



Pitch and Putt
Ireland

Backspin

Official E-Zine of Pitch and Putt Ireland

October 2023



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Pitch and Putt Ireland Backspin. It was another action-packed couple of months since the last Backspin with a major championship held pretty much every weekend throughout August and September, with every championship witnessing pitch and putt of exceptional standard, great competition and sportsmanship and no lack of excitement.

In this edition Declan Sheedy reviews all the championships played over the last two months, we hear from Dwyne Hill and his vision/plan as CEO Pitch & Putt Ireland, John Manning provides a look back at Championships previously held in McDonagh as the upcoming Interprovincial Match will be held there on Nov 4th. John also interviews Amy Galvin who recently won the Jack McCormack Scratch Cup in Kilbeggan and we look at some for statistics behind the Intercounty Inter & Junior challenge and National Interclub championship.

Our next edition will review the International Challenge between Ireland & Catalonia being played on 20th October along with the outcome of the National Interclub championship and Interprovincial Challenge Match along with a number of other features.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Declan Sheedy

Editor

Message from Pitch & Putt Ireland CEO Dwyne Hill

Hi,

I have been in post for nearly seven weeks and had a chance to meet with some members of the Pitch and Putt community and the passion for the sport is in abundance and that is a credit to everyone involved in the game.



Setting our priorities for the next 12 months is as follows:

- To create a new strategic plan to drive our sport for the next five years, we will be using an outside consultant to help us achieve this and bring fresh ideas to the table.
- Membership – we want to increase our membership especially with females.
- Create a Long Term Player Pathway, so you play for your club, then county, Inter Pro and the hopefully represent Ireland.
- Coaching – To review our current coaching course and to hold regular courses throughout the year. It is hoped that every club will have a qualified coach.
- To create a new schools programme at Primary & Post Primary, this includes a new TY Programme.
- Inclusion – inclusion is such a big area we want to do programmes with people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ community, those effected by war.
- Innovation – we want to look at how technology can help our sport
- Referring – That there is a pathway for those who have an interest to become International referees
- Anti-Doping – Our senior athletes are educated in anti-doping and match manipulation and that out major competitions may be drugs tested.
- Streaming – That major competitions are streamed at a professional level
- Commercial – That we can find a major sponsor in 2024.

This plan is doable, but only with the help of you the stakeholders.

This is a train journey and I'm the driver of the train but I need all county board, clubs, members to be on this journey with me and Pitch and Putt Ireland so we can get to our destination.

I look forward to meeting more of you over the next few months and I want to give a big thank you to Miriam our office admin who is doing a lot of the work in the background.

Dwyne Hill

National Championship Reviews

By Declan Sheedy

National Ladies & Gents Strokeplay Championship

@ Riverdale and Lakeside

Gents Senior

For the second time in as many months a National Senior Gents title would go to a Tipperary man following the success of Stephen O'Reilly (Hillview) in the National Matchplay. On this occasion it would be host club player Stephen Shoer (Riverdale) who would take the laurels with an outstanding performance on his home course and buoyed on by home support. Entering the championship as one of the favourites, which carries a lot of extra pressure and expectations, Stephen would stake his claim for the title from the outset. Playing in the early morning groups Stephen would post rounds of 46 & 42 (20 under) to put a marker down to the rest of the field. As the day progressed it would prove that this score would not be surpassed and Stephen would lead heading into the final 18. However the scoring on the day was exceptional as would the quality of the chasing pack heading into the Final 18. Rounds of 18 under from Damien Fleming (Deerpark) and Kieran Earls (Bruff) and 17 under scores from John McGrath (Deerpark) and Sean Crowe (Riverdale) would be next best, all with an brilliant chance of title glory. 11 under would be the cut for the final 18 and all the early groups out in the final 18 failed to make sufficient inroads on the leaders the first real target in the clubhouse would come from Paudie O'Sullivan (Fermoy) who shot an outstanding 43 (11 under) in the final 18 to post a target of 23 under, this following an opening 18 round of only 2 under. Evan Ganly (Trim) would be next in matching Paudie's 23 under total but this score would be quickly then surpassed by Daithi Sexton (Fermoy) whose excellent final round of 45 (nine under) put down a serious marker of 25 under in the clubhouse. This would leave the final two groups on the course to fight it out. In the second to last group it would be Sean Crowe (Riverdale) who would make a very fast start over the front nine and would tie for the lead towards then end of the front nine and looked like a major contender. Unfortunately for Sean the two's slowed up over the course of the final nine holes and with that his chances for the title. Sean would however post an excellent 46 (eight under) and finish the championship on 25 under. As others fell away all eyes reverted to the final three ball. A slow front nine from Kieran Earls would cost him his chances as his playing partners opened up a gap he would not be able to close giving the exceptional quality of play. Kieran's still managed a very good round of 47 (seven under) to finish in the growing group of 25 under. As it came down to Stephen and Damien, it would prove to be Stephen who would control the final round with outstanding pitch and putt throughout and held the advantage over his playing partners through. Indeed at one stage the record 54 hole in a National Strokeplay looked under threat but Stephen would use his experience over the back nine to ensure the title was secured first and with a five shot advantage with three holes to go Stephen would navigate the final three holes nicely allowing him a number of putts on the final green to win the title. A final round of 46 (eight under) and a winning total of 28 under crowned him the 2023 National Senior champion. A round of 46 (eight under) from Damien also secured him the runners up spot on 26 under. Daithi Sexton by virtue of the best final 18 would take third spot on 25 under. Congratulation to Stephen on his win and to the Riverdale and Lakeside course of their hosting

on excellent championships. Pictured Stephen Shoer (Senior Gents Champion) and Geraldine Ward (Senior Ladies Champion)



Ladies Senior

With the National Ladies Strokeplay championship reverting back to the traditional 54 hole championship from next year on, the 2023 National Senior Championship played in Riverdale could well have been the final time it will be competed for over 36 holes. With defending champion Chrissie Sheedy (Ryston) unfortunately unable to compete, it meant a new champion would be crowned as the Ladies took to the tee. It would however not be a new first time champion crowned instead Geraldine Ward (Portmarnock) would claim an incredible 12th National Senior Strokeplay title and extend her remarkable record of National Senior titles to 24. Geraldine would take a firm grasp of the championship early on and would lead the field after 18 holes by a shot from Liz Quinn (Collinstown) after a round of 50 (four under). Amy Galvin (Tullamore) was in striking distance also after round one following a 52 while Margaret Hogan (Tullamore) sat on level par after 18. With no room for major errors over the short format, the first player to set a target and take the clubhouse lead would be Margaret Hogan whose second 18 of 52 gave her the clubhouse lead of 2 under par. Playing in the following group, Glenda Hoey (Lucan) matched Margaret's 52 to finish her championship on one under. Amy followed in with a 56 and thus finish on level par which would just be outside the medal. With only two groups on the course, Geraldine would use all her experience to navigate the challenging back nine holes in Riverdale and post a solid round of 53 (one under) and a final score of five under for the 2023 Championship. In the final group a blistering final nine holes of five under par from Mary Murray (Rocklodge) would see her shoot up the leaderboard but would fall short of the target set by Geraldine with Mary finishing her championship on three under which was good enough for runner up spot with Margaret Hogan taking the bronze. Congratulations to Geraldine on another National Strokeplay title, extending her remarkable achievement in the games. All eyes look ahead to the National Ladies Championship in Navan in 2024.



Gents Intermediate

In one of the closest contested Intermediate Championships in the last number of decades only four shots seperated the 18 players who made the cut to play in the final 18 holes which was played in Riverdale, Nenagh. With the cut being five under par it would be Frank O'Brien (Collins) and Ger Ryan (Ardnacrusha) who would hold a one shot advantage over the rest of the field heading into the final round having both recorded

rounds of 99 and nine under par for the first 36 holes. As anticipated the scoring the final playoff was excellent all round but it would be a round of 46 (eight under) which stood above the rest and which came from Sean Clerkin (Killineer). Starting the Final 18 on eight under the exceptional final round would shoot Sean to the top of the leaderboard on final score of 16 under. With the 36 holes leaders struggling to find the two's in the playoff it would be Patrick Robinson (Gorwan), Darren O'Leary (St. Annes), Keith O'Brien (Tralee) followed by Frank O'Brien, who would come closet to catching Sean. A round of 48 (6 under) in the Final 18 from Patrick, Darren and Keith would see them reach final scores of 12 under, 11 under and 11 under respectively. Frank O'Brien would also finish on 11 under following a 52 (two under), but not enough to prevent Sean Clerkin from cliniching the 2023 Intermediate title. Patrick Robinson would claim the runner-up spot while Darren O'Leary would take third on the basis of best final 18 ahead of Keith and Frank. Congrulations to Sean who joined his club-mate Kyle Thornton in bringing home a National Strokeplay title to the Wee County this year.

Ladies Intermediate



It was a Tipperary 1-2-3 in the Ladies Intermediate Championship and even more joy for the host club as the gold and silver medals went to the host clubs players. **Margaret Hennessey (Riverdale)** add the National Ladies Intermediate title to the National Ladies Junior title she previous won in Tullamore with a brillant score of one under par for the championship, competed for over 36 holes. An outstanding first 18 of 51 (three under) gave Margaret a slender one shot advantage over

county player Frances Ryan (Lakeside) and a five-shot lead over club-mate Margaret Forde (Riverdale). With the remainder of the field with too much to do after the first 18, the medal would be decided between these three ladies. With conditions becoming tricker in the afternoon scoring became a bit more difficult however a final round of 56 from Margaret

Hennessey saw her finish the championship on one under par which could not be bettered by her other two challengers as Margaret Forde returned a final 18 of 55, final score of 111 (three over) while France returned with a 59 and also finish her championship on 111 (three over) where she would finish in third spot. An excellent win for Margaret Hennessey on her home course and having not added the Intermediate title of her Junior title will be out in coming years to try claimed the highly valued Senior title.

Ladies Junior



Played in Lakeside over 36 holes there was further success for the McDonagh club as **Marion Gannon Kelly (McDonagh)** won the National Ladies Junior title following rounds of 60 & 58 (10 over). Marion's very solid performance and score comfortably secured her the title by 8 shots ahead of former National Nett Matchplay runner-up Ann O'Herlihy (Lakewood) who finished on 18 over following rounds of 64 & 62. The bronze medal headed back to Kildare also as Catherine Dillon (St. Bridgets) claimed third spot on 21

over as she finished a shot ahead of a number of other players close behind. Congratulations to Marion who one can expect to see feature strongly again in future championships.

Gents Junior A

After the 36 holes the cut for the final 18 would come in at 4 over par in the Junior A championship. Heading in the playoffs it would be Martin O'Sullivan (St. Annes) and Jack Kirwan (St. Patricks) who would lead on 3 under each with Jason Moore (Ryston) in third on 1 under. However there would only be 5 shots separating the top 8 players which set the playoff up brilliantly and a winner to come from anywhere. Indeed it would be **Kyle Thornton (Killineer)** that grasp the opportunities in the Final 18 to shoot a brilliant round of 51, get into the clubhouse first and finish the championship on a total of three under par. With the final group still on the course the players would quickly know the score posted but unfortunately for the leader after 36 holes they could not match the three under posted. Martin O'Sullivan would fall agonisingly short posting a round of 55 to finish on two under while next best would be Jason Moore who also shot a final round of 55 to finish his challenge for 2023 on level which would secure him third spot by virtue of a better final 18 ahead of James Kirwan. Joy for the Killineer man in a very tightly fought championship played over the excellent Lakeside course.



Gents Junior B



Rounds of 54& 57 and final score of three over crowned **Colin English (McDonagh)** as the inaugural Junior B National Strokeplay champion in Lakeside in August. Introduced for the first time this year, the Junior B Championship unlike the other Gents Championship grades was competed for over 36 holes only. An impressive score on the challenging Lakeside course saw Colin secure the title by two shots from Patrick Walsh (Cunnigar) who shot rounds of 58& 55 for a five over total. Patrick would take the runner up spot on the Back 18 ahead of Cian McGovern (Lucan) who had led after the First 18 holes followed a brilliant round of 51 but who found the second 18 a tougher recording a final

18 of 62 but good enough to take third spot in the Championship. A shot further back on six over was Stephen Hanley who would place fourth overall and well ahead of the remaining players in the field. A Championship that we hope will continue to grow going forward after an excellent first outing in Lakeside this year.

National Ladies & Gents Intercounty Championship @ Lucan

Anchor Cup (Gents)

It was joy and success for Dublin on home soil as they reclaimed the Anchor cup with a very impressive performance over the weekend finishing with a team total of 105 under in what proved to be a very competitive Championship. Entering the weekend as many people's favourites and with high expectation on their shoulders, the Dublin men would put in four very strong sessions to hold off the very strong challenge thrown at them in particular from Tipperary and Kerry. At the halfway stage on Saturday evening, Dublin headed the leaderboard on 69 under which included a notable 12 under in the scotch foursomes from Stephen Murray & Gary Healy along with a nine under from Christopher Gallagher in the Singles. Dublin would be closely followed by a very impressive showing from Tipperary who stood on 66 under thanks to two sets of 11 under par rounds in the Scotch Foursomes from Michael Fennell & Stephen Shoer and Oisin Ryan & Sean Crowe. An outstanding 10 under in the Singles from Paul Sweeney put the Tipperary men in an excellent position going into the Sunday. In third spot going into Sunday were Limerick on 63 under, following strong scores by all three pairings in the Scotch foursomes plus another 10 under round from Kieran Earls in the Singles. With a bit to do but certainly still in it heading into Sunday were Kerry on 54 under plus Cork and Louth on 51 with the remainder of the counties in the division leaving themselves with too much to do to medal. Sunday began with the difficult Foursomes formats and there was little to separate the top six teams in terms of scoring. Of the Top 6 Cork returned the best team foursome total of 15 under, followed by Kerry with 14 under, Louth with 13, Dublin with 12,

Tipperary with 11 and Limerick with 9 thus all would still be to play for heading into the deciding singles session albeit Dublin now taking a four-shot advantage into it over Tipperary. In the final session of singles the standard of Pitch & Putt was outstanding on what was a course firming up as the day went on in beautiful sunshine. Playing in the final grouping together Dublin, Tipperary and Limerick each knew exactly how they were positioned against each other as the round progressed. Over the course of the final singles rounds Cork and Louth produced very solid team round of 20 and 21 under but would not be enough to close the gap that had built up between them and the leaders with Cork finishing fifth overall on a team total of 86 under while Louth would finished sixth on 85 under. Kerry would be the first team into the clubhouse and a best of the day team total in the Sunday singles of 26 under would see them put an excellent marker down for the remaining three team on the course as they finished the championship with a total of 94 under. Limerick's challenge unfortunately slowed in the final single session and failed to keep pace with their playing partners and would end with a singles teams total of 16 under and a total of 88 under for the Championship which would leave them just outside the medals in fourth place. It was now down to Dublin and Tipperary and it would prove to be the Dublin team who would stand up to the pressure over the final round and return an excellent singles team total of 24 under, that included a excellent eight under from Stephen Murrar, which would be four shots better than Tipperary who shot a team total of 20 under in the Singles ending their Championship on a brilliant total of 97 under and winning the silver medal. For Dublin, they would end the weekend as eight shot winners on a total score of 105 under and lift the Anchor Cup on home turf. Dublin have now been in the Top 3 spots in the last 10 inter-county Championship and their win in Lucan is their 19th title in the history of the Championship consolidating them with the second most wins in the Roll of Honour. Congratulations to the team of Christopher Gallagher, Stephen Murrar, Gary Healy, JR Crangle, George McGreal and Damien McCreevey on their win, pictured below.

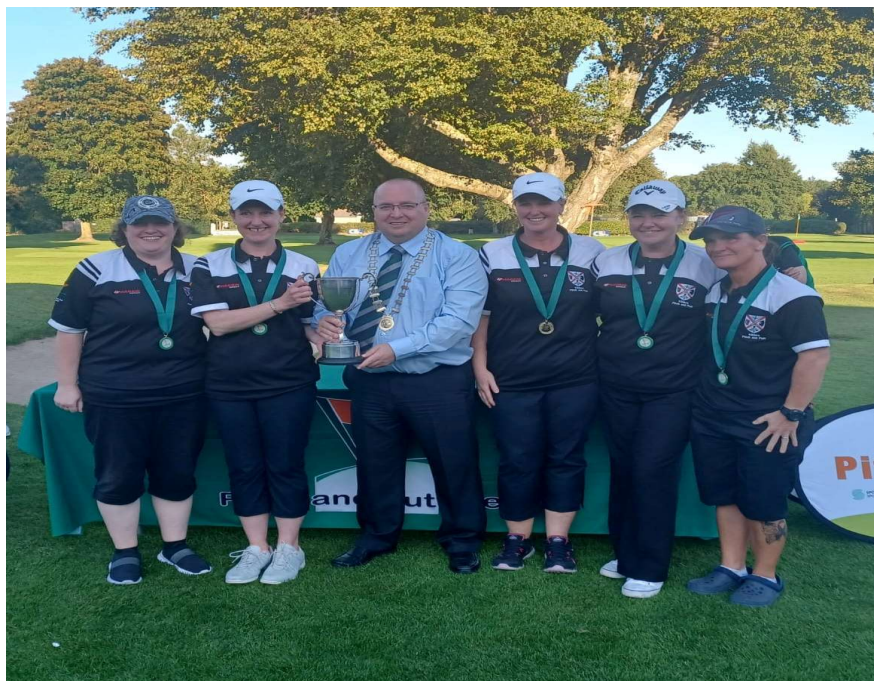


Eamon Birchall Trophy

Formerly awarded to the winners of Division B and subsequently the Nett winners for the last few years, a new criteria was introduced and warmly received in Lucan for which the Eamon Birchill cup would be played for. It was decided that the cup would now be played for by the teams who end up on the lower half of the leaderboard at the end of play on Saturday. These teams would carry their scores forward into Sunday and would compete against each other for the Eamon Birchill trophy. At the end of Saturday's play in Lucan it was determined that we would see Westmeath, Wexford, Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Galway and Clare fight it out for this cup albeit it looked like it would be a straight fight between Wexford and Westmeath who both ended Saturday on a total of 35 and 34 under respectively with Galway next best on 14. With the difficult foursomes first to be played on Sunday it would be clear that there would be no surprise challenges come through the field from the other and it would indeed be a battle between defending champions Wexford and the men from Westmeath. Playing together it would be Westmeath who took a big step towards winning the title retuning a team score of four under in the foursomes against Wexfords team score of five over and thus taking a eight shot lead into the Singles. However the Wexford lads would rise to the big challenge the faced and dug deep to return a team total of seven under in the singles which included an excellent six under by Paul Gorby ending their weekend with a total of 36 under par. Knowing what they needed to produce the Westmeath team fought to the very last putt but would ultimately fall just a single shot short after the weekends play as they could only return a team score of two over par and a final total of 35 under par, good enough for the runner up spot. It was an excellent final session for Wexford and for the second year in the row the Eamon Birchall cup returned back down to Wexford. The battle for third spot saw four counties (Kilkenny, Waterford, Carlow and Waterford) separated by only one shot after the long weekend but Kilkenny would claim the bronze on countbacks with a total score of seven under par. Congratulations to the team of Dan Power, Paul Gorby, Ruairi Fortune, Mick Molloy, John Kirwan, Dale Kirwan and John Tyrell on their win, pictured below.



Ladies Championship



Six counties were proudly represented in this year's National Ladies Inter-County championship as the teams of Cork, Dublin, Kildare, Louth, Meath and Tipperary took to the tee. In a differing format to the gents championship the ladies played with teams of four playing 36 hole Scotch foursomes on the Saturday and 18 holes singles were played on Sunday. As

expected at the end of play on Saturday the stage had been set for an exciting day's play to come on Sunday as only 10 shots would separate the teams of Kildare, Dublin and Cork after the Scotch foursomes. Kildare, the team of Chrissie Sheedy, Marian Courtney, Margaet Keogh and Tara Dillon, would hold a single shot lead over Dublin after shooting a team total of 14 under after the Scotch foursomes which included a best of the day 18 hole round of seven under from the pairing Chrissie Sheedy and Marian Courtney. Dublin represented by Ger Ward, Maree O'Toole, Glenda Hoey and Tracey Smith returned a team total of 13 under and remained in hot pursuit heading into the single which Cork's team of Mary Murrar, Sarah Byrne, Sarah O'Neill and Ailish Sexton were only four off the lead on 10 under total after Saturday's play. Tipperary found themselves a couple of shots further back than they may have wanted on a total of five under but not out of it while the teams of Meath and Louth shot team totals of six over and 25 over at the end of Saturday which would prove too much of a gap to close on Sunday. The Ladies were greeted with sunny and hot conditions on Sunday and with every shot counting meant the leaderboard had the potential to change quickly. Meath and Louth were first out but had left themselves too much to do after Saturday with the teams ending with team totals of 44 over and 63 over respectively. The Tipperary challenge from five under par never materialised with the team struggling over the singles format and they would end the championship on a team total of 17 over. That would leave Kildare, Dublin and Cork to fight it out for the medals. The Cork ladies playing ahead of Kildare and Dublin would throw the gauntlet down first returning a team total of 12 under, an very solid two under for the combined singles which included a brilliant five under from Mary Murrar. Word quickly got out to the Kildare and Dublin ladies of the target set and what was needed over the last six holes as they played them out. In singles there would be very little to separate the Kildare and Dublin teams over the first nine holes but it would be the defending champions Kildare who would keep the foot down and their experience as a team would come to the fore as they edged further ahead over the last nine holes and by the time the final putt dropped Kildare would have widened their

lead in returning a final team total of 21 under, seven under total of the singles which included an outstanding round of 47 by Tara Dillon. Dublin would have to settle with a final total of 12 under, one over for the combined singles which in the end would only be good enough for the bronze medal as Cork would take the runner ups on Back 9 countbacks. Kildare's victory would be their 13th National Intercounty title and more impressive would be that it would be Marian Courtneys 13th title, Tara Dillon's 12th title, Chrissie Sheedys 11th title and Margaret Keogh ninth title highlight the strength and experience of this quartet. The order of medals would also be a repeat of last years results with a Kildare, Cork and Dublin, 1-2-3. Ladies pitch and putt was the winner again in Lucan with top class Ladies Pitch & Putt on display. Congratulations to the Lilywhites with eyes now looking forward to Bagenalstown 2024 where we can hopefully see more teams enter and more county colours on display in the Ladies Championship.

Final Leaderboard from the 2024 National Intercounty

Gents Anchor Cup	
Dubin	-105
Tipperary	-97
Kerry	-94
Limerick	-88
Cork	-86
Louth	-85
Meath	-68
Offaly	-65
Kildare	-65

Gents Eamon Birchill Cup	
Wexford	-36
Westmeath	-35
Kilkenny	-7
Galway	-7
Wateford	-6
Carlow	-6
Clare	+29

Ladies	
Kildare	-21
Cork	-12
Dublin	-12
Tipperary	+17
Meath	+44
Louth	+63

National Gents Intermediate & Junior Intercounty Challenge @ Ryston

It was victory and joy for the two Munster counties in this years stage of the National Gents Intermediate and Junior Intercounty Challenge which was hosted by the Ryston club in Newbridge. As with previous years this challenge see the winners of the provincial Intermediate and Junior Championship played in August face off against each other in a matchplay formats (three scotch foursomes and six singles).



In the intermediate challenge it would yet again be the team from Cork who claimed the Munster honours in Rafeen Creek and they would face Louth who were victorious in Leinster in Poulaphouca. Cork, defending the title they won last year, represented by Darren O'Leary, David O'Leary, Morty Ahern, Ger Kehoe, Ryan Sexton and Philip Burns were in no mood to give up the title and in wet and damp conditions in Ryston began very strongly in the scotch foursomes against Louth winning all three matches by comfortable margins for 3&2 or better. With a commanding 3-0 lead heading into the Singles it would be a mountain to climb for the

Louth team of Barry Dyas, Sean Clerkin, Ger Thornton, Kieran McDonnell, Paul Cooney and Gerry Breen to over come. However the Louth team put up a stern challenge in the singles and pushed the Cork teams all the way with very little to separate the players in the majority of matches. In the end it may have been the extra bit of experience in such events that say the Corks players win pivotal holes late on and secure the wins in the first two matches to get to the five points and secure the title. Louth to their credit never gave up but despite their best efforts it would be Cork who would go on to win the singles sessions by 4-2 and a final victory score of 7-2 to retain the title.

In the Junior final it would be the team from Kerry respresented by Fintan Martin, Brian Moloney, Dan Broderick, Mark Lucey, Michael Creagh, Mark O'Regan and John O'Regan who claimed the Munster title in Rafeen Creek that would take on the team from Louth who won the Leinster championship in Athgarvan. Louth's line-up would be Arthur Murphy, Derek Reynolds, Kyle Thornton, Tony Butler, Shane Reilly and Cormac Donnelly. With the Intermediate team having lost out to Cork the Louth team



were hoping to go one better to secure gold in the Junior grade however they came up against

a very strong Kerry team on the day. A closely fought out Scotch Foursomes session saw Kerry take a slight advantage going into the singles winning the session 2-1. In the singles it would be Kerry who came to the fore with a dominate performance against their Louth competitors. With the first two games shared the score stood at 3-2 but from there on it was all Kerry as they went on to win the last four games and take the session 5-1 and secure a 7-2 victory overall.

Both challenges were played at a very high level and the hope is this challenge can continue to grow and flourish further in the coming years. See below the individual match scores.

Louth v Cork Intermediate Challenge

Intermediate Scotch Foursomes: Barry Dyas & Sean Clerkin v Ger Kehoe & David O Leary (Won 3&2), Ger Thornton & Kieran McDonnell v Morty Ahern & Darren O Leary (Won 3&2), Paul Cooney & Gerry Breen Snr v Ryan Sexton & Phillip Burns (Won 4&3)

Intermediate Singles: Barry Dyas v Darren O Leary (Won on 21st), Sean Clerkin v David O Leary (Won 2&1), Ger Thornton v Morty Ahern (Won 1up), Kieran McDonnell (Won 1up) v Ger Kehoe, Paul Cooney (Won 2&1) v Ryan Sexton, Gerry Breen Snr v Phillip Burns (Won 6&5)

Final Score: Cork 7 Louth 2

Louth v Kerry Junior Challenge

Junior Scotch Foursomes: Arthur Murphy & Cormac Donnelly v Mark Lucey & Dan Broderick (Won 5/4), Derek Reynolds & Kyle Thornton v John O Regan and Brian Moloney (Won 3/1), Tony Butler & Shane Reilly (Won 4/3) v Michael Creagh & Fintan Martin

Junior Singles: Arthur Murphy v Fintan Martin (Won 2&1), Derek Reynolds (Won 1up) v Brian Moloney, Kyle Thornton v Dan Broderick (Won 3&2), Tony Butler v Michael Creagh (Won 4&3), Shane Reilly v Mark O Regan (Won 1up), Cormac Donnelly v John O Regan (Won 7&6)

Final Score: Kerry 7 Louth 2

History of the National Intercounty Challenge

The National Graded Inter-County challenges have a relatively short history but the current scorestands at 6-0 to Munster counties. John Manning tells us more about the significance behind the recent Munster double in Ryston.

Cork sit proudly atop the Intermediate Roll of Honour with three wins out of three. Tipperary, Limerick and Kerry share pole position in junior with one success apiece. Louth lead the way with three runners-up spots (two Intermediate and one Junior) while Dublin (Intermediate), Wexford (Intermediate) and Westmeath (Junior) have all finished second on one occasion.

Just three players have more than one winners' medal. Fermoy pair Jimmy Quinn and JJ Quirke figured on the successful 2019 and 2022 Cork squads while Darren O'Leary featured in 2022 and in 2023.

7-2 is the highest winning margin and has been achieved on three occasions – once in Intermediate and twice in Junior. 5-4 is (not surprisingly) the lowest winning margin and has also been achieved on three occasions – twice in Intermediate and once in Junior.

Fermoy has supplied the most individual Intermediate Inter-County winners – JJ Quirke (two wins), Ryan Sexton, Jimmy Quinn, Robbie Donovan, Dylan Seymour and Gavin Dawson. St. Anne's aren't far behind – Darren O'Leary (two wins), Cian Murphy and Donal Duggan. Jimmy Quinn and Keith Power were members of Collins during their 2019 campaign while Morty Ahern also represents the Campfield club. David O'Leary and Ronan O'Driscoll are the Douglas contributors to Leeside supremacy in this event while Ger Kehoe (ESB) and Philip Burns (Brinny) played in 2023.

There is a greater spread of clubs across the successful Junior players. But Bruff supplied four (Kieran Donegan, Shaun Donegan, Peadar McCarthy and Mike O'Donnell) of Limerick's 2022 winning sextet with two from Ardnacrusha (Ralph Fitzgerald and Rick Harty). Four Tralee men (Mark Lucey, John O'Regan, Mark O'Regan and Michael Creagh) figured on Kerry's triumphant 2023 squad together with two from Deerpark (Fintan Martin and Brian Moloney) and one from Castleisland (Dan Broderick). Tipperary's winning team of four years ago was evenly dispersed across Larkspur Park (Ken Hayes and Daniel Ryan), Riverdale (Sean Crowe and Ger Tuite) and Tipperary Hills (Michael Butler and Michael O'Donoghue).

Provincial Championship Reviews

By Declan Sheedy

Provincial Intercounty Championships

Munster @ Rafeen Creek

Leinster & Poulaphouca & Athgarvan

Mid August saw players all over the country swap club colours to put on with pride their county jerseys in the provincial intercounty championships which were played for in Munster at Rafeen Creek while Poulaphouca and Athgarvan were the hosts for the Leinster championships. With the National Intercounty in Lucan only a few weeks away this would be the first time some players and counties would competitively line out ahead of the National championship while for many others this was their day to wear their county crest with pride. While the formats between Munster and Leinster differed between the different grades the standard of pitch and putt in both provincial championships was however was equally brilliant. Below we review how each of the championships played out and where the medals for 2023 went.

Munster Ladies



This was an all in championship with counties able to enter more than one team of four players where they would play 18 holes scotch foursomes and 18 holes singles under the stableford format. Six ladies team lined out, 3 from Cork and 3 from Tipperary with the strong hope we can see teams from the other Leinster counties enter next year. Playing on home county soil it would be success for the Cork teams with Cork 1 team of Mary Murray, Sarah O'Neill, Sarah Byrne and Ailish Sexton winning the gross title with a team score of 211 points while Cork 2 team claimed the nett prize with a team total of 235 points which they won on Back 9 county backs from the Tipperary 2 team. The winning Cork 2 team was made up up Michelle Fylnn, Veronica Foy, Nicola Ahern and Vera McCarthy. Tipperary 2 were the nett runners up ahead of Tipperary 1 in third on 231 points.



Munster Junior Gents



The Kerry Junior teams win would in the end prevented a clean sweep of titles for Cork over the weekend in Rafeen Creek. Kerry, Cork, Tipperary and Limerick took to the tee in this Junior Championship with 18 holes Scotch Foursomes and 18 hole singles being the format with all scores to count. Kerry made up of the team of Michael Creagh, Fintan

Martin, John O'Regan, Brian Moloney, Mark Lucey and Daniel Broderick would lead by three shots from Cork after the scotch foursomes and would build on this advantage with a very solid team performance in singles with a best round of 50 coming from Mark Lucey. A final team total of 14 under would prove good enough to secure a comfortable 10 shot victory ahead of Cork would would pip Tipperary to the runner-up spot on back 9 count backs.

Munster Intermediate Gents

A team total of 35 under gave Cork an 8 shot victory over Kerry in the Intermediate championship with Tipperary third on 25 under. The team of Ryan Sexton, Darren O'Leary, David O'Leary, Philip Burns, Morty Ahern and Ger Keohe held a seven shot lead from Kerry heading into the singles which included a best of the day 8 under from Ryan Sexton and Philip Burns. It was a lead the Cork men would not relinquisih and an impressive team performance by all in the singles, included six under from Ryan Sexton, would ensure they would retain their title. A seven under round from Tipperary's Sean Minogue would prove to be best of the day in the singles and help his county to the bronze medal.

Munster Senior Gents



Despite only four counties competing, this championship yet again proved to be a highly competitive event with brilliant scoring all round on the day. Cork, Kerry, Tipperary and Limerick all took the stage in Rafeen Creek with Cork favourites on home soil and they did not disappoint. A brilliant 32 under team total after the scotch foursomes which included two 11 unders and a 10 under from the Cork men put them six shots ahead of Limerick

heading into the singles while Kerry sat in third on 22 under. Limerick duo Tommy Hanley and John Farrell shot a outstanding 12 under in the scotch to boast the Treaty men challenge. The strength of the Cork team excelled in the singles where they would post a team singles total of 45 under between the six team members with best of the day coming from Eoin Walsh with nine under for the 18 holes. A final team score of 67 under from Cork would prove untouchable as the remaining three counties battled in out for the other medal. In the Cork would secure a 16 shot victory over Limerick who took the runner up spot by a shot from Kerry. The Cork team were represened by Ray Murphy, John Walsh, John Cahill, Eoin Walsh, Declan Freeman and Bryan Delaney in retaining their title. As we would see a few later all four of these counties would finish in the Top 5 of the National Intercounty albeit in a different order.

Leinster Junior Ladies & Gents



Athgarvan were the proud hosts of the Leinster Junior Ladies and Gents Inter-County championships. Disappointingly only two Junior Ladies teams were represented in Leinster this year but that did not distract from a very sporting head to head between host county Kildare and Kilkenny. It would be Kildare's day as the quartet of Marion Gannon Kelly, Anne Sweeney, Christina Foley and Fiona Lambe Homan would prove too strong

for the Kilkenny ladies with the Lilywhites using their knowledge and experience of the Athgarvan venue to their advantage and return a solid team performance to lift to the 2023 title. In the Junior Gents Championship 10 counties proudly pulled on their county colours but it would be the men from Louth who would returned as convienicing winners on a final team total of 10 under which would be 16 shots better than their nearest rival Wexford with the Meath team a further shot back. 13 under for the Scotch Foursomes the Louth men gave them a three-shot lead over Meath heading into the Singles. A very soild performance in the singles by all the Louth men was the difference on the day returning a team total of three over where all scores counted. Rounds of two under from Kyle Thornton and Derek Reynolds for the Wee County men contributed strongly to the teams final total and were best of the days scores in the singles. The winning team, who would in September competed in the National Junior Intercounty challenge were, Kyle Thornton, Derek Reynolds, Shane Reilly, Tony Butler, Stephen Behan and Michael Leech.

Leinster Intermediate Ladies & Gents

Action switched to Poulaphouca for the Intermediate Championship where in the Gents championship 11 team competed but it was joy for Louth for the second time over the weekend as they claimed the Intermediate title to go with the win by the Junior team. Louth made up of Barry Dyas, Kieran McDonnell, Sean Clerkin, Paul Cooney, Gerry Breen Snr and Ged Thornton ran out winner by 9 shots on a final tally of 26 under par from in second place Dublin with the host county Kildare picking up the bronze on



15 under. An outstanding 12 under in the scotch foursomes by Louth's Paul Cooney and Gerry Breen Snr was one of the highlights of the championship and a key score for Louths success. Like their Junior counterparts very solid team scoring the singles ensured Louth built on their advantage from the scotch and secure a convincing victory. It was gold for the Ladies from



the Royal County as Meath clinched the Ladies Intermediate title ahead of Kildare in second with Dublin taking third spot. The team of Paula Lynch, Sophie Farnan, Margaret Connelly and Margaret Reilly combined excellently over the tricky Poulaphouca course in both the doubles and singles format to win their third Intermediate title in recent years. A strong performance buoyed on by home support would see the Kildare ladies take the silver.

Leinster Senior Ladies & Gents

It was Dublin who came out on top in the Senior Ladies Championship ahead of their main rivals Kildare in this year's inter-county championship. Taking a four shot advantage into the singles after the scotch foursomes the team of Ger Ward, Glenda Hoey, Maree O'Toole and Tracey Smith would have very closely fought out battle with their playing partners Kildare in the single. Try as they might Kildare's Marian Courney, Margaret Keogh, Tara Dillon and Marion Gannon Kelly would be unable to overcome the four shot lead in the singles despite an outstanding eight under par from Tara Dillon and in the end would finish three shots behind Dublin to take the runners up spot. Dublin would finish with a team total of two over par with Kildare on five over while Meath would take third on 24 over par. The Dublin Senior would secure a fantastic double for the Dubs as later that afternoon they would claim a commanding 12 shot win in the Senior Gents Championship with a team total of 49 under, 12 ahead of runners up Louth with 37 under while Meath ended up in third with 35 under par. Two scores of 46 in the scotch foursomes from the pairings of Christopher Gallagher/George McGreal and Gary Healy/Stephen Murray plus an eight under in the singles from Christopher Gallagher

were some of the highlights from an excellent all round team performance. Trailing by three shots after the Scotch Foursomes Louth were unable to keep pace with the excellent single scoring to close the gap but a strong performance saw them take the silver on the day.



U16 Championship Reviews

By Declan Sheedy

It was an action packed few weeks on the U16 scenes with multiple National and Provincial championships taking place the length and breadth of the country. On a very positive note it was fantastic to see such a significant increase in numbers entering the U16 championships this year and credit must go to all the players, clubs, county boards and parents for making this happening. Of course in all aspects of the game including the U16's more can be done and we hope to see even more entries from counties and clubs next year but a big congratulations needs to go to everyone involved in the success of 2023. We take a look below at a round up of all the National and Provincial championships played between end of July and end of August.

National U16 Matchplay Championships @ Lakeside

Lakeside in Templemore played host to the National U16 Matchplay championship played over two days at the end of July. A great entry meant that it would be a long and eventful day on Saturday as the boys and girls would play a round robin group format to start off with in order to determine who qualify to play in the National Matchplay Cup and Shields. Saturday's play saw excellent Pitch & Putt throughout the day and come Saturday evening the semi finals in all boys and girls championship were determined and they would return on Sunday to play the semi finals and finals.



In the Boys Championship it would be an all Munster semi final line up with three of the four representing clubs from Kerry. The first semi-final pitted Deerpark clubmates Nathan Cronin and Brian McCarthy together while in semi-final two Ajay Barrett (Listowel) took on Adian Spence Murphy (Claycastle). The first semi final proved to be an epic battle between two of the top U16 players in the country. Brian took a 1up advantage through 18 and with more top quality Pitch & Putt played over the final 18 it came down to the 36th green to separate

the two boys with Brian closing out the match and taking victory on a score of 1up. In the second semi-final, Adian would take a 2up lead through 18 holes but the extra experience of Ajay on championship weekends came to the fore over the course of the final 18 and with some exceptional pitch and putt recovered the deficit to win the match 4&3 and set up an all Kerry final. As we witnessed all weekend the standard of pitch and putt was excellent and the final between the two Kerry boys was no different. Very little would separate these two excellent players throughout the hole final. Ajay would take a 1up lead through 18 and as the advantage continued to swing back and forth in the final 18 it would be Brian who won a

number of pivotal holes the home stretch and would hold onto the lead towards the end to close out a 2&1 and be crowned the 2023 National U16 Matchplay Champion.

In the Boys Shield competition the semi finalists to tee it up Sunday morning were Billy Buckley (Collinstown) who would face Daniel Leahy (Listowel) with Ronan Bennett (Deerpark) taking on Eoghan Morrissey (Gowran). Little would separate the two players in the first semi final as Billy and Daniel would have a titanic battle between them. It would eventually come down to the last hole where Billy would take the victory and the match 1up and progress to the Shield final. There he would face Ronan Bennett who would have a comfortable 8&7 win the semi finalist against Eoghan Morrissey who had played some brilliant Pitch & Putt over the weekend to make it this far. The final would



prove to be a very close and highly competitive match. Ronan would clinich some key holes in the first round and lead 2up through 18. The second 18 would see both player trade holes in a match that could have swung either way but Ronan would hold onto his 2up lead and close out the match on the 35th hole with a 2&1 win to claim the 2023 Boys Shield competition.



Six girls entered the Championship on Saturday and come Sunday four remained to fight it out in the semi finals. Defending champion Sarah Cooney (Seapoint) would face Meghan Ahern (Collins) in the first semi-final with Gemma Cuffe (Kilbeggan) facing Molly O'Toole (Ryston) in the second semi. Both semi-finals would prove very close encounters with both matches going down the final hole to decide the winner. In the end it would be 1up victories for Meghan and Molly to set up a Collins v

Ryston final. In the final played over 36 holes would provide for some excellent Pitch & Putt by the two girls. It was Molly however who took the early advantage in the final led 3up after 18 holes. The girls would trade a number of holes in the Final 18 but Molly would not let the lead she had built up slip over the final round and despite every effort from Meghan, Molly would close out the match a 4&3 and become the 2023 National Girls Matchplay Champion.

National U16 Strokeplay & Intercounty Championships @ Seapoint



All road led to Termonfeckin and the fantastic Seapoint course for the National U16 Strokeplay and Intercounty championships. With almost 100 players entered a two tee start was operated for the championship and the boys and girls did not let us down with outstanding scoring and Pitch & Putt on display. An outstanding nine under par from Jack McShane (Gowran) crowned him the 2023 National U16 Strokeplay champion. Having won the Leinster U16 Matchplay title earlier in the year this outstanding performance capped off an great year and we will no doubt hear and see gave him a five shot victory over the recent National 16 Matchplay Champion Brian McCarthy who returned another brilliant championship performance. Brian would clinch the runner-up spot on Back 9 from the 2023 Leinster U16 Strokeplay Champion, Peadar O'Toole (Athgaran) who would pick up the bronze medal, another players who one can expect to challenge very strong for future titles. In the 10-13 age section the Helen McMorrow cup went to Ryston's Harry Tiernan who shot a brilliant two under par to lift this cup, another future star in the making. There was a historic three in a row of wins from Sarah Conney (Seapoint) as she shot a brilliant five over par on her home course to lift the title for the third year running in claiming an eight shot victory over her nearest competitor Gemma Cuffee (Kilbeggan) who finished on 13 over and who took the runner-up spot on the Back 18 from Tipperary Hill's Sarah Ryan. With four national titles to her name (three Girls strokeplay and one Girls matchplay) Sarah Cooney is now the most successful Girls Juvenile in National event ever with four titles.



The National U16 Intercounty championship was played off the back off the strokeplay championships. Players who were on their county teams would take the best 18 holes from the singles and bring it into the intercounty team score before they then played 18 hole scotch foursomes after which the 18 hole singles and 18 hole scotch foursomes score would be added to determined the winning county.

Kerry (by virtue of their 'Gold' team made up of Brian McCarthy, Ajay Barrett, Ronan Bennett and Nathan Cronin) would retain the title for Kerry with a team total of 308, 16 under total by a single shot from Kilkenny. A brilliant 10 under team total in the scotch would prove the difference as they trailed Kilkenny by two shots after the singles. This would move Kerry on to eight Tommy Murphy Cup wins, further consolidating the Kingdom's third place on the all-time Roll of Honour. Kerry's score of 308 is the lowest winning aggregate in the history of the National Juvenile Inter-County championship. Their victory in Seapoint meant Kerry completed a Juvenile Inter-County four in-a-row, equalling the Cork 1996-1999 sides.



Kilkenny finished second in the National Juvenile Inter-County championship for the first time with an brilliant display from their team of Jack McShane, Harry Concannon, Michael Holland and Tomas Carroll and will certainly be a major contender in the coming years again. Dublin finished third (by virtue of their Blue team) in the National Juvenile Inter-County championship for the fourth time (since third place was officially introduced in 1992) finishing the 2023 Championship on level par.

Provincial U16 Strokeplay & Intercounty Championships

Munster @ Larkspur Park and Leinster @ Poulaphouca

The same format played in the National U16 and Intercounty championships was ran for the Munster and Leinster U16 Strokeplay and Intercounty championships. An excellent standard of pitch and putt was on display at both Larkspur Park and Pouaphouca where all players represented their clubs and counties with pride. Below are the results and photos of the prizewinners from both championships in both the strokeplay and intercounty events.

Munster

Boys 14-15

Winner: Brian McCarthy (Deerpark) 100

Runner-Up: Nathan Cronin (Deerpark) 101

Third: Aidan Spence Murphy (Claycastle) 107



Boys 8-13

Winner: Ben Franklin (Hillview) 115

Runner-Up: Charlie Taylor (Tipperary Hills) 117

Third: Alex Downey (Hillview) 127



Girls

Winner: Sarah Ryan (Tipperary Hills) 122

Runner-Up: Megan Ahern (Collins) 133



Inter-County

Winner: Kerry 'Gold' 302

Runner-Up: Tipperary 'Gold' 316

Third: Kerry 'Green' 333



Leinster

Boys 14 - 16

1st Peadar O Toole, Athgarvan 104

2nd Tadhg Burns, Collinstown 108

3rd Billy Buckley, Collinstown 109 (B9)



Boys 10 - 13

1st Harry Tiernan, Ryston 106

2nd Jack McShane, Gowran 109

3rd Harry Concannon 120 (B18)



Girls

14 - 16

1st Molly O Toole, Ryston

2nd Gemma Cuffe, Kilbeggan

10 - 13

1st Brianna Vereker, Ashgrove



Intercounty

1st Kildare A

2nd Kilkeny

3rd Westmeath A



Interview with Amy Galvin (Tullamore)



The Pitch and Putt world was abuzz on Sunday 17th September following the sensational performance by Amy Galvin at the Westmeath Classic in honour of Jack and Rose M Cormack. The Tullamore lady fired rounds of 49 and 43 for an incredible 16 under par 92 at Kilbeggan to win the overall award, a shot clear of club-mate Patrick Murphy (47+46). John Manning spoke to her on the win.

National Girls' Strokeplay champion at St. Bridget's in 2012 and at Navan two years later, Amy was chuffed to win the Westmeath Classic.

"I'm absolutely delighted with it. It is definitely one of my proudest achievements in Pitch and Putt."

That amazing second round of 43 was blemish-free.

"(I had) eleven birdies. I got seven of them in the back nine. Normally at least one four likes to grace my card so I got lucky this time!" laughs an elated Amy.

"Honestly, I think it was just one of those rounds where everything goes right for you! I've never shot a score like that before but I'm really hoping I can do it again. The company is definitely what helped me the most." For her date with destiny, Amy was accompanied by two Westmeath stalwarts and a relative to whom she is very close. "I was joined by Shane Kinahan (Lough Owel), Kevin Flanagan (Collinstown) and my auntie Lynda Carton. We were all just relaxed and having some fun which made it that much more enjoyable."

We wondered what Amy's expectations were on Sunday morning and did she think she had done enough to win overall when she had finished?

"Starting out, I was really hoping just to not get drenched in the rain!" jokes the Sacred Heart (Tullamore) School alumna. "I never start out with any expectations. I just like to play and see how it goes." "I was really hoping it would be enough but there were some fantastic players heading out after me so I wasn't sure."

Five times a Leinster Juvenile Strokeplay champion, Amy enjoys a wonderful family tradition in Pitch & Putt. Her grandmother Annie and dad Anthony have obviously been a huge influence on her Pitch & Putt career.

"I love that so many people in my family play Pitch & Putt. My Dad has been teaching me the ropes since I was eight years old, and I'll still take any pointers he throws my way." "Any course I go to in Ireland, I'm always met with fond stories about my nanny Annie and Grandad Dinny (RIP), which is amazing to hear. I'm so glad I still get to play Pitch & Putt with my nanny, especially as we are celebrating her 80th birthday this week! She is a fantastic role model, as well as my aunts Lynda and Denise."

Amy and her Dad won the Gross at this year's Leinster Mixed Foursomes in Kilbeggan. She won her first Leinster Girls Strokeplay in Kilbeggan back in 2009 and won there again in 2013. So she must like "The Lawn" layout?

"Kilbeggan has always been a favourite course of mine. It's only a stone's throw away from my home club of Tullamore. I'd always go out and spend the day there with my cousins during our summer holidays from school."

Amy finished in the Top 6 of this year's National Strokeplay Championship and it's a title she has aspirations to win one day.

"Yes, I would definitely like to win a national championship at some point in the future."

Being one of eleven players to have won at least two National Girls Strokeplay titles, Amy warmly reminisces about her juvenile years.

"I remember the excitement of it all. All the parents and friends would be there to watch everyone play and there was always a great atmosphere to it. One person I remember fondly from my years competing as a juvenile is the late Eamonn Birchall. He would always greet us with a smile and a hug and was always very kind."

After excelling as a juvenile and winning a Leinster Inter-County Stableford medal with Offaly at Castletown in 2015, Amy took some time out of Pitch & Putt. A seismic international event close to home attracted her back to the sport.

"The Irish Open was held in Tullamore last year. The atmosphere that weekend was incredible. That was definitely the deciding factor for me. I came back the next day to join as a member again."

Not many of Amy's contemporaries from her U16 days still play. Does she think our sport could do more to attract more young ladies?

"It is a huge shame that there are so few women playing Pitch and Putt. Maybe if there was more of a link between schools and Pitch & Putt Ireland, girls could start at a young age and grow with the sport as they get older," she feels.

Amy is acknowledged as having a very even temperament, reacting very much the same to both bogeys and birdies. How does she achieve this?

"This game is all about having fun for me. I find that the more I enjoy a game the better I play."

Another lady to have won Overall at a comparable event is Breda White. That was in the 1990 Parteen Scratch Cup. Breda is a player that Amy has admired from something of a distance.

"I do know Breda and have seen her in action this year," says Amy. "I haven't had the pleasure of ever playing with her but hopefully I will get to do so soon."

In addition to her 2015 adult success, Amy helped Offaly to second place in the 2013 Leinster Juvenile provincial Inter-County championship at Kilbeggan (again!) in 2015. The Faithful County have been absent from the National Ladies Inter-County arena in recent seasons but Amy is upbeat.

"We do not have a lot of senior players here in Offaly, but thankfully this year our Intermediate and Junior players stepped up to allow us to put forward both an inter and a senior team for the Leinster Inter-county. We were unable to put forward a team for the All-Ireland, but hopefully we will have one in next year. The Offaly women are a fantastic bunch of ladies!"

Previous championships held in McDonagh, Co. Kildare



McDonagh has previously hosted six national events and one International Championship. John Manning tells us more about these events in this piece in advance of McDonagh playing host to the Interprovincial Challenge between Munster & Leinster on November

1970

It all began for the excellent club Curragh on September 6th 1970. Limerick left-hander Nancy Tuohy (Catholic Institute) won the National Ladies Strokeplay championship when she scored eight under par 154 for the 54 holes event, which was played in atrociously wet and windy conditions. Runner-up was the holder, Clare Keating (Woodvale) on 159. After the 1st 18 holes, Nancy led by four shots with a three under par 51. Having repeated that score for the second round, she led the field by eight shots. Clare summoned-up a tremendous final round display in an effort to retain her title, scoring a fine 49. Nancy continued her consistent performance with an excellent 52, to secure a first, and ultimately only National Strokeplay victory for the two-time Matchplay victor.

In the Intermediate championship, Joan Kavanagh (Mellows) captured the trophy with a score of 183. Second was Nan McMahon (Royal Meath) on 187. Cork players dominated the Junior Championship. Mary Madden, a comparative newcomer from the Douglas club, returned 192 to clinch the title. Runner up was Angela Roche, (Rocklodge) who carded 196.

1997

William Baird of sponsors Penfold Commando was very impressed when he attended the National Matchplay finals at McDonagh on June 2nd 1997. Margaret Hogan (Tullamore) won her third title with a 6&4 final victory over Jean Cooney (Bissell). In the 'local derby' Gents final; Jason Hannon (St. Bridget's) was a 2 and 1 winner over Eddie Carey (Athgarvan). Beaten semi-finalists were Frank Ryan (Athgarvan), Ian Donnelly (Cement), Ger Ward (Portmarnock) and Teresa Broderick (Tralee).

2000

Saturday September 2nd, 2000 was a sunny day and the sun certainly shone on the Kerry Pitch & Putt teams in the Paintworld Inter-County Championship B Divisions. In the morning, the Kerry Ladies (Teresa Broderick, Julianne Broderick, Eileen McCarthy, Margaret Looney and Eileen Moynihan) carded a team total of 436 and that was good enough for an eight shot win

over favourites Down (Marina O'Rourke, Bernie Somers, Kathleen McDermott, Isobel McMahon and Antoinette McKay). In a dramatic finish to the Mens Division B Championship, the Kerry Gents quintet (Derry McCarthy, Shane McCarthy, Monty Galvin, Tony Broderick and Jason O'Regan) completed the Kingdom double when they overcame Meath (Colin Somers, Ian Farrelly, Sean Downes, Patsy Reilly and Wally Sheridan) by a single shot.

Next day, it proved to be a stroll in the sun at McDonagh for the Kildare ladies team who ran out winners of the Paintworld Ltd. A Championships for the third time in four years. Bernadette Coffey, Tara Dillon, Christine Byrne, Marian Byrne and Rose Kelly combined for 399, a magnificent 33 under par (a then all-time championship record). They finished 20 strokes clear of Dublin (Geraldine Ward, Sheelagh Elmes, Peggy Campbell, Margaret Thomson and Stella Sheridan). Cork (Claire Murphy, Linda Murphy, Siobhan Scannell, Joan Higgins and Vera McCarthy) grabbed third place on 431. Kildare Gents (Frank Ryan, Joe Ronan, Eddie Carey, Tom McCormack and Ian Dillon) scored 370 and secured the double with an exciting one shot victory over Cork and Westmeath. Cork (Ray Murphy, John Walsh, Frank O'Donoghue, Chris Scannell and John Cahill) pipped Westmeath (Alan Hanlon, Niall Cuffe, Paul Bray, Danny O'Hanlon and John Feery) 101 for silver on the fifth card.

2003

Ireland (Liam O'Donovan, Darren O'Reilly, John Walsh, Chris Scannell, Derek Courtney and Sean Harkins beat Catalonia Jordi Saborit, Gines Fernandez, Josep Pellicer, Ramon Carrera, Paco Salido and James Marshall) 5½ matches to 3½ in the European Team championship final at McDonagh on September 14 th .

2018

At McDonagh in July 2018, Mary Murray Rocklodge captured the National Ladies O55 Senior Grade Strokeplay Championship, scoring 107 at McDonagh to finish two clear of Shandon's Maree O'Toole. Mairead O'Toole clinched the National Ladies O55 Intermediate Grade Strokeplay championship in a play-off with Rose Kelly (Ryston) after a tie on 110. Anne Sweeney's (St. Bridgets) tally of 122 in the junior championship was a single stroke better than club-mate Dina Dillon's 123. Frank Ryan (Athgarvan) became the 2018 National Gent's O55 Senor Grade Strokeplay Champion when his 94 at McDonagh was two better than Joe Ronan (McDonagh). Riverdale's Sean Minogue's 96 was a single shot better than Tullamore's John Fleming, in the Intermediate Championship. Christy Sweeney (St Bridgets) scored 103 to win the National Gents O55 Junior Grade Strokeplay Championship. Martin Verbeek (Lough Owel) was second on 105.

2019

Two national events were held by the club during this particular year. St. Munchin's College (Shea Fennell, Patrick Mitchell and Paddy Lawler) scored 316 at McDonagh in May to become the first Limerick school to win the National Schools Competition. In so doing, they dethroned

reigning Munster and National Champions St. Francis College, Rochestown (Eoin Keating, Liam McGrath and Colm O'Sullivan) by a six stroke margin. Then in September, in an unbelievably tight finish to the National Ladies Inter-County Championship. Tipperary scored 590 to narrowly prevail from Dublin (Helen Greagsbey, Phil Condrón, Pauline Balfe, Glenda Hoey, Geraldine Ward and Sheelagh Elmes) who also tallied 590. Tipperary were represented by Breda White (captain), Martha O'Brien, Shula McCarthy, Mary QuinnMichelle McCarthy and Gemma McCarthy (whose 57 was the tiebreaking sixth card). Kildare (Margaret Keogh, Chrissie Byrne, Elizabeth Smyth, Marian Courtney, Mary Donnelly and Tara Dillon) were third, seven strokes back. Nett winners were Cork (Mary Murray, Valerie Leahy, Sarah McGrath, Ailish Sexton, Mairead Manning and Sarah O'Neill). Junior Smith, John Ross Crangle, Jason Larkin, George McGreal (captain), Paul Nolan and Chris Gallagher combined impressively for a total of 739 at McDonagh to wrap-up an 18th Gents Inter-County victory for Dublin. Louth (Ian Donnelly, Peter Reilly, George Beardsley, Sean Goggin, Barry Thornton and Padraic Sarsfield) signed for 749 to be runners-up. Limerick (Martin Keohane, Patsy Farrell, Thomas Hanley, Kieran Earls, James Ryan and Liam O'Donovan) scored 758 in third spot. Kilkenny claimed the new (at the time) Team Nett award (Eamon Birchall Cup) as Nicholas Brennan, Michael Kehoe, Kevin Knox and Patrick Robinson. Derek Delaney and JamesCasey formed the triumphant Black and Amber line-up.Wexford's second nett award was secured by Dayle Donohue, Richard Grannell, Dean Grannell, Martin O'Neill, Paul Tobin and Jim Foley.

Look back at the last time the National Inter Club finals were played @ St. Bridgets

The National Inter-Club finals were previously played at St. Bridget's on October 15th 2016. In the era of the separate Senior and Inter/Junior tournaments, Dave Sexton and Brian Mason led their respective clubs to victory. John Manning tells us more about events seven years ago.

Fermoy beat St Anne's by 6-3 in the senior decider while Parteen were crowned 2016 Inter/Junior champs after a 6½ to 2½ final victory over Deerpark. Fermoy led St Annes 2½ to ½ after the Scotch Foursomes showdowns in the Senior Final. John Cahill & Dave Sexton delivered by 1up while Declan Freeman & Daniel Keohane won by 3&2 as Bryan Delaney & Conor Clancy halved with Frank Dineen & Liam Myers. Overall Fermoy victory and the first of the four-in-a-row was secured via wins for Daniel Keohane (who beat John O'Sullivan 3&2), Bryan Delaney by 3&2 over Frank Dineen and Declan Freeman (a 2&1 winner over Liam Myers) and a half for John Cahill. Conor Clancy lost to Ray Murphy by 5&4 while Dave Sexton went down to Kieran Dunscombe by 2&1.

Parteen's wins for Brian Mason (over Aidan O'Keeffe by 3&2), Pat Ryan (1up), and Alan Bennis (who beat Kieran Fitzpatrick by 2&1) were enough for Parteen to secure their win with Jason O'Sullivan (6&5) and Johnny O'Brien (2&1) Deerarks only point scorers in the Singles. Conor Fahy had claimed Parteen's first point in the Singles with a 2&1 victory over James Fleming in the top match. A 2up victory for Parteen in the final Scotch Foursomes match with Deerpark put them 2½ to ½up on the Killarney club ahead of the Singles. Parteen duo Conor Fahy & Brian Mason defeated Deerarks Jason O'Sullivan & Noel Moynihan 3&2 in the first Scotch Foursomes while the Che Maher & Pat Ryan v Deerarks James Fleming & Aidan O'Keeffe encounter finished all square.

An all Cork Senior Final was in prospect after St Annes recorded an 8-1 victory over Deerpark in the second semi-final. Fermoy had reached the decider after a convincing 7-2 win over Bruff in the first semi-final. Bryan Delaney (4&3), Daniel Keohane, Declan Freeman and Conor Clancy (all by 3&2) along with John Cahill (1up) were their winners in the singles as Tommy Hanley (1up) secured Bruffs sole individual point. It was 2-1 to Fermoy after the Scotch Foursomes as Declan Freeman & Daniel Keohane beat Bruffs Patsy Farrell & Martin Keohane 1up while Brian Delaney & Conor Clancy lost to Bruffs Brian Webster & Thomas Hanley by 1 hole. Dave Sexton & John Cahill beat Pacelli Darcy & Liam O'Donovan 2&1.

St. Anne's were in a strong position after their semi-final Scotch Foursomes as Frank Dineen & Liam Myers beat Sean Kelly & St John Kelliher by 4&2, Kieran Dunscombe & John O'Sullivan outscored Damien Fleming & Michael Foley by 1up while Ray Murphy & Darren Collins were 4&3 victors over John McGrath & Derry McCarthy. Singles wins for Darren Collins (5&4), John O'Sullivan (4&3), Frank Dineen and Kieran Dunscombe (both by 3&2) gave the Shanakiel men their commanding victory overall as Damien Fleming (4&3) produced Deerpark's solitary point in the game.

Parteen reached the Inter/Junior Final after a 6-3 last four victory over Cement. After success for Parteen's Conor Fahy over Cement's Gel Martin 5&4 in the first Singles encounter, wins for Che Maher (6&5), Brian Mason (4&3) and Alan Bennis (3&2) along with a half for Patrick Ryan sent Parteen through as Kieran McDonnell (4&3) supplied Cement's only win in the Singles. Parteen duo Conor Fahy & Brian Mason had beaten Kieran McDonnell & Colin Campbell of Cement 3&2 in first Scotch Foursomes. Ger Keogh & Patrick Ryan lost to Gel Martin & John Brannigan by 2&1 to level the match. The third Scotch Foursomes match finished level meaning the match was tied at 1½ apiece ahead of the Singles. Deerpark qualified to face Parteen in the Final after 4&3 singles wins for both Kieran Fitzpatrick and John O'Brien and a 2up success for Jason O'Sullivan gave them a 7-2 overall victory over Tipperary Hills. Wins for Aidan O'Keeffe (1up) and Brian Moloney (5&3) along with a half for James Fleming with Mike Brennan had put the Killarney side 4-2 ahead with three Singles matches left. Tipp Hills Paul Malone & Robert Swords defeated Deerpark's Jason O'Sullivan & Brian Moloney by 5&4 in the Scotch Foursomes while Deerpark's James Fleming & Aidan O'Keeffe outlasted Mike Brennan & Ray Lyons of Tipp Hills by 3&1. Mirroring the Parteen/Cement semi-final, the third Scotch Foursomes between Tipp Hills & Deerpark finished tied leaving the side's deadlocked with 1½ each at halfway.

Ireland v Catalonia International Challenge

Ireland will Catalonia at the Montseny course in Catalonia on Friday 20th October. Last played in 2018 in Seapoint, Ireland were victorious against the Catalans. As per 2018, Irelands team consists of six ladies and six U16 players. The match will be matchplay format and the teams will play 18 holes scotch fourballs, 18 fourballs and 18 singles. As the time of writing the Irish team have just arrived in Catalonia and we wish them all the very best. We will have a full report of the challenge in our next edition.

The Irish team to face Catalonia is:



Chrissie Sheedy (Ryston)

Geraldine Ward (Portmarnock)

Mary Murray (Rocklodge)

Liz Quinn (Collinstown)

Breda White (Tipperary Hills)

Paula Lynch (Oldcastle)

Brian McCarthy (Deerpark)

Nathan Cronin (Deerpark)

Ajay Barret (Listowel)

Joe Franklin (Hillview)

Peadar O'Toole (Athgarvan)

Jake McShane (Gowran)

Upcoming Championships & Events

International Challenge Ireland v Catalonia

Montseny, Catalonia

20th October

National Interclub Finals

St. Bridgets

28th October

Interprovincial Challenge Match

McDonagh

4th November

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Backspin Production Team: Declan Sheedy with contributions from John Manning & Dwyne Hill