritise Girls' only provision with the support of Scottish Golf.

Scottish Golf Initiatives

We have made significant progress with Scottish Golf initiatives which provide the main pillars for our player pathway. We plan to add Scottish Golf Junior Skills Challenge to next year's programme – this is something we have piloted this year.

Scottish Golf Girls' Hub

Building on the success of 2021 we have delivered 9 volunteer led sessions (13.5 hours) with the support of the Ladies Section. As part of our summer Girls' Hub, girls accessed 6 hours of formal coaching delivered by Caimin's School of Golf. With the support of Scottish Golf we have also secured a further 6 hours formal coaching over the Winter months. Caimin's School of Golf is sponsoring a further 6 hours studio time that will be volunteer led and we'll add 3 hours of social time here too. Girls will have had access to 12 hours formal coaching and 22.5 hours volunteer led sessions through the 2022 Girls' Hub. To date we have worked with 9 girls and 6 of those are considered regulars. The Girls' Hub was responsible for 2 girls joining this year and continues to be priority work due to the aforementioned under-representation of girls in the Junior Section.

David Freeland
Girls' Hub Co-ordinator

Scottish Golf Junior Flag

Following our Flag golf debut in 2021, we signed up two teams of four for the Regional Qualifying event at Kingsfield. We ran weekly supervised practice sessions for our Juniors on the Hope course for six weeks prior to the event, with 12 Juniors in total attending. Teams were picked based on recorded scores over the practice sessions. The Juniors

played fantastic golf in tough conditions and course layout, with both teams improving on last year's scores and one team winning Regional Qualifying and moving on to the National Finals at Gleneagles.

The National final was played in challenging conditions, with it being touch and go as to whether the competition would be played due to the heavy rain. Thankfully the rain cleared and our Juniors played some excellent golf to finish in the top 10 out of 16 competing teams. We were treated to a barbeque and the use of the lawn game facilities at the Hotel before watching some trick shot golf to finish off the day. From the faces of our Juniors, it was clear to see that they had a great day. It was a privilege to look after and encourage our Juniors through the season and we hope to keep the momentum we've gathered this year and keep on improving into next year.

Gareth Robertson
Junior Flag Team Manager

Scottish Golf GolfSixes

Our GolfSixes Squad again took part in the Linlithgowshire League, competing against 3 other Clubs. Building on our success from last year, where we finished in 3rd place from five teams, we won the League! The Team secured our first ever fixture win – away at Bathgate Golf Club of all places and we were the model of consistency throughout the season. We are particularly proud of our achievement here, as we stuck rigidly to the guidance and ethos of introducing beginners and involving girls. The matches were played in great spirit and we returned to the Clubhouse for an impromptu celebration on securing the League away at Dundas Parks. The scenes in the Clubhouse that evening were quite something as we celebrated our landmark victory!

Winning the Linlithgowshire League meant qualifying for the GolfSixes Regional Final at Mearns Castle. We played some fantastic golf and finished a credible 4th place. The GolfSixes Squad have represented our Club superbly well – enjoying participating and making new friends along the way. We look forward to continued involvement and success through GolfSixes in 2023.

David Rockland
GolfSixes Team Manager

Junior Golf

In addition to the aforementioned initiatives we have continued to run our own events and sessions with around 30 children involved in our annual Play Day in August and a core group of volunteers and children turning out regularly for supervised golf playing from the Blue Tees.

Juvenile Golf

It has been yet another quiet year in terms of Juvenile developments, but significantly we have co-opted another volunteer onto Junior Council who is specifically interested in supporting this aspect of work. Much of our focus over the last couple of years has been on developing the younger section and over the next two to three years we will see a significant number transitioning to Juvenile. The emphasis now switches to developing a player pathway to support retention and engage both existing and new members. In addition to supporting young people to participate in Winter Scrambles we have plans to introduce a Monthly Medal and Summer League format in 2023. We are also close to securing a Stephen Gallacher Foundation event that will see between 70 – 100 children and young people of all abilities playing at WLGK next summer. If/when we secure this we propose to immediately revive our Junior Open – aligning it with the SGF event. In line with developments in other countries we are supporting Juniors with Handicaps ≤ 19.9 (Boys) and ≤ 34.9 (Girls) by allowing them the opportunity to both participate and win adult competitions.

Club Rental Scheme

We rented out 18 of 19 sets of Golphin clubs, generating income in the region of £300. The scheme has been very successful and we plan to make further investment to support players up to the age of 13 years. This initiative in partnership with Scottish Golf, Golphin and Caimin's School of Golf is something we are very proud of – making golf both accessible and affordable. We are confident that we already have one of the best, if not the best, schemes of its kind in the local area but we want to continue to develop this and for it to be one of the best in the country.

Social Media

Our Private Facebook Group currently has 103 members. This is the primary forum for communication with Juniors and their parents and caregivers. As part of our safeguarding protocols we vet all requests to join the group and are committed to annual housekeeping to ensure the membership is up to date, appropriate and remains restricted to relevant people. Our Twitter account currently has 202 followers and we went all "Insta" earlier in the year and have 56 followers on this platform. Follow us on Twitter @WLGJuniorGolf - we follow back! Follow us on Instagram - wlgcjuniors.

Fee Structure

The decision has been taken to keep fees at the same level for 2022. Our current fee structure is as follows:

- Juvenile - £80
- Juvenile* (child or grandchild of member) - £56
- Junior - £40
- Junior* (child or grandchild of member) - £28

*The following concession applies for members with children/grandchildren – first child charged at 30% of full fees, second child charged at 50% of full fees and any other children at £10.

Fundraising

We have received various contributions by way of financial donations and been involved in fundraising activities ourselves. This has prompted us to seek the support of a Treasurer and we will look to provide the Membership with a brief financial summary of our activity in future years.

Acknowledgements

There are too many people to acknowledge each and every one by name here, but particular thanks go to Iain Marshall and his team (including the volunteers), Caimin Condren and his team, Captain Bryan Gale and WLGC Council members, outgoing Ladies Captain Gina Beglin and the Ladies Section. I'd also like to thank Chris Bell, Bryan Doherty, David Freeland, Mel Freeland, Gareth Robertson and David Rockland who - along with Iain Marshall - have provided significant support this season and have committed to helping out more formally. Also worthy of mention are the contributions of both Alan Hastie and Jim Rockland who have helped out on more than one occasion and have more than a passing interest in the development of the section. Thanks, as always, to the parents and caregivers that have supported their children to play golf this year – this support and encouragement is crucial as we work together to grow the game.

To the wider membership who have again offered phenomenal support to the section this season - whether you donated money, golf clubs and/or golf balls, prizes, your time, your labour, your thoughts, views and encouragement please know that these are all greatly appreciated! Please continue to do whatever you can and be assured that we are committed to giving children and young people an experience that will support and encourage them to play and enjoy golf through adolescence, into early adulthood and beyond.

Summary

This season has definitely been one to remember! We still have much work to do, but the foundations are there and three years on from our aspirational vision for Junior Golf we have continued to reach key milestones. It has been both a pleasure and a privilege to work with the children and young people, their parents and caregivers and of course serve our Golf Club to further develop this priority area of work.

Dale Marsters
Junior Convenor
December 2022