

BACKSPIN

Official E-Zine of the Pitch and Putt Union of Ireland

November, 2016



Issue Highlights:

- Inter Club Championships
- Irish Open @ Rocklodge
- International Pairs
- National Mixed Foursomes
- Plus Much More...

A Chara,

You are very welcome to this the third and final edition of Backspin for 2016. While this edition was intended to be released a month ago, work commitments prevented us from bringing it out until now. This edition focusses on the period post the National Inter-County Championships in the main with emphasis on the National Mixed Foursomes, the Irish Open in Rocklodge, the National Inter-Club Finals along with the International Pairs tournament in Catalonia which was won by Limerick duo Thomas Hanley and Kieran Earls.

Of course we had another new event in the meantime, that being the National U-16 Matchplay Championships in Royal Meath in early October which was won by Glen Towler from St Stephens meaning he won both the provincial and national event in 2016. The Helen Persson Memorial Cup is the prize now for the winner of this event with the introduction of a Plate competition also (**continues on last page**)



2016 Inaugural U-16 National Matchplay @ Royal Meath Pitch & Putt Club. (l-r) Boys Winner Glen Towler (St. Anne's), Girls winner Katie Rose Heeney (Bellewstown) and Boys Plate winner Evan Carry (Castletown)

2016 Irish Open @ Rocklodge P&P Club

By John Manning

Below is a reprint of the interviews John Manning did for the FIPPA website on the recent wins of Frank Dineen and Breda Lonergan at the Irish Open in Rocklodge. Also included are the thoughts of the Seniors victor Pacelli Darcy.

Frank Dineen- Gents Winner

There had been a considerable bump in the road midway through Frank Dineen's season.

A misfiled entry meant the charismatic Cork man was denied the opportunity to contest the National Strokeplay over a layout where has seen much success. "I missed out this year on playing in the inspirational Tullamore course for the Irish Strokeplay, so for me this (the Irish Open) was my major," says Frank, speaking after his closing six birdie salvo at Rocklodge to clinch his second Irish Open.

There were some promising signs for Dineen in advance. "Over the last number of years' work commitments have kept me away from the course but that all changed this year with a new job," explains Frank. "I had some time that allowed me to compete in more events and even get in a bit of practice and that has turned my form around. I was delighted to make the Cork team this year and having won the Rocklodge Scratch Cup earlier in the season I was hopeful of possibly being in the mix. I knew I was striking the ball well and putting like I can."

The 2008 National Strokeplay Champion didn't drop any shots on

Saturday but still trailed overnight. "Arriving on Sunday I was four shots behind Bryan Delaney and knew that I would have to shoot a great score to catch him and Damien Fleming. In my mind, I had -10 as a target. I thought with that and a bit of luck I could go close. It suited me to be out in the three ball before them and I hoped for a good start and then hopefully enjoy being in the mix on the way home."

He was. "I sank a good putt on 8 from about 10 feet and then pitched close on 9 so turning -5, I felt I was right in it but equally knew that I had work to do. A good pitch on the drop shot (13) and a very good putt on 14 gave me a bit of confidence and then, following Shane (Murphy) on 15 I sank a monster putt. Having watched his ball, I was confident of the line. But for me the big moment was the putt on 16, a seven-foot downhill right to left slider. When that went in the middle of the hole, I thought it could be my day." A chip-in at 17 and a four-footer on the final green followed and Frank Dineen was home.

A profound attachment to the venue paid handsome dividend again. "I love Rocklodge," beams Frank. "As a course, it has it all a mixture of risk and reward – spectacular setting and views and a wonderful club. Fantastic pitches and brilliant greens. It certainly is one of the best courses in Ireland, if not the world."

The four-time Inter-County winner speaks enthusiastically of fields yet unconquered. "I will definitely be in Norway – for me the chance to compete as a possible world champion could never be missed – how many of

us can say that in our lifetime? That should be the pinnacle for anyone playing our sport. I also intend to play one other international open next year – I haven't played in Catalonia yet so maybe there or Holland."

Frank believes the Irish Open field was not as deep as it could have been. "I felt for Rocklodge. They put on a magnificent event and I feel it could have been supported a little better by the players. I know there is the fear factor and the scores shot around Rocklodge by the Cork players but the course was perfectly set up and any player travelling would have enjoyed the event. The field was a magnificent collection of players but a few more could have made it even better."

Autumn success has dulled the ache of midsummer omission and Frank is characteristically generous.

"If you play your best and make no mistakes then you can be happy - winning is a bonus. I play the game for enjoyment and to be in the mix – it's not about winning - all the time."

Breda Lonergan- Ladies Winner

2016 will linger long in the memory of family, friends and supporters of Breda Lonergan. A key birthday in Pitch and Putt terms had passed and there was a fresh opportunity. "I can't believe my year," reflects Breda. "I just wanted to get my senior under my belt really. But to get the national, well I can only say I was elated."

Breda wasn't overly familiar with the Irish Open venue. "I've played Rocklodge maybe five times and I still find it a very hard course. One has to be spot on with pitching." That did not



2016 Irish International Open @ Rocklodge Pitch & Putt Club, Cork. Winners, (l-r) Gent's winner Frank Dineen (St. Anne's), Seniors winner Pacelli Darcy (Bruff) and Ladies winner Breda Lonergan (Tipperary Hills).

deflect a cause for current year celebration at the Rocklodge Irish Open. "My pitching was good. The greens were brilliant, so I got a lot of good putts. My playing partners (Trim's Paddy Kelly and Trevor Ahern of Collins on Sunday) were great also," reflects Breda of her five-stroke success at Irish Open 2016.

Her victory in the All Ireland Strokeplay at St. Stephen's arrived 29 years after she previously took the title in 1987 at Athgarvan. "It's the gap between my titles that made it sweet," laughs Breda who won the National Matchplay at Parteen in 2014. That was soon after Breda's reappearance on the Pitch & Putt scene after a couple of decades away. There were two primary reasons for her return. "My left knee is not great, so I had to retire from the driver," says Breda of her departure from golf. Her other motive was intensely personal. "Tipp Hills had closed. In my resting up, I decided to try and get Tipp Hills up and running for my friend Sean Keane."

PPUI Hall of Fame inductee and Patron Sean Keane (RIP), who died in 2014, was a Tipperary Hills stalwart from its inception in 1970. Sean and his wife Nellie had nurtured Breda in Pitch and Putt from a young age. "Yes, I'm glad I came back and delighted with my achievements and I'm delighted to have put Tipp Hills on the map for Sean. He made Tipp Hills." After a pleasant trip to Dagenham a month earlier, Breda thoroughly enjoyed the whole Rocklodge experience. "I was impressed with the organisation of the Irish Open. They had to deal with rain delays. So, all told very well done to all."

The absence due to injury of

Breda's long standing friend and rival slightly overshadowed the latest success. "Yes, I was disappointed that Eleanor pulled out. Eleanor has always played Rocklodge brilliantly. When you're playing in a big event it's always great to have the best players taking part. It's sweeter for the winner to win when the field is from the best players." British Open champion Mary Murray finished second at Rocklodge and some foreign visitors were also on the leader board. "Well done to all players, says Breda. "Mary has had a great year. Lovely to see the Dutch coming over to play. I'm looking forward to meeting them again!"

It appears that there will be a broadening of the Lonergan Pitch & Putt horizons in 2016. "I would really like to play the World Strokeplay in Norway and I plan to play foreign international opens."

Pacelli Darcy- Seniors Winner

Pacelli's passport will also get some exercise in 2017. "Next year I hope to play and practice a lot more. It's going to be a very busy year of travel," Darcy anticipates. "The World Strokeplay in Norway, Catalan Open in April, the World Pairs in Galicia, the British Open and the International Pairs (if that one goes ahead) in November in Barcelona are all on the cards." The 2015 European Over 55s Strokeplay champion was speaking a few days after celebrating his fifth international open success at senior level. "To win the Over 55s Irish Open was great. The practice in the weeks coming up to the Inter County (Pacelli's Limerick tied sixth with Meath) and the Open stood to me over the weekend at Rocklodge."

It isn't easy to win at over 55s level. "I felt that the course played a lot tougher on the Sunday," recalls Pacelli. "Anthony Malone is still one of the best players in Dublin and he was always going to produce a good score in the final 18 holes. On Sunday I played with Sean Minogue and Dave Campbell from Trim. Sean is having a great season, doing very well in Catalonia, finishing runner up in the National Over 55s Strokeplay and coming a very close third in the British Over 55s Open." Pacelli felt that the critical moments at Rocklodge hinged on the last seven holes. "I was one shot behind the clubhouse leader Anthony Malone at that stage and I had played those holes in over par for the first two rounds. I managed to birdie 14 to level things up and my thinking was that if I could give myself four putts, I surely would get one of them." Another twist loomed. "Sean pitched a great ball to the 16th and got a hole in one to make us all square going to the 17th!"

Pacelli is an ultra-experienced campaigner but the good player is always learning. "I got lucky at the 17th. I left myself with an identical putt that I had missed the previous day so I knew the read and managed to hole it. Playing the 18th Sean needed a birdie and his putt stopped on the lip of the cup. He was very unlucky but his time is only around the corner." Echoing his co-victors, Pacelli is effusive about the iconic Cork course that is celebrating its 70th year of existence. "Rocklodge was in immaculate condition for the Open. I have to praise the Rocklodge committee for their organization. Everything was top class and we always get a great welcome every time we visit. The weather delay was handled very well on the

Saturday morning."

Pacelli was delighted to witness some super-super seniors (a couple of 80 year legends) playing an exhibition Fourball to launch the Irish open. "It was great to meet Mick Forrest and TJ O'Riordan at the event. Two great ambassadors and stars who set the standards that Cork Pitch and Putt has achieved today. It was also great to see John O'Leary (the 1983 National Matchplay winner who has returned to the sport after a protracted absence) at Rocklodge and playing very well too."

The Corinthian aspect of our sport was again underlined in Pacelli's closing remarks. "Unfortunately, due to work commitments I did not play a lot of Pitch & Putt this year and it was a bonus to have won in Catalonia and Rocklodge. Getting to the semi-finals of the Munster Matchplay was pleasing given the very tough draw that I had."



PPUI Youth Officer Noel Collins presents the u-16 National Matchplay trophy to Glenn Towler (St. Anne's)

Success for Fermoy in Scratch Inter-Club

By Jason O'Connor

NATIONAL successes don't just happen on the day or indeed overnight. They require a bit of work in advance as Daithi Sexton, captain of the winning Fermoy Scratch Team in the National Inter-Club Final explains. "The process started two years ago, in November 2014. We decided to try to put together a team that could compete, we did a lot of practice that winter and we travelled to courses outside Fermoy to allow us to see how players reacted to playing different courses. We had early success that year by going through the Cork League Group Stages unbeaten, but we failed to perform in the semi-finals. We regrouped ourselves for the Inter-Club last year, and again, we had success in the Group Stages, but we lost out to Bruff in the semi-finals. At this time, we needed to review ourselves and our performances, and this led to us having some trials and some heated meetings over the winter months of 2015," the team captain said.

The club would lose again in the Semi-Finals of the Cork Leagues earlier this year but Daithi felt the defeat was a positive in some respects. "The feeling amongst the team was changing and when we entered the Inter-Club competition this

year, the confidence was starting to grow as five of our players finished in the Top 12 positions in the trials for the Cork Inter-County team. Most importantly though the players started helping each other with their games and this transformed us from a group of individual players to a team all playing together for one goal," he said. Fermoy's journey to Kilcullen for the Finals was a strange one as Daithi explains. "The group consisted of St Annes and Collins. These two teams have players that have been at the top of the game for more than 15 years and strange because the early stages of the competition felt more like the Cork Leagues than the Inter-Club competition. However, we had some great matches against both teams and our confidence continued to grow as we topped the group. We actually were supposed to play Tullamore in the Quarter-Finals, but due to circumstances out of their control, they gave us a walk over. We are currently planning a match in the near future with Tullamore, so hopefully we will have some good banter on the day." Daithi said.

As fate would have it Bruff would be their opponents again in this year's Semi-Finals. "Yes, it brought up memories but

not great ones to be fair as the Bruff players played very well last year. However, it was a good draw for us because we respected Bruff so much that it allowed us to focus only on the semi-final game. The 7-2 scoreline actually did not do justice to Bruff, as a lot of the matches were really close. In the double matches, we were behind early on but we managed to get a 2-1 lead which really could have been 2-1 to Bruff on another day. In the singles matches the draw went very well for us and we managed to close out the match but some of those matches were close and again, could have gone either way, he said. In the Final lay another Cork team, one with a proven track record of success

in not just at National but also Cork level in St Annes. How were Fermoy feeling about a Rebel derby in advance?

“We were feeling confident but a bit cagey. Confident because we were playing well and cagey because we knew we were up against one of the best teams in the country in recent years. We have played against St Annes a lot in recent years in the Cork Leagues and we know each other very well, they have top players that need no introduction but we felt that we also had top players on our side so we were really looking forward to the match. Indeed because of the number of matches between us both over the years.



PPUI Honorary President Mervyn Cooney presents Inter Club (Scratch) Cup to Fermoy team captained by Daithi Sexton.

We respected them but we did not fear them which really gave us a chance,” Daithi said. Leading after the Doubles put Fermoy in pole position for their hard work over the previous years to come to fruition.

“It was really encouraging (to be leading halfway through) but we knew that the match was not over. The six players that St Anne’s fielded in the final were all capable of winning so we tried to reset the goals of our team in a way that had worked all through the competition. Our goal was to try to win each session; we tried to take the doubles as one session and the singles as another. So even though we had a healthy lead after the doubles, our goal was to win the session of singles games which we did by a score of 3.5-2.5. I am sure we will continue to have matches with St Anne’s over the coming years and we are really looking forward to it,” he said.

What did it mean for Daithi to be captain of the side? “A great honour! As I said earlier we went through a lot over the last two years but I need to give credit to the players because even though they are top individual players and some of them played on some of the Cork Inter-County teams over the last few years they really

allowed me to pick the team without any demands from them. John (Cahill), Bryan (Delaney), Declan (Freeman), Conor (Clancy), Wayne (Galvin), Dan (Keohane) and Darren (Duffy) are all well able to play the game and to captain them was great for me. I also need to mention some more players from the club that were not on this panel but they contributed to this team over the last two years in some way, they are JJ Quirke, JJ O’Connor, St John O’Connor, Ryan Sexton and Justin McCarthy,” he said.

How significant a success was it for the club in general? “It’s massive, it gives the whole club a boost, there is a real buzz around the club and already we have four



Frank Dineen (St. Anne’s P&P Club) who was crowned 2016 Irish International Open @ Rocklodge P&P club.

teams preparing for the Cork Leagues which start in February. For the first time ever we will have one Senior team, two Intermediate teams and one Junior team entering the Cork Leagues which is excellent for the club. We are hoping that all four teams will enter the Inter-Club competition in 2017 so the buzz will continue throughout the year,” the team captain said. Daithi concludes with some further words of thanks.

Niall Reynolds for setting up and running this great competition. I would also like to thank St Bridget’s for their hospitality not only on the day of the finals but also on the days when we went to the course for practise, the St Bridget’s course is always in top condition and it is one of the best in Ireland. I would also like to thank the teams and the captains that we have faced throughout the year, along with JJ and Jimmy that supported us on the day.”

“I would like to thank the PPUI and



PPUI Honorary President Mervyn Cooney with Inter Club winning captains Brian Mason, Parteen, (Inter/Junior) and Daithi Sexton, Fermoy (Scratch).

Ladies Inter Club Success for St. Bridget's

By Jason O'Connor

CONSIDERING it was a competition that hadn't been played in two years and was put out to the back end of the year, the National Ladies Inter-Club might not have caught the imagination as one would have expected. However four teams went to Bagenalstown in Carlow on the October Bank Holiday Saturday to end the PPUI year and it was probably the team who had the biggest disadvantage in terms of handicaps that would emerge victorious.

St Bridgets had two teams entered in the form of a low and high handicapped team with the former consisting of Chrissie Byrne, Marian Courtney, Tara Dillon and team captain Margaret Keogh emerging victorious in the end. Margaret felt that it wasn't so much of a novelty for St Bridgets to have two sides entered in such an event. "It wasn't that it was a novelty for the club to have two teams taking part it was more that it made sense for the competition. Obviously some clubs are more female orientated than others and this affords more members the opportunity to play. I suppose it was a significant victory for ourselves as it is a competition we have supported since its

inception. We had been there or thereabouts a couple of times but always came up a couple of shots short. It is always pleasing to win something on behalf of the club and good to keep the titles rolling in for St. Bridgets," Margaret said.

Was it hard to keep focussed on the event when it went out so late in the year? "Yes, it was like it became the forgotten competition for most of the year, but then the Pitch & Putt calendar is so full it is hard to find suitable dates for most competitions," she said. What of the handicap element to this event? "We have always felt a little disadvantaged having to give so many shots. However, differentiating between levels of ability is what handicaps are for and with the new Handicap System in place it should eventually be a more level playing field for all," Margaret feels. On paper in the Semi-Finals against Cunnigar, the Kilcullen side always appeared to be in control, but Margaret said they never lost focus of the task at hand.

"It was a pleasure to play against the Ladies from Cunnigar. The matches were played in a great spirit and they were gen-



PPUI Honorary President Mervyn Cooney presents the trophy to the winning St. Bridget's team of Marian Courtney, Margaret Keogh (Captain), Tara Dillon and Chrissie Byrne. (Photo courtesy of Darren Keogh)

uinely sporting losers. As you know, there is no such thing as "in control" in Matchplay as the game can change in one hole and momentum is everything. Without doubt the games were a lot closer than people may have thought," the St Bridget's captain said. 8-1 was the winning scoreline for them and then it was onto the Final against the last team to have won this event in Tullamore back in 2014, namely Lakeside of Templemore. "We were well aware before the final of what a good team Lakeside were and the challenge they would pose. They had defeated the other St Bridget's team in the semi-final that morning, a good reminder of their abilities. It is always nice to face defending champions and helps focus your mind on the challenge ahead. Straight away, we decided

that it was critical we win both doubles games. This would boost our own confidence, while placing doubt in their minds and extra pressure on them individually in the singles. That said, we never contemplated victory until the decisive putt was held," she said.

4.5 to 1.5 was the winning margin for the St Bridget's quartet in claiming the title and cap a year that saw some good individual displays by the members of the winning team. "It was a great year for Marian this year. She was Runner-Up in the National Strokeplay and beaten semi-finalist at the Leinster Matchplay. Definitely if she could find the time to play/practice a little more, she would have many more titles to her name. Some would say it was a quiet year

for Chrissie, but fourth in the National Strokeplay, third in the Leinster Strokeplay, beaten semi-finalist in the National Matchplay and Leinster Matchplay Champion would do me any year!! Tara as always was there or thereabouts and has been a consistent title contender for the past couple of years. I feel very lucky to be surrounded by such talented players, but more importantly such great team-mates, Margaret said of her team-mates.

What did Margaret think about the Bagenalstown course on the day? We felt that the Bagenalstown course set up quite well for us. There are some very tough holes on it and we thought if we played to the top of our abilities that we would be very difficult to beat. It is a course that we are all very familiar with and we would have to

mention that it was in superb condition for so late in the year and we congratulate all involved with the club,” she said of the event venue. Finally where would she like to see this event go from here?

“A simple hope for this competition would be to double the number of entries for next year. The venue of the final could play a major role in this. As mentioned previously, some clubs are more female orientated/have larger female playing memberships. Maybe one of these clubs should be targeted for the finals in order to encourage greater participation. We wish the PPUI and this competition every success moving forward and look forward to defending our title next year.”



Ray Murphy (St. Anne's) gives a putting demonstration between rounds at the 2016 Inaugural u-16 National Matchplay held at Royal Meath P&P Club in Clonee.

International Pairs @ Saint Cebria

By John Manning

FOLLOWING their success at the International Pairs event in Catalonia on the first weekend in November, John Manning spoke to Tommy Hanley who partnered with Kieran Earls to win at Sant Cebria.

They may not be regular doubles partners but a September Foursomes round hatched an idea that led to international glory just under two months later. Kieran Earls (Parteen) and Tom Hanley (Bruff) carded 51 at RGSC on 11th September. That helped Limerick to joint sixth place in the Inter-County but loftier peaks loomed.

On 5th/6th November, Tom Hanley and Kieran Earls scored 138 to win the Catalan International Pairs at Sant Cebria. A key component of that 24 under par aggregate return was a 42 in the first round Greensomes (Scotch Foursomes). “We dovetailed very well and we fed off each other very well on Saturday,” recalls Tom Hanley, a National Inter-Club runner-up with Bruff last year. A 50 in the Foursomes left Hanley and Earls on 92 after 36 holes.

In contrast to past years when Irish and Catalan teams jostled at the top of the leader board, the 2016 International Pairs featured a battle royal between a couple of Irish combinations. Dubliners Stephen Murray and Paul McGreal got pretty close at one stage on Sunday, having trailed by four overnight. “McGreal came out of the blocks very well and Murray got a ‘oner’ to get them back to one with six to play,” said Tom of the Old County men. “We won three of the last

six to pull away.”

Kieran’s succinct reaction to their three-shot success was, “European doubles champions! Over the moon and celebrating!” Tom identifies a key turning point in the win. “On the 10th hole on Sunday, I had to make a five-footer for par to stay one ahead and we birdied the next two.” Murray (the 2010 Irish Open runner-up) and McGreal shot 45 for the Sunday Fourball. Their 141-tally left them two clear of the best Catalan pair - Carlos Perez and Sergi Andres.

Tom is a fan of the Sant Cebria course, which was a new venue for the International Pairs in 2016. “It was a fine course; probably the first Spanish course that I’ve played that is very similar to courses here in Ireland.” Earls and Hanley are not the first Co. Limerick team to win the International Pairs. Did they receive any advice from Pacelli Darcy and Liam O’Donovan (as former winners in 2014)? “No, just a bit of slugging on the practice round,” laughs Tom. “We visited the bamboos a few times, out of bounds!” They learned quickly and their 138 is the record low winning score at the International Pairs.

The 2015 Munster Gents Match-play champion isn’t shy about dishing out some counsel though! “I do remember giving one of the former winners a bit of advice going down the straight of the European Singles. He was taking in a bit of air!” That was a reference to certain Mr. O’Donovan. Liam eventually finished fifth at Sant Cebria alongside his long-time



Kieran Earls (Parteen) and Tommy Hanley (Bruff) who triumphed at Saint Cebria in the International Pairs

sidekick Pacelli, five adrift of their Shanonside neighbours.

One can never underestimate the importance of a good base on these foreign Pitch and Putt jaunts. “We stayed in the H Top Calella Palace,” recalls Tom. “It’s a five-minute drive from the course. I would highly recommend it to anyone playing in the Catalan Open next year.” The popular early season Open returns to Sant Cebria in 2017. The Maresme county course previously hosted the event in 2010 along with the 2002 Catalonia v. Ireland encounter.

As befitting the social ethos of Pitch and Putt, Kieran and Tom enjoy the company of the Dutch and Catalan players on the international circuit. “The Catalans are very friendly and welcoming.

The Dutch are like the Irish – like their few pints and always up for the craic!” Tom Hanley anticipates being back to defend next year (a new host venue is being considered) and they plan to play in the new World Pairs. “I’m hoping to play the Catalan Open in Sant Cebria in April and going to try for the double - European and World Champions - in June.”

As a former two-time Catalan Open Runner-Up, Kieran Earls will join him on that odyssey.



PPUI Garda Vetting

By Paul Hayes

Several years ago, after requests from several clubs the PPUI began working with the Garda Central Vetting Unit to complete Vetting reports on behalf of clubs. The same relationship continues today with the newly formed National Vetting Bureau. This year approximately 50 individuals have been vetted by the Garda's National Vetting Bureau on behalf of clubs affiliated to the PPUI and with the introduction of new legislation the relationship will continue.

The landscape of this entire process has changed this year with the introduction of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016. This Act came into law on the 29th April and from that day on it became mandatory for any individual working with children or vulnerable adults to be vetted. In other words, if a club has an individual coaching or training Juveniles there are in breach of the law, and risk prosecution.

This is not intended to scare sports clubs away from working with Juveniles, it merely provides security for all parties involved. The Act is also very clear in that only those engaging in relevant work need to be vetted. In terms of our sport relevant work refers to coaching or training of Juveniles or bringing them to com-

petitions. This refers to a lot of the work that a club's Juvenile Officer will do or indeed a member of the Juvenile committee. If a club had Juveniles playing and the green keeper is working on the course, he / she does not need to be vetted. If there is a competition between adults and juveniles, the adults don't need to be vetted to play. The only people that need to be vetted are those working (coaching) directly with the juveniles.

As part of the PPUI Level 1 Coaching course it is mandatory that all participants complete Garda Vetting so this is covered initially but it is the policy of the PPUI (as recommended by the Vetting Bureau) that individuals be re-vetted every three years which will be the responsibility of the club. A database of all those who have been vetted is kept by the PPUI's Vetting Liaison and clubs can easily check on who is and isn't vetted. The process for vetting is very simple and forms are easily completed in 5 mins.

I encourage all clubs to be sure that they are covered under this Act. If you are not sure if you have the relevant people vetted or if you have any questions, please feel free to call me in the office or drop me an e-mail to paulh@ppui.ie.

Paul Hayes PPUI Garda Vetting Liaison.

Inter/Junior Inter Club Title heads to Limerick

By Jason O'Connor

IT was a very early start for Parteen on the day of the National Gents Inter-Club Finals in Kilcullen. Leaving at 5am they set out with hopes of a win for the club that nestles nicely in the hinterland of a certain Thomond Park. For team captain Brian Mason it proved to be an evening tougher ask in making it on Saturday October 15th as he was at a wedding the day before. Despite these logistical difficulties the club emerged victorious on the day with wins over Cement and Deerpark to become the fourth club to the Inter/Junior title.

“It’s a great boost to the club, we had a very enjoyable campaign even though there were a few times we were struggling to get six players together to play a game. The courses we played on were fantastic and I thought St Bridgets did a great job with the course for the Finals,” Brian said after their win. A Limerick Matchplay winner this year who returned to the game having played previously at Juvenile level, Brian felt that former National Junior Strokeplay Champion Alan Bennis along with this year’s Munster Junior Matchplay winner in Conor Fahy gave the team some good experience. “We got more confident with each game we won during

the campaign and we just focussed on what was in front of us with each game and didn’t pay too much attention to what was happening elsewhere,” he said.

A 100% record in the Group Stages saw them make it through to the Quarter-Finals; they defeated Tipperary Hills 1 in their first match 8-1 before defeating Tralee 6-3 in their second match. Riverdale came the closest of any side to beating them in Parteen just emerging 5-4 victors in their final group game. A 7-2 victory over Cunnigar in the Quarter-Finals (played at St Annes) saw them through to the Semi-Finals where Cement of Louth would be their opponents. Level at 1.5 apiece after the doubles, wins for Brian, Conor, Alan and Che Maher along with a half for Patrick Ryan in the Singles were enough for Parteen to go through to the decider on a winning score of 6-3.

Deerpark of Kerry would be their opponents in an all Munster decider. Brian was happy with how the team stayed focussed on the task at hand. “There wasn’t too much between the sides in terms of shots, I think there was only one match where there was a really significant difference,” he said. Parteen took a decisive grip on

the game with two wins in the first 18 holes to lead by 2.5 to 0.5 at the halfway stage. When it came to the Singles encounters, Brian was only focussed on his own match and not thinking about what was happening elsewhere. He along with Conor, Alan and Pat Ryan got the four singles points that secured their 6.5 to 2.5 victory.

The team certainly benefitted from Kieran Earls' management skills on the day as Ger Keogh, Ger Roche and Tom-

my Fennell were other members of the victorious Parteen side. After the celebrations, Brian hopes that there is more success to come for the club down the line. "Some of us are moving on now but there are plenty of good Inters and Juniors in the club who could come along next year and take our places. Personally for me the Limerick team is my ambition for next year. I'm delighted to be back playing the game now and really enjoying it all again."



PPUI Honorary President Mervyn Cooney presents Inter Club (Inter / Junior) Cup to Parteen team captained by Brian Mason.

National Mixed Foursomes

By Jason O'Connor

LESS than six days after the disappointment of missing out on an Ladies Inter-County success with Kildare in RGSC, Chrissie Byrne more than made up for it with a first ever victory in the National Mixed Foursomes at Riverdale on September 17th last. She did it with a new playing partner as well as her usual playing companion of Ryston's Darren Keogh was absent meaning club-mate Derek O'Toole would be the one to step into the breach. Success was not have been expected by observers in advance but two Hole-In-Ones certainly aided the Kilcullen duo in their success.

"I'm delighted to have won this for the first time," said Chrissie after a two shot victory in Nenagh. "Myself and Darren have come close a number of times but its nearly always the Gross prize we end up winning with the way the handicaps work in favour of many of the other teams who play in it. We got the first Hole-in-One about eight or nine holes in and it really got our blood pumping. It (a Hole-in-One) is worth the same as any other plus on a scorecard but as a morale booster it's worth a lot," Chrissie feels. For Derek the win marked the first ever time he had lift-

ed a Cup and represents a bit of a spur to play the game on a more regular basis.

"I've been playing on and off for about 15 years now but this something that will probably encourage me to play a bit more regularly. The success Chrissie has had in the game is well known and to be up there with her now as a national winner is a great feeling," Derek said. Playing in the second session, they were aware that 15up was the score to beat after the first session with local duo Margaret and Dean Courtney leading the way. 8up for their first 18 was a good start but they went one better in their second round with 9up to emerge as victors of the Sean Coyne Memorial Cup with 17up.

Being only Chrissie's second time playing the Nenagh course, the win was even more significant. "It's a fantastic track and we got a wonderful welcome from the club during the event as well," she said. When it comes to the defence of the title next year in Lucan, Chrissie will have a bit of a decision to make about her playing partner considering she won the Gross in the Leinster equivalent with her brother-in-law Darren. "That will be a bit of a

tough call alright!” Chrissie said about who she will play with in 2017.

One thing that was noticeable about the prize-winners in Nenagh was that there was a strong crossover between the prize-winners in the Munster and National events. Margaret and Dean Courtney had previously won the Second 18 Session prize in Tralee, Munster Mixed Foursomes winners Elaine Quinn and Mick Fennell from Lakeside won the First 18

Session in the National while Munster Runners-Up Lisa O’Connor and Tony Blake won the Second 18 prize in Riverdale. The Gross winners in Riverdale in Catherine McCreevy and Wally Sheridan were National winners in 2014 in another crossover from previous stagings.



2016 PPU National Mixed Foursomes winners Derek O’Toole and Chrissie Byrne from St. Bridget’s P&P Club. Awarding prizes on the day in Riverdale were PPU Honorary President Mervyn Cooney and PPU Honorary Treasurer Breda Brophy.

BACKSPIN PRODUCTION TEAM

Jason O'Connor, John Manning, and Paul Hayes

(continued from page 1) giving our U-16's an extra opportunity at success. Evan Carry of Castletown (National U-16 Strokeplay winner) was the winner of this section as no doubt Glen will look forward to defending the title next year on home turf when the second staging takes place at the Glanmire course.

By and large we have had a positive year on and off the course, media exposure is increasing as we had the TV cameras at the National Matchplay for the second consecutive year and we also attended the recent Over 50's expo at the RDS in Dublin. We hope to build on a lot of things in 2017 and as can be seen recently from the post on the website we are asking all PPUI members for their input into our next Strategic Plan for the period up to 2020. Now is certainly a time of year for ideas than can improve our game not just at national level but also within our clubs. We can all think of a great idea during the middle of the playing season only for it to go awry during the depths of winter!

Also in this edition our Development Manager

Paul Hayes has some information on the new Garda Vetting procedures. I want to thank Paul for his work during the year in editing and putting together these e-zines. I'm happy that we were able to bring out more than we did in 2015 but hopefully in 2017 we might be able to bring them out with a bit more frequency. Thanks to John Manning for his pieces on the Irish Open and International Pairs events, John's enthusiasm and love of the game continues to shine when one delves into them.

We intend to bring out our next edition post the Convention which will take place in Nenagh on the last Saturday in February. Until then we wish clubs continuing to play away in the cold weather for Turkeys and Hampers the best of luck with the conditions and wish all our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours in Sport

Jason O'Connor

Communications & Press Officer
PPUI
0868048933

MAJOR UPCOMING FIXTURES AND DATES TO REMEMBER

Leinster & Munster Fixtures meetings take place on 1st December

Closing date for Motions, Recommendations and Nominations is 6th Feb 2017
2017 Convention will be held in the Abbey Court, Nenagh on 25th Feb 2017

Reminder to all that want an advertisement in the Fixture Book to get them into the office ASAP