



Pitch and Putt  
Ireland

# *Backspin*

Official E-Zine of Pitch and Putt Ireland

August 2023



Dear Friends,

Welcome to your second edition of the Pitch and Putt Ireland Backspin for the summer of 2023. In what has been a very busy last two and half months of National and Provincial Championship action across both the adults and U16 game, Declan Sheedy takes the opportunity in this edition to review all of the championship and the events played out since our last Backspin. As you will read from the below it has been an action packed and very successful calendar of events where all the championship courses were presented in exceptional condition and the standard of competition, sportsmanship and play excelled throughout.

As announced by the NEC at the end of July, Pitch and Putt Ireland welcome Dwyne Hill as new CEO of Pitch and Putt effective from August 12<sup>th</sup> and Miriam Valentine joins the office effective immediately. As an organization we welcome both and we will aim to hear more from Dwyne in our next Backspin edition in September.

Ahead of the National Strokeplay Championship to be played in Riverdale and Lakeside in Co. Tipperary over the weekend of August 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, John Manning provides for this Backspin some facts and statistics on previous National Strokeplay Championships held in Co. Tipperary.

Our next edition will review the U16 National Matchplay played recently along with the upcoming National Ladies & Gents Strokeplay, U16 Provincial Strokeplay, Ladies, Gents and U16 Provincial Intercounty championship along with a number of other features.

I hope you enjoy this edition and wish everyone a successful and enjoyable August on the pitch and putt courses around the country.

Declan Sheedy

Editor

# **National Championship Reviews**

**By Declan Sheedy**

## National Matchplay Championship @ St. Bridgets



Glourious sunshine and heat greeted the players and spectators at the excellent St. Bridgets course which hosted the National Matchplay championship over the June bank holiday weekend. The course was in exceptional condition which firmed up over the duration of the weekend adding to the challenge facing the players. However, it did not prevent outstanding performances being produced and a brilliant championship overall. The following takes a look at the championship and our new National champions.

### Ladies National Matchplay

For the fourth time in the last five championships a new first time winner of the ladies scratch matchplay title was crowned. Following first time wins for Mary Murrar (2019), Martha O'Brien (2020) and Liz Quinn (2022) it would be **Oldcastle's Paula Lynch** who would claim the 2023 title in St. Bridget's. With the ladies scratch championship now reduced to a final field of 16 (and a straight knockout format), as always the championship was very competitive with the best ladies in the country participating.

Paula entered the championship quietly under many peoples radar but left on the bank holiday Monday a deserved champion and someone that will challenge for many more senior titles in the future after her excellent performance. Paula commenced her championship on the Saturday and recorded a comprehensive 10&9 win over Lucan's Siobhan Keely. Next up for Paula on the Sunday in the quarter final would be previous winner of this event, Breda White (Tipperary Hills). This would prove a very closely contested match with both ladies all square through 18 and with six holes to go Breda would hold a 2 hole advantage. Paula however dug deep over the closing holes of the regulation 36 to force the match into extra holes where she would claim victory on the 38<sup>th</sup> and proceed to the semi final. In the semi finals on Monday morning Paula faced the 2019 champion Mary Murray. Unfazed by her first appearance in a national matchplay semi final Paula would take the early lead in this match and never relinquish it. Paula turned 4up on Mary and moved to 5 up with 12 to go and while Mary would

win the odd hole from there it would be Paula who controlled the semi final to run out a 3&2 victor and enter her first matchplay final. Here opponent would be Chrissie Sheedy (Ryston) who was returning to action for the first time in 2023 in this championship. Despite her lengthy absence Chrissie had a very impressive run in the championship defeating Liz Quinn of Collinstown (and defending champion) in round 1 by 3&1 and followed this by defeating her sister and 2023 Leinster matchplay champion Marian Courtrey (Ryston) 1 up in the quarters. In the semi final on the Monday morning Chrissie would defeat club mate Tara Dillon (Ryston) by a comfortable margin of 6&5 to move into her 12<sup>th</sup> national matchplay final and seeking her 7<sup>th</sup> title. In a final which was played in breezy but sunny conditions over a very firm St. Bridgets course, the consistently excellent pitching and putting from Paul Lynch would prove the deciding factor in the final. Paula won the first two holes and never looked back from this point retaining the lead throughout the final. Her flawless performance (the best she has ever pitched in her own words), and a pretty much error free game were pivotal which saw Paula race to a surprising 6up lead after 14 holes. Both ladies traded holes over the final few holes of round 1 but Paula would retain the 6up advantage through 18. Paula continued her excellent play in the second 18 holes and while Chrissie never gave up and tried to chip away at the 6 hole deficit, Paula retained a 5up advantage with 9 to play, responding almost immediately to any hole Chrissie won in a rounds where very few holes were halved. Chrissie reduced the lead to 4 after the 12 and when it looked like she would get it back to 3 with 5 to play and keep the pressure on, Paula produced an excellent par from off the back of the 13<sup>th</sup> at this key point in the match to keep it a 4up and all but secure the title. In the end Paula closed out the match with a 3&2 victory and very deservedly lift the 2023 national matchplay title. Paula became the second player from Co. Meath to become National Ladies Matchplay champion and the first since Ann Hall of Royal Meath at Seapoint in Millennium year.

## Gent National Matchplay

In the gents matchplay **Stephen O'Reilly (Hillview)** emerged the triumphant winner at the end of the long gents matchplay weekend winning all six of his matches. Stephen becomes the second Tipperary player in history to win the National Matchplay championship as he joins Eoin Morrissey (1961) as a Hillview winner of the National Gents Matchplay championship. Stephen's win in 2023 comes not long after his previous semi final appearance in 2020 where he lost to eventual winner Kieran Earls (Bruff) on that occasion. Enroute to the title this year Stephen saw off the challenge of Darren McNally (Bagnelstown) 7&6 in the first round on Saturday. Stephen's closest match of the weekend came in round 2 against Jason O'Reagan (Tralee). This match was nip and tuck throughout with Jason taking a 1 up lead with six to go. However Stephen would produce the strongest finish over the last six holes and take the win on the final hole 1 up. In the last 16, Stephen defeated one of the pre tournament favourites in the form of George McGreal. All square through 18, an excellent second round from Stephen saw him take the match by 3&2. John Walsh (Collins) was Stephen's quarter final opponent where Stephen would pretty much control this match throughout. Turning 4up after 18 Stephen proceeded to defeat John on a score of 6&5. It would be another Cork man awaiting Stephen in the semis on Monday morning, Peter Donavon (Bishopstown). As he had done all weekend excellent pitching and exceptional putting would see Stephen have the upper hand through this match also. 3up after 18 he would close it out with a 5&3 win to reach his first National matchplay final. Facing Stephen in the final would be John Cahill

(Fermoy). John was making his appearance in the final for the second year running having lost to Barry Morrissey (Bishopstown) in Douglas in 2022. John had a very impressive run to the final with wins against Tony Blake (Tralee) 7&6, John O'Leary (Douglas) 4&3, John Sloane (Cunnigar) 5&4, Pdraig Mallon (Trim) 7&6 and in the semi an 8&7 win over Jim Judge Jnr (MacBride). In the final it would be Stephen who struck early on and who continued his excellent play and in particular putting throughout. Similar to his previous rounds Stephen built a strong 3up advantage through 18, an advantage he would not relinquish enroute to winning the prestigious National Matchplay title by a margin of 6&5.

## Ladies Nett National Matchplay

The Ladies Nett matchplay saw sixteen ladies take to the tee on Saturday, all with aspirations of lifting the cup come Monday afternoon. This championship took the form of a 18 hole round robin format on Saturday and Sunday to get down to a final 8 where it would be 18 hole knockout match play from this point where handicaps would play a key part throughout. Come Monday afternoon it would be the Leinster junior matchplay champion **Audrey Donnelly (MacBride)** who would add the National Nett matchplay title to her honours with a 2up victory over Christina Foley (Athgarvan) in the final. Having navigated through the round robin stage, Audrey faced Theresa King (RGSC) in the quarterfinal where she would have a 5&3 win and set up a semi final match against Grainne Shelley (Larkspur Park). This was a very close match with the game all square through 12. However Audrey would critically win three of the next four holes and secure a 3&2 victory to reach her first final. Her final opponent Christina had defeated Margerat Connelly (Trim) 3&2 and Veronica Anglim (Hillview) 7&6 in the knockout stage get to the final. It would prove to be an even matched final for the majority, however, Audrey's experience on the final stage would come to the fore to ensure she headed down the final hole with a 1up lead. With a few putts to spare Audrey would make par on the last hole and claim a 2up victory and take the title of National Nett championship for 2023.

## Intermediate and Junior Challenge

A new initiative was introduced by the NEC this year which welcomed the winners of the provincial intermediate and junior championship, played a number of weeks earlier, to play against each other on the Monday afternoon alongside the other three National championship finals above. Played over 36 holes, the junior match saw Leinster junior matchplay champion **James Casey (Gowran)** face Munster junior matchplay champion Colin Hennessey (St. Annes). James has played in the National gents matchplay already that weekend and had a number of very impressive wins so was very familiar with the course that weekend which may have proved a benefit to James as he would go on to record a comfortable 9&7 victory over Colin and take home this inaugural junior prize. In the intermediate match, another player who featured in the main championship was Munster intermediate matchplay champion Philip Burns (Brinny) take on **Wayne Allen (St. Patricks)** who recently won the Leinster intermediate matchplay championship. In this battle it would be Wayne who would take the win. Wayne would turn 1up but both players would trade holes across the match but in the end Wayne would hold out to claim a 2&1 win and take the prize back to Enniscorthy.

## National Seniors Strokeplay Championship @ Glenville

Glenville played host to the National Seniors Strokeplay championship in June and delivered an immaculate but challenging course for the championship. Below is a review of the winners over the weekend.



**Anthony Malone (Lucan)** joins Frank Ryan and Pat Greene as three-time winners of the National Gents Seniors Senior Grade Strokeplay championship. A brilliant display of pitch and putt over the tricky but immaculate Glenville course saw Anthony finish on 13 under par with rounds of 47 + 48. Leading after the first 18, Anthony never let the lead go and closed out an excellent win. Closest to him and runner up would be Frank O'Donoghue (Rafeen Creek). Two very solid rounds of 49 would see Frank finish on 10 under par and take silver with fellow Cork man Declan Freeman (Fermoy) being a further two shots back on 8 under following two rounds of 50. Rounds of 53 and 51 and 4 under total would secure the gents intermediate title for **Gerald JJ Quirke (Fermoy)**. Gerald's excellent score would prove to be the only score under par on the day and give him a 4 shot victory over Dominic Kavanagh (Bruff) who finished on level par along with four other players. Dominic excellent back 18 score of 50 would secure him the silver medal with Dermot Heffernan (Lucan) taking home the bronze medal on the back 9 from Ian Leech (St. Annes). Gerard JJ Quirke becomes the sixth different Cork player in history to win the National Gent's Senior Intermediate title. **Nicky Byrne (Collins)** became the second player from Collins to win the National Gents Seniors Junior Grade. An excellent score of 2 over (55 + 55) would give Nicky a two shot victory of Benny McCarthy (ESB) on 4 over (56 + 56) ensuring a Cork 1-2 who claimed the runner up spot on the back 18 from Oliver Plunkett (54 + 58). **Thomas McInerney (Cloughue)** will forever be known as the man who collected the initial National Gents Seniors Junior B Grade Strokeplay crown. A score of 16 over (61 + 63) was good enough to take the title back to Cloughogue. Runner up was Seamus Gleeson

(Riverdale) on 19 over (64 + 63) with Vincent O'Brien (Bellowstown) taking third spot with a score of 21 over (64 + 65)



**Geraldine Ward (Portmarknock)** claimed her first National Seniors Senior ladies title in Glenville with a comfortable 5 shot victory over runner up Ger Holland (RGSC) with fellow clubmate Sheelagh Elmes (Portmarknock) back in third. A brilliant score of 4 under (53 + 51) would see Geraldine become the seventh former winner of the National Ladies Strokeplay Championship to also win the National Ladies Seniors Senior Grade Strokeplay Championship (joining Margaret Hogan, Sheelagh Elmes, Rose Kelly, Chris O'Shaughnessy, Ann Maloney and Breda White on that particular list). Ger Holland took second place in the National Ladies O55 Senior Grade Strokeplay Championship eight years after her win in the event at Old County following her rounds of 53 + 56.



**Mary Quinn (Lakeside)** is the new Ladies Senior Intermediate champion. Rounds of 54 +61 gave Mary a final total of 7 over and a comfortable 5 shot victory over home place Joyce Keane Glenville who finished on 12 over (60 + 60). It would be another Tipperary player Liz Forde (Riverdale) who would take third place in this grade with a score of 16 over (63 + 61). **Anne Sweeney (St. Bridgets)** reclaimed the junior title five years after winning it last in McDonagh. In a very closely contested grade Anne's score of 24 over (69 + 63) was good enough to give her a one shot victory over Nora O'Meara

(Glenville) on 25 over (58 + 75) with Bernadette Morgan (Glenville) also on the host club a further shot back on 26 over (66 + 68)



## National Mixed & Non Mixed Foursomes Championships @ Royal Meath

### National Scotch Non-Mixed Foursomes sponsored by Brophy Bros Builders



**Winners:** David Moran & John Burns (Royal Meath) 97pts(B18)

**Runner Up:** Niall Robbins & Ian Fitzpatrick (Erry) 97pts

**Gross:** Kieran Earls & Tommy Hanley, (Bruff) 97pts

**1st Session:** Richie Walsh & Johnaton McCabe (Trim) 94pts

**2nd Session:** Joe Redmond & Thomas O'Brien (St Patricks) 96pts(B9)

### National Mixed Scotch Foursomes sponsored by Brophy Bros Builders



**Winners:** Audrey Donnelly and Padraic Sarsfield (MacBride) 93pts

**Runners Up:** Mary Lynch and Daniel O' Toole (Royal Meath) 92pts (B18)

**Gross:** Breda Purcell and Gareth Walsh (Lucan) 85pts

**1st Session:** Susan Synan and Robert McCabe (Royal Meath) 92pts

**2nd Session:** Marie Power and Dick Dreeling (Gowran) 89pts (B18)

# **Munster Championship Reviews**

**By Declan Sheedy**

## Munster Matchplay Championships @ Tralee

Tralee played host to the 2023 Munster Ladies and Gents matchplay and delivered the course in excellent condition allowing for exciting and a very competitive championship to follow.



**Jason Cregan (Tralee)** claimed his first senior provincial title on his home course with a very impressive victory in a top quality field. Jason began his challenge with a 2&1 victory over the experienced Declan Freeman (Fermoy) on Saturday and followed this up with a strong 3&2 win over Christopher Gibney (Listowel). On Sunday morning Jason faced off against Eoin Walsh (Collins) where a very strong last 9 holes saw him close out a 1up victory having been 2 down with 9 to play. In the semi final Jason would overcome the strong challenge of James Cleary (Larkspur Park) where the match sat at all square through 18. Jason however would move 3up after 27 holes and hole on to take the win on the 35<sup>th</sup> hole. In the final Jason would face Ray Murphy (St Anne) who came off the back of an excellent 1up win against Bryan Delaney (Bishopstown) in the semi final. It would be Jason who was quickest out of the blocks in the final racing to a 3up lead through 9 holes, a gap that Ray was unable to close. In the end Jason closed out an excellent win on a score of 6&5 to claim his first senior matchplay title.

In the ladies senior section four ladies were entered so the championship started off with the semi final pairings. Mary Murray (Rocklodge) took on Sarah Byrne (Fermoy) in the first match. This would prove to be a one sided affair on this occasion with Mary running out a comfortable 7&6 winner. The other semi final between Breda White (Tipp Hills) and **Sarah O'Neill (Collins)** would be a much closer contest. Sarah took a 2up lead after 9 and it would be a lead she would not let go of and close out the match

with a 2&1 victory over Breda. In the all Cork final it would be Sarah who would stamp her mark on the match early with some excellent play and turn 4up after 18. Sarah would continue to drive forward in the second 18 and in the end close out a comfortable 8&7 victory to claim the senior title.

**Philip Byrne (Brinny)** is the new Munster gents intermediate matchplay champion after a 7&6 win in Sunday morning's semi-final against Deerpark's James Fleming and the Brinny player followed this up with a victory over local Tralee member Keith O'Brien by 5&4 in their decider. In a titanic battle, Keith O'Brien survived on the first extra hole of his semi-final joust with David White (Larkspur Park) to make it to the final.

The intermediate ladies grade would also just see four players compete. However the semi-finals proved there was very little to separate the ladies involved. Semi-final one saw Elaine Quinn (Lakeside) secure a final hole win over Mairead Manning (St Stephens) in a match where there was never more than a hole or two between the ladies. A very similar battle entailed in the second semi-final where home player **Lisa O'Connor (Tralee)** would have a final hole victory over Margaret Hennessey (Riverdale) with another 1up victory. In the final, home advantage would play a key part as Lisa O'Connor would claim the title with a 3&2 win over Elaine Quinn in an entertaining and competitive championship final.

**Colin Hennessey (St. Annes)** added the provincial gents junior matchplay crown to the Cork Matchplay title he won a few weeks earlier. Having qualified for the Munster final with a 5&3 semi-final victory over E.S.B.'s Ger Dinan (ESB), Hennessey denied club-mate Dean Lonergan by 8&6 in the decider which was Dean's second successive runner-up performance in this event. In another all-Cork semi-final, Dean Lonergan ran out a 4&3 victor over Korey Murphy (Rafeen Creek) earlier that morning.

Tralee would have further success in the ladies junior championship where **Catriona O'Connor (Tralee)** would clinch the junior title defeating clubmate Rosemaire O'Sullivan (Tralee) in the final by a score of 6&4. As with the other ladies grades it was a field of four and in the semi-finals Catriona would defeat Angela Royer (Bishopstown) by 3&2 while Rosemaire would enjoy a victory over Lesley Gilmore (Bishopstown) on a score of 8&7.

## Munster Strokeplay Championships @ Fermoy

The beautiful Fermoy course was the host for this years Munster Ladies and Gents strokeplay championship for all grades. A course which has seen some excellent scoring in past championships, it did not disappoint again this year with the standard of play and exceptional scoring.



Local player Daithi Sexton (**Fermoy**) would capture the prestigious senior gents title with an outstanding performance. His score of 33 under would win by four shots from Paudie O'Sullivan (Majestic) on 29 under with Byran Delaney (Bishopstown) taking the bronze medal with a final score of 27 under. Daithi would lead after 36 holes having recorded rounds of 44 and 43 to sit on 21 under.. Despite the heavy pressure on leading, Daithi would go even lower in the final 18 and shoot a brilliant 12 under 42 to secure the title. An exceptional final 18 of 40 from Paudie shot him up the leaderboard while the

final groups remained on the course. However his flawless round would only be good enough for the silver. A final total of 16 under would see **Darren Temple (St. Stephens)** edge a very closely contested intermediate championship where only 3 shots separated the top 7 players. Tied on 13 under with David O'Leary (Douglas) after 36 holes, a solid round of 51 from Darren in the final 18 would see him finish 1 clear of John Farrell (Bruff). His final round of 49 would see him claim second place on a total of 15 under from David O'Leary who picked up the bronze, courtesy of a better back 18. There was further success for Cork



clubs in the gents junior A championship as **Martin Sullivan (St. Annes)** would have a comfortable 4 shot victory over Gerard Dinan (ESB). Martin posted a final total of 10 under.par while Gerard on 6 under. Michael Creagh (Tralee) took the final podium spot on level par. **Stephen Hanley (Bruff)** would have the honour of winning

the very first junior B championship introduced for the first time this year. He shot a brilliant score of 1 over for 36. Runner up was awarded to Thomas Roberts



(Lakeside) and third going to Paul Hayes (Listowel) who returned scores of 10 and 11 over respectively.



Further success for the Fermoy club came in the ladies championship with home player **Sarah Byrne (Fermoy)** winning the ladies senior title. With the ladies championship being 36 holes, Sarah returned a winning score of 2 under to claim a 2 shot win over Sarah O'Neill (Collins). Third spot went to Michelle McCarthy (Tipp Hills) with a final score of 3 over par. Adding to the celebration in the Fermoy club and not to be outdone by husband Daithi, **Ailsih Sexton**

**(Fermoy)** took home the ladies intermeditate title with an excellent final score of 1 over. Ailish's round of 55 and 52 would see her finished 3 shots clear of Paula Nolan (Rocklodge) who finished on 4 over with Margaret Forder (Riverdale) taking third spot on the back 18 with 5 over. It would be a clean sweep for Cork



clubs in the ladies championship as **Nuala McNamara (Collins)** won the ladies junior championship on 21 over par. Nuala would finish well clear of the rest of the field with Gillian Morrissey (St. Annes) and Eileen Hanley (Ranger) a further 9 and 10 shots back respectively.



## U16 Matchplay Championships @ St. Stephens

All roads led to the St. Stephen's club in Cork for the 2023 U16 Munster matchplay. Play got underway in earnest with everyone keen to get their hands on the silverware at the end of the day. The first round of matches determined the players in the cup and shield competition. The boys cup championship would be dominated by the boys from Kerry with the two semi finals being an all Kerry affair. In the first semi, A Jay Barrett (Listowel) would defeat Brian McCarthy (Deerpark) 2&1 in a very closely contested and high quality match. While in the other semi final, two Deerpark



clubmates went head to head where **Nathan Cronin (Deerpark)** would overcome the challenge of Bryan O'Leary (Deerpark) by 3&2. In the final which was played over 36 holes it would be Nathan Cronin that would take an early advantage and was 3 up after 18. A very competitive battle continued between the two young stars but Nathan would hold on to his advantage over the second round and close out the match and claim the title with a 4&3 win.

In the boys shield competition there was joy for **Aidan Spence-Murphy (Claycastle)** as he defeated Daniel Leahy (Listowel) in the final by a score of 5&3. Early in the morning Aidan would see off the challenge of Joe Franklin (Hillview) by 5&4 in the first of the semi finals while Daniel had an epic battle with his clubmate Jayden Chute (Listowel) which required extra holes. Daniel came out victorious on the 19th.



In the girls championship **Megan Ahern (Collins)** would lift the girls title following a very competitive match against Sarah Ryan (Tipperary Hills). Both girls played some excellent pitch and putt but in the end it would be Megan who would prevail on a score line of 6&5. There is no doubt both girls will meet again in championship action in the coming years as they are the future stars of ladies pitch and putt.

# **Leinster Championship Reviews**

**By Declan Sheedy**



## Leinster Matchplay Championships @ St. Patricks and Bagenalstown

The courses of St. Patrick's in Wexford and Bagenalstown in Carlow were the joint hosts of this years Leinster Ladies and Gents Matchplays. Both courses were presented in excellent condition and were exceptional hosts throughout the weekend. Bagenalstown hosted the senior and intermediate gents matches for rounds 1 through to the quarter finals on Saturday with the semi finals and finals played in St. Patricks on Sunday. St. Patricks would be the venue for the full ladies and junior gents championship .



In the Senior sections it would be double success for Kildare clubs. In the gents **Ian Dillon (St. Bridgets)** would win his first senior provincial title defeating Stephen Murray (Old County) 3&2 in the final while **Marian Courtney (Ryston)** claimed the senior



ladies title, a title she last won in McDonagh back in 2002, with a 5&4 victory over Liz Quinn (Collinstown) in the final. Enroute to the final Ian defeated Dessie Baker (Lough Owel) 5&4 and Dean Grannell (St. Patricks) 3&2 in Bagenalstown. He proceeded to defeat Sean O'Connor (Erry) 3&2 in the quarters followed by a semi final win against George McGreal (Old County) 5&4. In the final Ian would find himself 2 down after 18. However, he would produce an excellent fight back over the second 18 against Stephen to close out a 3&2 victory. In the ladies, Marian started her campaign with a preliminary match against Bridie Cummins (Trim) with a 11&10 win. Marian followed this with a 3&2 victory over her sister Margaret Keogh (Ryston) in the quarter and a 7&6 win over clubmate Tara Dillon (Ryston) in the semi final. In the final, Marian continued her excellent form in the championship and built an early lead in the match against Liz which she would not relinquish to close out a 5&4 win and lift the title.



In the gents intermediate championship it would be home success as **Wayne Allen (St. Patricks)** secured a comprehensive win in the final against another player from the CKW region in the form of Mark Comerford (Gowan). Wayne's route to the final like the senior gents would be carved out across Bagenalstown and St. Patrick's. He claimed wins over Ross Sweeney (Lough Owel) 6&4, a very

closely contested win against Kevin Knox (Gowran) 1up and a quarter final victory by 7&6 over Donald Kelly (Trim). A titantic semi final match against Patrick Robinson (Gowran) saw this match go to the 39<sup>th</sup> hole where Wayne would pip Patricks in this encounter. In the final, Wayne playing on his home course started brilliantly and raced to a 7up lead after 18. A margin too much for Mark to come back from and Wayne closed out the match with a comprehensive 11&9 victory to claim the title. A field of seven intermediate ladies took to the tee in St. Patrick's over the weekend, in what would prove to be a very competitive championship. Come Sunday afternoon it would be **Barabra Murphy (Seapoint)** who would take the intermediate ladies crown after a 3&2 win in the final against Susan Richie (RGSC). Wins against June Vereker (Ashgrove) 3&2 and a 2&1 victory over Theresa King (RGSC) in the semi final paved her way to the final. In the final both players produced a high level of pitch and putt over the tricky St. Patrick's course but it would be Barbara who would win the critical holes in the latter half of the match and see through to the finish.



The junior ladies championship unfortunately saw a small field of four take part. It is



very important to see this championship proceed and be played with the hope of larger enteries to come in the future. Depsite the small field it was a very competitive and sporting championship with **Audrey Donnelly (McBride)** defending her title and lifting the cup for the third time. In the semi final Audrey defeated Christina Foley (Athgarvan) by a score of 5&4 having been all square through 18. In the final she would face a player from the CKW regional in the form of Hillary

Walsh (Ashgrove). In the final Audrey's experience in the matchplay would come to the fore and combined with solid play she built up a commanding 5up lead through 18. She continued to build on that in the second round to close out the match with a

10&9 victory and retain her title. **Gowran's James Casey** took the Leinster gent junior title in Enniscorthy. A 10&9 win in the quarter final against James Fagan (Loughlinstown) set up a semi final match against Ian Fitzpatrick (Erry) which would prove a tough battle. Ian led 1up through 18 but it would be James who came good in the second 18 holes to take the match 2&1 in the end. A final against home player James Kirwan (St. Patricks) would follow where it would be James that gained the advantage over the first 18 holes with some excellent pitching to turn 3up. The two players traded holes over the course of the final 18 but James would retain his early lead and close out the match 4&3.



## Leinster Strokeplay Championships @ Royal Meath & Seapoint

Royal Meath welcomed all the ladies grades for this years Leinster Strokeplay Championship and the venue provided the ladies with a fair but challenging set up. The weather would prove wet and windy for the majority of the day but that did not prevent some excellent pitch and putt to be played across all grades.



Following her brilliant National Matchplay win in St. Bridget's less than six weeks earlier, **Paula Lynch (Oldcastle)** would again come up trumps in Royal Meath and claim her first senior provincial title with a one shot victory. Rounds of 53 + 50, which included a hole in one late on, would see her return a score of 5 under par and pip the defending champion Chrissie Sheedy (Ryston) by a single shot over the 36 hole format. Chrissie's rounds of 51 + 53 had set the clubhouse lead until Paula returned the winning

score late on. Paula and Chrissie's were the only score under par on the day as Glenda Hoey (Lucan) would take the third spot on level par. There was further joy for Meath clubs in the ladies intermediate championship as former multiple girls champion **Sophie Farnan (Skryne)** won her first ladies championship (and certainly wont be her last!). A fantastic score of 1 over (56 + 53) would see her lift the title by a shot from Barbara Furlong (Lucan) on 2 over (56 + 54). The host club would see a medal be retained in the club as Theresa Fagan (Royal Meath) took third place with a score of 5 over (57 + 56). There was



much to celebrate for the Ashgrove club in the ladies junior

championship taking both the gold and bronze medals in this grade. **Hillary Walsh (Ashgrove)** clinched the junior title with a score of 14 over (59 + 63). This would be two better than runner up Annette Dowling (Trim) on 16 over (66 + 58). June Vereker (Ashgrove) on 18 over (64 + 62) would complete the prizewinners in this years ladies championship.



In Seapoint the gents championship was played across the full weekend over a 54 hole format championship (junior B 36 holes). On Saturday the Junior B and Intermediate championships were played in tough conditions. In the inaugural provincial junior B championship a play off would be required to decide the winner with **Bozidar Stjepanovic (MacBride)** and Paddy Bird (Laytown) tied on a score of 7 over after the 36 holes. It took to the 10<sup>th</sup> extra hole for a winner to be decided and that would be Bozidar who would get the winning putt and become the first time champion with Paddy taking the runner up spot. Third place would go to Alan Devenney (Lough Owel) on a score of 11 over.

Like the junior B championship the intermediate grade would also require a playoff to decide this years champion. After 36 holes of play it would be Kevin Corcoran (Old County) who would hold a commanding 5 shot lead over the field after an excellent 10 under (48 + 50). Christopher Finn (Loughlinstown) lay on 5 under followed by **Dylan Hudson (St. Patricks)**, Brendan Rothwell (Kilneer) and Anthony Kavanagh (Trim) all sitting on 3 under. In the final 18 it would be Dylan Hudson who would make the big move with an exceptional round of 48 and found himself on a total of 9 under. In the final group Kevin Corcoran managed a very respectable round of 55 but that would only be enough to tie Dylan and see the two men in a playoff. The extra holes would see Dylan clinch victory and take the title back to Enniscorthy. Kevin would pick up the runner up spot while Brendan Rothwell held on for third place.



Sundays play saw the Junior A and Senior championship take pride of place. Trailing by a shot after 36 holes on 1 over par, **Stephen Behan (Kilineer)** would use his knowledge of the Termonfeckin course well in the final 18. He shot a very solid round of 55 to record a final total of 2 over which would be good enough to win the junior A title despite strong challenges from the rest of the field. Runner up place would go to John Peare (St. Patricks) on 4 over while the bronze was won by John Gilsenan (Trim) on a score of 4 over.

The senior championship took centre stage in the afternoon and at the end of play it would be success for home player **Darren Fagan (Seapoint)**. Leading on 15 under after 36 holes, with a two shot advantage Darren would continue his excellent play over the course of the final 18. Not unexpectedly, pressure came from the chasing pack. Eamon Gibney (Castletown) took the club house lead following a final 18 round of 46 to post a score of 20 under. Darren however responded with an equally impressive 47 final 18 and finished on 22 under to claim the title. Eamon would secure the silver medal while third place went to Christopher Gallagher (Lucan) on 19 under following a better final 9 from Gary Healy (Loughlinstown).



## U16 Matchplay Championships @ Gowran

The wonderful Gowran course in Kilkenny was the host for this years 2023 Leinster U16 matchplay. In the boys championship 16 players entered an open draw where the



winner round 1 would play in the Boys Championship with the losers in round 1 playing in the Boys Shield. As games progressed throughout the morning and afternoon in a very competitive and sporting manner the final 4 in the Boys Championship were determined. This would see home player Thomas Carroll (Gowran) take on Harry Tiernan (Ryston) in the first semi final. A nip and tuck game throughout, it came down to the final hole where Harry would come out on top with a 1 up victory. In the other semi final Gowran would again be represented by another young man in the form of

**Jack McShane (Gowran)** and like the first semi it would be a Kilkenny v Kildare battle as Jack would face Peadar O'Toole (Athgarvan). This semi final would see the Kilkenny player take the victory with a 6&5 victory and secure his place in the Championship final. In the final and with plenty of home support behind him, it would be Jack McShane who would come out on top in a really high quality final between two excellent young players by a score line of 4&3. The match ebbed and flowed for much of the game but it would be Jack who edged ahead on some key holes and took a lead which he would not relinquish to lift the 2023 Leinster Championship cup.

In a similar manner to the Boys Championship, the Boys Shield proved a very competitive competition with great play all day. The final 4 in the shield would see three Ryston players represented against another home player from Gowran. The first semi final saw **Donnacha Lally (Ryston)** face Aidan O'Connell (Gowran). This was a very closely contested match but down the stretch it would be Donnacha who clinched key holes to get his nose in front and would eventually run out a 2&1 winner. The second semi final saw brothers and Ryston team mates James and Liam Keogh take on each other. In this family affair it would be James who would take the victory on this occasion with a 4&3 victory to make it an all Ryston final. In the final it was Donnacha who would get off to a very strong start and build up a good lead which he would not relinquish despite a strong effort from James. He ran out a comfortable winner in the Shield Final after a long day's play.





Six girls took to the tee for the girls championship in a straight knock out format. After an afternoon of play, it would see sisters **Gemma** and Pippa **Cuffe** (both Kilbeggan) face each other in the first of the semi finals. With both girls knowing each others games very well this would be a very close match for the majority of the round. It would be Gemma who took the victory in the end of this second family affair with a hard fought 2&1 win over her sister. In the second semi final, Ryston were again represented at the latter end of these championships where Molly O'Toole (Ryston) took on Aoibhe Vereker (Ashgrove). Another high standard game would see Molly secure a 4&3 win and move into final. In the final there would be nothing to separate the two girls and it would come down to the very last hole to decide a winner where Gemma claimed a 1up win to win her first girls championship title.

## Pitch & Putt Ireland welcome Dwyne Hill and Miriam Valentine

Pitch & Putt Ireland would like to welcome Dwyne Hill and Miriam Valentine to the organization. Dwyne is joining Pitch & Putt Ireland as our new CEO and Miriam joins him as the new office assistant. Dwyne has worked with Hockey Ireland for the last 5 years and has a wealth of knowledge of the sports sector and will be starting on the 16th of August. Miriam has been working in the finance sector and will be running the day-to-day office operations. This is an exciting time for Pitch & Putt Ireland and Dwyne & Miriam look forward to getting to know the wider Pitch & Putt community

We will hear more from Dwyne in our next edition of Backspin.





# Previous National Ladies and Gents Strokeplay's in Tipperary by John Manning

## Gents

### **1973 National Ladies Strokeplay championship**

It's almost 50 years since the National Ladies Strokeplay championship was first played in Co. Tipperary – at Hillview in heatwave conditions on 9th September 1973. The top lady player of the era, Clare Keating (Woodvale) captured the senior championship with a 36-hole aggregate of 105, which earned the Leaside legend a four-stroke victory over fellow Corkonian Marie Allen (St. Anne's). Three over after two holes, Clare was undaunted and recovered to even par at halfway before shooting 51 second time. Mary O'Rourke (Majestic) signed for 113, which delivered a two-stroke winning margin over runner-up Josephine O'Callaghan (Hillview). Junior champion was Meta Collins-Powell (Woodvale) whose 129 proved two better than Kay O'Reilly (Glenville).

### **1975 National Ladies Strokeplay Championship**

Clare Keating lifted her sixth and final national Ladies Strokeplay title when the championships returned to Hillview just two year later in 1975 (7th September). The Cork star fired two holes-in-one (at the 15th first time and at No. 7 in round two) as she compiled an impressive 98 for a five-shot cushion over her great rival, Shandon's Teresa McGuigan. It was a Cork 1-2 at intermediate level with Helen McDonnell (Douglas) shooting three under par to deny Liz Cronin (St. Anne's) by a brace. The junior championship required a three-way play-off after Marion Nolan (Campions), Jane O'Leary (Rocklodge) and Gertie McDonnell (Collins) all scored 121. The Dublin lady prevailed in extra-time with Jane O'Leary filling second place.

### **1988 National Ladies Strokeplay Championships at Hillview**

Sunday 26th June dawned wet and dismal in Clonmel. The picturesque Hillview course, presented as always in impeccable condition, was a fitting test for the country's top lady players. In senior, one of the early starters, Shandon's Georgina Forristal (who had partnered Clare Keating at Hillview thirteen years previously) compiled two consistent rounds of 49 and 48 to set a hot pace on 97. Multiple national champion and the toughest of competitors, Margaret Hogan (Tullamore) came to the last at ten under par. Her pitch finished just off the green and her brave chip for a tie came up agonisingly short. The par left Georgina still one clear. Holder Breda Lonergan (Tipperary Hills) posed the last main threat to the Shandon lady's supremacy. Playing at the tail of the field, which is the champion's privilege, Breda put up an admirable defense of her title. Her return of 101, however, proved four too many and Georgina Forristal emerged a worthy champion. Athgarvan's Martina Loakman dominated the intermediate championship with a two-round tally of one under par. That turned out to be five better than Cork player Siobhán Foy (Rocklodge) in second place with Dubliner Helen Grimes (R.G.S.C.) another four strokes back in third spot. Martina's Athgarvan club colleague

Aine Brennan really turned on the style in a nine-hole play-off for the junior championship. Boosted by an ace at the fifth, Aine Brennan posted 24 for the extra holes to see off the challenge of gallant runner-up Ros O'Rourke (Crosshaven). The pair had earlier tied on 119. Home club player Joan Morrissey (Hillview) took the bronze medal with 11.

## Gents

### Lakeside 2000

1998 National Matchplay champion Ray Murphy, from the Templebreedy club in Crosshaven, turned in a superb performance to win the Millennium National Strokeplay championship on Sunday 2 July at the Lakeside club in Templemore. Ray, who was twice third (1994 and 1995) put together fabulous rounds of 44, 43 and 48 to win by five shots from Paul Bray of the Collinstown club in Co. Westmeath. Third place went to reigning National Matchplay Champion, Mark Millar of Cement, who finished on 141.

Murphy's 21 under par 36-hole total of 87 saw him head the 20 qualifiers who made it through to the final 18 holes of the Paddy Old Irish Whiskey sponsored event. At this stage, he led by two from Brayvond by five from Millar and 1995 Strokeplay champion, Chris Scannell of Collins. Bray birdied two of the first three holes in the final round to briefly level matters but Murphy stepped up a gear and when Paul Bray bogeyed the long 8th, Ray regained the lead and ran out a convincing winner. Paul Bray gamely birdied the last two holes to edge out Millar, who had earlier birdied the same two holes to overtake Chris Scannell, who finished fourth and took the final exempt slot for 2001. In Saturdays' Intermediate Championship, Barry Hill from the McBride club in Drogheda scored 49 and 50 to lead on nine under par after 36 holes. A 51 in the final round gave Barry a 12 under par aggregate of 150 and an eventual winning margin of four shots over John Brohan (Douglas). Brohan the former Cork Hibernians soccer star, shot rounds of 51, 50 and 53. Frank Connolly, of Dublin's Glenville, moved through the field with a final round of 50 to clinch third spot on 155. Lakeside's own Noel Leahy dominated the Junior Championship from start to finish. A stunning opening round of six under par 48 gave him a great boost. He added a second 52 to hold a nine-shot lead heading into the play-off. A 52 in that final round saw him post an aggregate of 10 under par 152 and win by ten shots from Bruff's Joe Ring. Noel Leahy became the first male player from Lakeside to win a national title. John Paul Ivers of Ballycotton in Cork was a model of consistency. He carded three successive rounds of 55 to claim third place.

### SENIOR

135 Ray Murphy (Templebreedy), 44, 43, 48.

140 Paul Bray (Collinstown), 46, 43, 51.

141 Mark Millar (Cement), 48, 44, 49; Chris Scannell (Collins), 46, 46, 49.

142 Billy Farrell (Bruff), 51, 46, 45; John Cahill (Fermoy), 49, 44, 49.

143 Pat Dennehy (Bruff), 47, 49, 47; Paddy O’Connor (C.Y.M.C.), 48, 46, 49; Peter McGivern (Cloghogue), 45, 47, 51.

144 Brendan O’Shea (Shandon), 48, 48, 48; Alan Hanlon (Collinstown), 48, 47, 49; Paul O’Brien (Lakeside), 49, 44, 51.

145 John Carroll (Cunnigar), 50, 47, 48; Patsy Farrell (Bruff), 51, 46, 58; George McGreal (OldCounty), 51, 46, 48; George Beardsley (Cement), 49, 45, 51; Con Clear (Riverdale), 46, 47, 52.

147 Mark Ryan (Bruff), 47, 49, 51; Frank O’Donoghue (Templebreedy), 47, 47, 53.

148 Colin Somers (Royal Meath), 49, 45, 54.

### **INTERMEDIATE**

150 Barry Hill (McBride), 49, 50, 51.

154 John Brohan (Douglas), 51, 50, 53.

155 Frank Connolly (Glenville), 51, 54, 50.

156 Thomas O’Donovan (Bruff), 53, 52, 51.

157 Thomas Fagan (Cement), 50, 54, 53; Mike Walsh (Majestic), 53, 51, 53; Paul Campbell (Trim), 53, 51, 53; Paddy Croke (Lucan), 53, 50, 54.

159 John Byrne (Ierne), 60, 46, 53; George O’Shaughnessy (Lakeside), 54, 51, 54.

161 James Carroll (Erry), 55, 52, 54.

164 Mike Donovan (Cunnigar), 54, 52, 58.

166 Finbarr O’Donovan (Collins), 52, 55, 59.

169 Ronan Hollywood (Cloghogue), 55, 53, 61.

### **JUNIOR**

152 Noel Leahy (Lakeside), 48, 52, 52.

162 Joseph Ring (Bruff), 54, 55, 53.

165 John Paul Ivers (Ballycotton), 55, 55, 55.

167 Gary Comerford (McDonagh), 57, 55, 55; James Carroll (Castletown), 58, 52, 57.

168 Crohan Fitzgerald (Castleisland), 61, 52, 55; John Clarke (Tullamore), 54, 56, 58.

169 Brendan Linehan (Douglas), 57, 54, 58.

173 Brian Barrett (Charleville), 61, 52, 60; Dan Coady (Lucan), 55, 56, 62.

### **Larkspur Park 2006**

The National Strokeplay Championships were contested at Larkspur Park in Cashel on the same dates as the 2000 staging in Lakeside and Ray Murphy emerged victorious in the Senior Grade again. With his three-stroke victory, Murphy completed the Matchplay/Strokeplay double, a feat he would go on to repeat the following year. Eoin Shannon (Collins) also enjoyed a three shot Intermediate winning margin while Dungarvan's John O'Shea(Cunnigar) won by five in the Junior.

### **Senior Championship**

137 Ray Murphy (Templebreedy) 44, 47, 46

140 James Cleary (Hillview) 46, 49, 45

141 William Buckley Junior (Erry) 48, 43, 50 (third on final 18); John Walsh (Collins) 47, 43, 51

142 Dave White (Hillview) 47, 51, 44; John Cahill (Fermoy) 45, 46, 51

143 Damien Fleming (Deerpark) 49, 46, 48; Thomas Walsh (Old County) 48, 47, 48

144 Paul O'Brien (Lakeside) 50, 46, 48; Darren O'Reilly (CPM) 47, 48, 49; Noel Joyce (Hillview) 48, 47, 49

145 Gerard McGuirk (Cement) 48, 49, 48; George Beardsley (Cement) 52, 44, 49

147 James Carroll (Castletown) 50, 49, 48; John O'Sullivan (St. Annes) 49, 49, 49; Terence O'Donnell (Loughlinstown) 48, 50, 49

148 Kieran Dunscombe (St. Annes) 47, 50, 51; Frank O'Donoghue (Templebreedy) 49, 48, 51

149 Frank Dineen (St. Anne's) 51, 47, 51

152 Ken Alexander (Templebreedy) 49, 50, 53.

### **Intermediate Championship**

148 Eoin Shannon (Collins)

151 John Flood (Bellewstown)

152 Ronan Whelan (Kilbeggan)

153. James Hickey (Larkspur Park)

154 James McCarthy (Claycastle)

155 Robert Bissett (Duleek); Christy Tydings (Parteen); John O'Sullivan (Lakewood)

156 Paul Collins (Majestic)

157 Denis Dennehy (Douglas).

### **Junior Championship**

160 John O'Shea (Cunnigar)

165 Alan Maher (Lakeside) second on final 18; David Dooley (Lucan)

167 Stephen O'Brien (Midleton)

174 John Ivers (Ballycotton)

### **2017 Hillview**

Hillview hosted the Gents Strokeplay Championships on the weekend of July 15<sup>th</sup> /16<sup>th</sup> . A rejuvenated Mark Millar (Cement) carded an impressive 133 to beat Stephen Shoer (Lakeside) by a single shot in the senior event. Two young Corkonians triumphed in the other grades. Keith Power (Fermoy) was Junior champion on 149 while Conor Irwin (Douglas) took Intermediate honours with 147.

### **Senior Championship**

133 Mark Millar (Cement) 44, 43, 46

134 Stephen Shoer (Lakeside) 44, 44, 46

136 Damien Fleming (Deerpark) 43, 48, 45

139 Paul O'Brien (Lakeside) 47, 47, 45 (4<sup>th</sup> on tiebreaker); Eddie Hennessy (Tramore) 49, 45, 45; Declan McCarron (Listowel.) 47, 44, 48

140 John Cahill (Fermoy) 44, 49, 47; James Cleary (Hillview) 48, 44, 48; Chris Scannell (Collins) 47, 44, 49

143 Paul Tobin (St. Patrick's) 45, 49, 49; Bryan Delaney (Fermoy) 45, 46, 52

144 Jason O'Regan (Tralee) 48, 48, 48; Ian Donnelly (Cement) 49, 47, 48; Ray Murphy (St. Annes) 48, 47,

149 Padraic Sarsfield (McBride) 48, 47, 49; J.R. Crangle (Loughlinstown) 44, 50, 50; Kieran Earls (Parteen) 50, 44, 50

145 Sean Goggin (McBride) 51, 45, 49; Chris Gallagher (Lucan) 47, 46, 52

149 Darren O'Connell (Tullamore) 51, 44, 54

### **Intermediate Championship**

147 Conor Irwin (Douglas) 48, 49, 50

149 Jimmy Quinn (Fermoy) 51, 49, 49

150 Michael Cronin (Deerpark) 51, 47, 52

152 Eamonn Sheehy (Tralee) 48, 52, 52; Mark Kelly (Rochfortbridge) 52, 47, 53

153 Robbie Donovan (Fermoy) 48, 52, 53

154 Conor Fahy (Parteen) 52, 51, 52; Alan Hobbart (Tralee) 50, 48, 56

155 Michael Ahern (Lucan) 52, 48, 55

158 John Minogue (Riverdale) 47, 54, 57; Darren Quirke (Fermoy) 51, 49, 58

161 Dom Scully (Laytown) 51, 51, 59.

### **Junior Championship**

149 Keith Power (Fermoy) 47, 48, 54

150 Kyle Kennedy (Tipperary Hills) 55, 49, 46

152 Mark Jordan (Raffeen Creek) 48, 52, 52

154 Nicholas Brennan (Gowran) 53, 50, 51

155 Keith Flynn (Fermoy) 55, 50, 50

157 Michael Kirby (Larkspur Park) 52, 54, 51

158 Karl O'Keeffe (Collins) 47, 62, 49; Peter Kearney (McDonagh) 55, 51, 52

160 George Goodman (Larkspur Park) 54, 52, 54

162 Jack Carroll (Tullamore) 53, 54, 55; Paul O'Rourke (Dunshaughlin) 54, 52, 56

169 Gerard Heelan (Bruff) 53, 54, 62.

# Upcoming Championships in August

## Provincial U16 Strokeplay & Intercounty

Munster @ Larkspur Park and Leinster @ Poulaphouca  
11th August

## National Ladies & Gent Strokeplay

Riverdale and Lakeside  
Saturday and Sunday 12th-13th August

## Provincial Ladies & Gents Intercounty

Munster @ Rafeen Creek and Leinster @ Poulaphouca  
Saturday and Sunday 19th-20th August

## National U16 Strokeplay & Intercounty

Seapoint  
26th August

### MISSED OUT ON QUALIFYING?

**WHY NOT COME ALONG TO THESE GREAT CHAMPIONSHIPS TO SUPPORT YOUR CLUB AND COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES. ALL CHAMPIONSHIPS ARE OPEN TO PLAYERS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS TO ATTEND AND GIVE YOUR SUPPORT.**

**SEE FIXTURE BOOK FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND EVENTS**

[WWW.IRISHPITCHANDPUTT.IE](http://WWW.IRISHPITCHANDPUTT.IE)

Check out our social media pages:

**Facebook** - @officialppireland, **Twitter** - @pitchandputtire, **Instagram** - @pitchandputt\_ireland, **LinkedIn** - Pitch and Putt Ireland, **#pitchandputtireland** on all sites

**Backspin Production Team: Declan Sheedy with contribution from John Manning**