

BACKSPIN

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

April, 2017



PPUI

Issue Highlights:

- 2016 Provincial Reviews
- Schools Report
- Fixture Plan Report
- 2017 International Preview
- Plus Much More...

A Chara,

You are welcome to this first edition of Backspin for 2017. While the year has already begun for us with the staging of the Provincial Schools Competitions, it really will be clicking into gear soon with Qualifiers on the horizon for some of our

big events.

In this edition we start with a look back to the year at Provincial level in 2016 and also have a look at the recent Provincial Schools Competitions themselves. John Manning also has a look ahead to the year at International level along with an explanation of the changes to the fixture calendar for the coming year. We also have(continued on last page)



2016 PPUI Hall of Fame Inductee, Jim Byrne (Old County P&P Club) receives his framed declaration from PPUI Honorary President, Mervyn Cooney.

2017 International Preview

By John Manning

2004 champion William Buckley (Erry) and Bruff's Liam O'Donovan (the victor two years ago) will head a 23 strong Irish challenge for the 2017 Catalan Open, to be held at the Sant Cebria course on April 22nd/23rd. William Buckley was part of the Irish team that defeated Catalonia in an international challenge at Sant Cebria in 2002. Pacelli Darcy will seek a three-timer in the Over 55s category at Sant Cebria.

Across the Atlantic, on April 29th/30th Argentina will face Chile in an international match in Buenos Aires – the first time the teams will have played each other in Argentina. Chile won the previous (2007) match in Santiago. The FChPP (Chilean Pitch and Putt Federation) are hoping that this gathering will be another step on the way to forming a South American Pitch and Putt Association. Interest is growing in Argentina as well as in Ecuador and Brazil. May 12th/14th will see a new tournament on the Calendar – the Iberian Team Open Cup, to be contested at the Urduna course in the Basque Country. Urduna is a new layout, opened just last November and situated about 40 kilometres south of Bilbao. During May, the weather in the region is very pleasant, with an average temperature between 16 and 22 degrees.

There is sure to be huge interest in the First World Pairs championship to be held in Tambre, Galicia from June 9/11. The format is interesting with Foursomes, Scotch Foursomes, Fourball and Singles play planned. Tambre hosted the II World Strokeplay championship in 2013, won by John Walsh (Ireland). And John Walsh will

put that title on the line at Imjelt, Drammen, Norway from July 6th/9th in the third World Strokeplay Championship. Chrissie Byrne will defend the Ladies' Championship and other Irish exempt players at present are: John Ross Crangle Eamon Gibney, Liam O'Donovan, John Cahill, Pacelli Darcy, Frank Dineen, Damien Fleming, Breda Lonergan and Mary Murray. Players from sixteen associations are expected to participate.

El Pilar-Sarria is the venue for the Quadrangular International this year, from July 28/30. The competing teams will be Galicia (hosts), France, Catalonia (who won in France last year) and Basque Country. A welcome new open tournament will be played from September 15/17 when the Slovenia Open takes place at Brdo. Situated in the Alpine region, Brdo is one of the most beautiful Slovenian resorts, very near to the main international airport and to the capital Ljubljana. On October 12th/15th Bruff's Thomas Hanley and Kieran Earls (Parteen) will seek to retain the Catalan International Pairs event, to be held this year at the inland course of Lleida (home club of the EPPA/FIPPA President Victor Moscatel).

For those who fancy a bit of long distance travel, Waverley (Melbourne) will host the 2017 Australian Open, from October 28th/29th. Tom Rickit and Helen Angel will defend their titles on a course where James Rogerson won the recent Victoria Masters and where Marc Fischer clinched the 2014 Open (on the last occasion the Australian blue riband was played there).

2016 Review—Munster

By Jason O'Connor

The year in Munster got underway in earnest on the weekend of May 16th when the Munster Matchplay Championships were held in Lakeside, Templemore. Nearly a year since they contested the 2015 National Matchplay Final at the same venue, John Walsh and Bryan Delaney did battle again for the Senior title. Battle was the operative word as it went to the fourth playoff hole before Walsh eventually came out on top. The same two players would also be deadlocked after the regulation 54 holes in the Senior Strokeplay in St Annes a month later. Walsh would emerge victorious again to retain the Strokeplay title and do the provincial double at senior level.

Returning to the Matchplay and the Intermediate Competition was won by Rocklodge's Craig Cahill after he had a 3&2 victory over Parteen's Alan Bennis in the Final. Another Parteen player Conor Fahy won the Junior competition beating Anthony Maher from the host club in the decider 4&3. Shane Murphy (Raffeen Creek) finished third to Walsh and Delaney in the Strokeplay in St Annes while the Intermediate title went to Ryan Towler of the host club leading home a Cork 1-2-3 in the grade with David

O'Leary (Ballinlough) and Peter O'Donovan (St Stephens) second and third respectively. Stephen O'Donovan of Cunnigar, Dungarvan won the Junior title ahead of Parteen's Fahy and Charleville's Jamie Moloney in second and third.

The Ladies Strokeplay in Hillview saw Eleanor Walsh of Fermoy defeat Breda Lonergan of Tipperary Hills by three shots to win the Senior title while the Intermediate title had to go to a playoff with Rocklodge's Mary Murray eventually getting the better of Hillview's Kathleen Shanley in the decider. The Junior title was won by Bruff's Margaret O'Donovan, one stroke ahead of Mairead Manning of St Stephens in second. In the Inter-County events in Tramore in August, the Cork Senior Gents team won a sixth consecutive title in winning once more in their grade with hosts Waterford an impressive second ahead of Tipperary in third. The Cork Intermediate Gents team were victorious in their grade 12 shots ahead of Kerry while the Rebel Junior team completed a clean sweep of the Gents titles meanwhile with a four stroke victory over Tipperary.

The Ladies events saw Cork win the Ladies Senior and Junior events with Waterford denying them a clean sweep in the Intermediate event. Incidentally that was the only provincial inter-county event Cork didn't win this year as their U-16 was also victorious over Kerry the same weekend in Tramore. The U-16 events saw the Matchplay event held in Deerpark in July with the Strokeplay in Tramore in August. Glenn Towler (St Annes) and Cillian Courtney (Deerpark) contested the decider after beating Iain Aherne (Ballinlough) and Lorcan Martin (Deerpark) respectively in the Semi-Finals. Glenn won 4&3 in the Final, the first part of a provincial and national Matchplay double. In the Strokeplay Iain Aherne was the winner of the 14-15 section ahead of Conor Bowdren (St Annes)

and Eoin Keating (Douglas) in third. In the U-13 Section Glenn Towler won from Cian Murphy (St Annes) in second and Cillian Courtney in third.

The final Munster event of the year was the Mixed Foursomes in Tralee on the last weekend in August. Lakeside's Elaine Quinn and Michael Fennell were the winners of the tricky format with a score of 10up, three ahead of former winners from the host club Lisa O'Connor and Tony Blake on 7up. Paula Nolan and Hugh Cooney of Ballinlough won the Gross prize with 4up while the session prizes went to Mary Murray and Garrett O'Mahony (First 18) and Margaret and Dean Courtney of Riverdale, Nenagh (Second 18) both with scores of 6up.



PPUI Honorary President Mervyn Cooney and GCSAI President Tom Carew at the recent announcement of their Educational Partnership.

Provincial Schools Report

By Jason O'Connor

FRIDAY March 31st saw our first events of 2017 take place in the form of the Provincial Schools Finals in Rochfortbridge (Leinster) and Bruff (Munster) respectively. 47 teams took part in the two events and Jason O'Connor reports on how it all panned out in both venues.

Leinster

It was victory for Ardscoil Chiaran Naofa Clara 1 in Rochfortbridge as they had seven shots to spare over their nearest challengers. A round of five under par from Ciaran Doyle was crucial to the Offaly School's success as he combined with Mark Newman and Conor Egan for a total of 328 in victory. Borris Vocational School's Nicholas Brennan also had five under par in giving the Carlow School second by a single stroke as Conor Cleere and

Paul O'Neill were other members of the trio that finished on 335.

Third were another Offaly School in Killina Presentation School with a four under par round from Shane Kearney a key feature of their bronze medal finish on 336 as they finished seven clear of Mercy Secondary School from Westmeath. Three under from Dylan Carton helped the latter to fourth place ahead of Gallen Community School 1 from Ferbane who finished fifth.

Other Schools to Qualify for National Finals: 6th Colaiste na Inse 345, 7th-Ardscoil Chiaran Naofa 2, 347, 8th-Ardscoil Pdraig 1 354, 9th- Athlone Community College 360



2017 Leinster Secondary Schools Competition @ Rochfortbridge: Winners from Ardscoil Chiaran Naofa, Clara were Mark Newman, Conor Egan and Ciaran Doyle.



PPUI Munster Coordinator Mark Keohane presents Edwards Walsh, Greg Barrett & Roy Whelan with trophy for Munster Secondary Schools Competition held @ Bruff

Munster

Reigning National Champions Davis College of Mallow added another provincial title to their honours as they had a three-stroke victory over Ardscoil Rís of Limerick in Bruff. The team of Edward Walsh, Greg Barrett and Roy Whelan shot 322 in changeable conditions in Mallow with a score of eight under par from Walsh and three under from Barrett crucial to their success. Six under from Emmet Fitzgerald and one under par by Conor Meade were key features in Ardscoil Rís' score of 325 with Calum Spicer making up the three-man team.

Third place was decided on count back as Colaiste An Chraoibhín Fermoy 1 (Conor McCarthy, Seamus Óg Shealy and Dale Dawson) and Carrigaline Community School 1's Ian O'Donoghue, David How-

ard and Ruairi Mehigan's team finished level on 327. Best score of the day went to Douglas Community School's Cian Morrison with 11 under par for his 36 as his school finished fifth overall on 333.

One very encouraging sight at the event was the entry of an all-girls team from Colaiste Iosaef Kilmallock of Limerick comprising Aisling Lynch, Lily and Rachel O'Brien.

Other Scores to Qualify for National Finals: 6th- Colaiste An Chraoibhín Fermoy 2 345, 7th- St Brendans College Killarney 3 345, 8th- St Brendans College Killarney 2 347, 9th- Carrigaline Community School 353 (CB)

2016 Review—Leinster

By John Manning

The 2016 Leinster Matchplay Championships opened the season in glorious sunshine on May 14th/15th at Ring Commons (Gents) and Bellewstown (Ladies). All the finals took place in Bellewstown.

The Gents Senior Final was an all Cement affair in which Ian Donnelly beat George Beardsley 5&4. Jamie Hogan (Tullamore) defeated Anthony Gibney (Navan) by 11&10 in the Intermediate decider. Junior champion was Glenn Fortune (St. Patrick's) who overcame Glen Martin (Cement) 5&4. Chrissie Byrne (St. Bridget's) won her sixth Leinster Matchplay championship crown when she beat Tracey Redmond 3&2 in the Ladies Senior Final. Siobhan McDonnell (Lucan) clinched the Intermediate title with a 2&1 final victory against Carol O'Brien (Gaeil Colmcille). Ratoath's Bronagh Darby was a 5&4 ladies' junior final winner over Frances Farrell (Cement).

Next up were the Leinster Gent's Strokeplay Championships at Collinstown on 26th June. A superb closing 46 saw Keith Redmond (Lucan) force a play-off for the gents' senior championship. Keith tied on 143 with John Ross Crangle (Loughlinstown). Keith scored 24 to JR's 25 in the play-off. Third was Jim Judge (Erin's Isle) with 145. Michael Aherne (Lucan) was intermediate champion on 97 with Patrick Murphy (Tullamore) second and Kevin Doyle (St. Patrick's) third. 100 secured junior laurels for Martin Russell (St. Bridget's), ahead of Granard's Anthony Burke and Ross O'Reilly of

Old County (who was third on the back eighteen from Damien Middleton (Collinstown)).

On that same summer Sunday, Geraldine Ward (Portmarnock) became Leinster Ladies Strokeplay champion yet again. At Rochfortbridge, Ger scored 100 to head Margaret Hogan (Tullamore) by two. Chrissie Byrne secured third on the tiebreaker from Ger Holland (RGSC). Sandra Keogh (Lucan) was a comprehensive eight stroke intermediate victor on 107. Mary Sherry (St. Bridget's) placed second, ahead of Lucan's Evelyn O'Gorman.

Ferbane took junior first and second. Mary McKenna returned 120 to Ann Minogue's 123. Third on 127 was Catherine Fox (Glenville).

A team tally of 505 saw Offaly capture the Leinster Juvenile Inter-County Championship, at The Acres on August 6th, a Faithful County success for the first time since 2009. Host county Longford were runners-up with Westmeath third. There was high drama on the Saturday at The Acres as two Tullamore brothers played off for the Leinster Boys 10-13 Strokeplay Championships. Daniel Fox carded 110 over 36 to tie with his brother Michael. After another deadlock on 29 in the nine hole play-off the pair played six additional holes before Daniel eventually clinched the title with an ace! Third was Pdraig Carton (Kilbeggan) on 112.



2016 PPUI Hall of Fame Inductee, Jim Byrne pictured alongside PPUI Honorary President Mervyn Cooney and Old County Pitch and Putt Club members past & present.

There were host club triumphs in the Boys 14-15 and Girls 10-13 categories - Daniel Reynolds (103) and Katelyn Farrell (173). Daniel outlasted Seanie Bellew (Gaeil Colmcille) by a shot while Evan Carry's (Castletown) 107 took third. Katelyn finished ahead of club mate Tara Spollen and Sarah Mahon (Lucan). Aoife Mahon (Lucan) emerged as Girls 14-15 Champion. Evan Carry (Castletown) retained his Leinster Juvenile Matchplay Championship trophy. Evan beat Conor Cleere (Gowran) in the Navan final by 5&4.

An exciting finish to the Leinster Gents Inter-County Championships, at St. Bridget's on August 14th, saw Louth beat Wexford by a single stroke, 417 to 418. Westmeath were third, another dozen shots back. Kildare dominated the ladies' championship on 481. Dublin took second on 500. 456 won the Leinster Junior Inter-County Championship for Wexford at St. Bridget's. Wexford's winning mar-

gin was eleven strokes over neighbours Carlow. Third went to Kildare on 485. In the Ladies Junior Stableford event, Kildare won out on 160, ahead of Louth on 154. Kildare won the Leinster Intermediate Inter-County Championship with 445 at McDonagh, Wexford (461) and Meath (468) were second and third respectively. Dublin won a play-off with Kildare for the Ladies (Stableford) intermediate event after a tie on 178.

Ann O'Shea and Kevin Bermingham (Old County) won the Leinster Mixed Foursomes at Lucan on August 28th. Their +11 return saw them finish a single shot ahead of Audrey Donnelly and Padraic Sarsfield (McBride) who took second on the back 18 tiebreaker. Best Gross went to Chrissie Byrne (St. Bridget's) and Darren Keogh (Ryston) on +9. Lucan dominated the session categories - Tracey Smith & Anthony Malone (1st 18) along with Phil Condrón & Pdraig Croke (2nd 18).

PPUI Announce Greenkeeping Educational Partners

By Paul Hayes

The Pitch and Putt Union of Ireland (PPUI) recently announced they have started an educational partnership with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland (GCSAI). The GCSAI is the Professional Association for the men and women who manage and maintain the courses and grounds of Irish sporting facilities.

Speaking at the launch of the partnership, PPUI Honorary President Mervyn Cooney said “the PPUI are committed to providing excellent support to our affiliated clubs and this partnership will offer a great opportunity for upskilling our green keepers and all who maintain Pitch & Putt courses to an exceptionally high standard”.

The GCSAI, through General Manager Damian McLaverty have developed solutions to help PPUI members expand and enhance their knowledge in Course Management, Professional Sportsturf Management Practises and Equipment Maintenance and Management. Working closely with PPUI Technical Officer, Ger O’Connor, the GCSAI will look to develop a long-term strategy for supporting Pitch and Putt greenkeepers.

GCSAI President, Tom Carew, at the launch stated his organisations commit-

ment to support the PPUI in achieving its goals of broadening educational opportunities for its members and expressed his pleasure in signing the agreement with the PPUI, his last act as President before stepping down at their upcoming AGM.

The partnership will begin in earnest this May when the GCSAI and their educational partners will deliver a one day course on Saturday 27th at Lakeside Pitch & Putt Club, Templemore, Co. Tipperary. The seminar will cover important aspects of course management and maintenance including weed identification, greens nutrition, machinery maintenance, fertiliser application, machinery demonstration and much more. As part of the educational partnership announced, the PPUI encourage all Pitch & Putt clubs to register their greenkeepers with the GCSAI. This event and all future events will only be available to those who are registered with the GCSAI.

The GCSAI have provided a full agenda for the day led by GCSAI General Manager, Damian McLaverty and developed in conjunction with PPUI Technical Officer, Ger O’Connor. This is a wonderful opportunity for all those who are involved in the maintenance and upkeep of Pitch & Putt courses to have the support of this

professional association. The benefits of registration extend beyond this initial training day and include the following:

- Access to the GCSAI Continuing Professional Development (CPD) System
- Access to online Course Management Resources
- Access to Online Education Webinars
- Award winning Greenside magazine, the only Irish Professional Sportsturf publication on the market
- Dedicated HR helpline which is free to members
- Yearly International Education trip

- Invitation to regional social and golf outings
- Regular updates from GCSAI including job vacancies
- Invitation to all seminars and workshops hosted by GCSAI – at a nominal charge

Should any clubs or individuals who look after the maintenance of courses want to find out more about this great opportunity, all details can be found on the PPUI website www.ppui.ie or alternatively, feel free to contact Development Manager, Paul Hayes on 086-1738722 or by e-mail to paulh@ppui.ie.



Pictured at the launch of PPUI's educational partnership with GCSAI were (l-r) GCSAI Gen. Manager Damian McLaverty, GCSAI President Tom Carew, PPUI President Mervyn Cooney, PPUI Development Manager Paul Hayes & PPUI General Secretary Michael Murphy.

PPUI Fixture Plan / Calendar

By John Manning

As you all might be aware there are some changes to the fixture programme for 2017. Secretary of the National Competitions Sub-Committee John Manning outlines the thinking of the Sub-Committee in making the recent changes.

Late last year, National Competitions Coordinator Myles McMorrow chaired a Sub-Committee to examine the National Fixtures Calendar. Myles was joined by Michael Murphy, Mark Keohane, Sean Minogue, Anthony Malone, John Carton and John Manning.

The Sub-Committee met twice in the Abbeyleix Manor Hotel and also consulted by phone and e-mail. A number of key suggestions were agreed and made to the NEC.

The Sub-Committee produced a major fixtures revamp with the following structured approach.

National



Provincial



County



Club.

An aspiration was to create more room in a compressed competition schedule and to reduce the pressure on closing dates and on administrators.



2016 No. 1 Players John Walsh (Collins) & Ger Ward (Portmarnock) pictured with PPUI President Mervyn Cooney at the PPUI AGM in the Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh.

To address concerns that the season begins to dip after the Inter-County teams are selected, the Provincial Matchplays have been moved to the end of the season. The National Mixed Foursomes will switch to earlier in the year. Cutting the latter loose from their provincial counterparts may generate more entries. A two week window between the Ladies and Gents Strokeplay championships will have administrative and publicity benefits.

In the 21st century, everybody, everywhere seems to be busy. Traffic congestion is the bane of every motorist's life behind the wheel. Strokeplay qualifying rounds for the Provincial Matchplays will eat into that poverty of time. There will be a single designated weekend for all County Strokeplay championships and a single designated weekend for all County Matchplay championships. Commitment has been obtained from Cork and Dublin County Boards to hold their respective County Strokeplays and County Matchplays on the specific Fixtures Calendar weekends allocated for that purpose.

The PPUI is committed to the encouragement and support of the participation of ladies in Pitch and Putt at all levels. To promote this ideal, two Ladies social events will be held on 12th May 2017 –

one in Munster; one in Leinster. There was widespread agreement that venue and timing for these events were important. Courses chosen should offer a good accessible course with a strong ladies' membership and a local hotel facility, ideal for post tournament meal, drinks and music (and accommodation if players wished to stay over).

In conjunction with a Ladies Sub-Committee, the opportunity will likely be taken (given a large congregation of lady players) to gather a short questionnaire covering topics such:

What motivates ladies to play Pitch & Putt?

Why Ladies don't enter the National Championships?

What is going well in ladies Pitch & Putt?

What's not going so well

What more club be done by clubs?

What more could be done by NEC?

The output will be collated and used to inform ladies development strategies.

We want to maximise the return from the time, effort and creativity put into planning juvenile and youth programmes. To attempt to reduce the number of younger players dropping out, an under 20s Strokeplay championship will be introduced (to be held on the same weekend as the Under 16s Strokeplay).

There is no denying the potential of the All Ireland Inter-Club events but groundswell opinion is that the competitions need to be more organised and that a date specific fixtures structure is essential. Intending players need to know which dates they are committing to. Dates have been set for each round of the 2018 National Inter-Club tournaments.

The issue of holding multiple Scratch Cups on the same date was examined closely. The practice of some clubs organising multiple Opens and multiple Scratch Cups formed part of this exercise. It is recommended that Clubs hold maximum of one Open and one Scratch Cup (held over a single week).

PPUI / GCSAI Greenkeeping Education Day Sat 27th MAY

Lakeside Pitch & Putt Club, Templemore, Co. Tipperary

THE DAYS AGENDA and SPEAKERS: REGISTRATION 9.00am -9.45am

10.00-10.05: Welcome and introduction, PPUI rep and Damian Mc Laverty, Gen Mgr. GCSAI

10.05-10.45: Weed Identification & Control and Greens Disease Mgt, Greg Collins Bayer.

10.45-11.30: Grass & Seed ID & Greens Overseeding Techniques, Colm Ryan Cropcare.

11.30-12.15: Greens Nutrition & Management, Tony White Turfcare.

12.15-12.30 Split up into designated groups and move to outdoor stations.

12.30-1.00: Station 1 Machinery Maintenance and Selection, Greens Mower, Triplex Mower, Surrounds Mower.

Station 2 Weed & Grass Identification and Fertilizer application Demonstration.

Station 3 Irrigation demonstration including Maintenance & Sprinkler Heads.

Station 4 Aeration Machinery and Sprayer Demo.

1.00-2.00: Lunch

2.00-3.00: Outdoor Stations

3.15-4.00: GCSAI CPD System&Website/Group Discussion/Feedback/Plans for the Future.

AS PART OF THE DAY WILL BE OUTDOORS PLEASE BRING WATERPROOF CLOTHING

FULL DETAILS OF THE NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AND DETAILS OF THIS EVENT ON PAGE 9 OF THIS ISSUE OF BACKSPIN

BACKSPIN PRODUCTION TEAM

Jason O'Connor, John Manning, and Paul Hayes

(continued from first page) news of an exciting new partnership with the GCSAI one which we hope will be of big benefit to Grounds Committees in our clubs a course on which will be delivered in Lakeside on Saturday May 27th.

Two weeks earlier on Saturday May 13th our national launch and draw for this year's National Matchplay Championships in Tipperary Hills will take place in Sport HQ, Dublin. We are hoping to stream this year's draw live on Facebook in conjunction with our existing coverage of the event. We hope to do a number of other Backspins in 2017 and we welcome any suggestions for articles on same.

We wish everyone well as the year gets into gear and we all take advantage of the extending daylight to play the game we love. Thanks to John Manning and Paul Hayes for their assistance in putting this edition together.

Until next time,

Mise le Meas,

Jason O'Connor

Communications & Press Officer

PPUI

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MAJOR UPCOMING FIXTURES AND DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 5th:** All Ireland Secondary Schools Final @ Tullamore
- May 20th:** Leinster Mixed Foursomes @ Royal Meath
Munster Mixed Foursomes @ Lakewood
- June 3rd to 5th:** National Ladies & Gents Matchplay Championships @ Tipperary Hills
- June 17th to 18th:** Leinster Ladies Strokeplay Championship @ McDonagh
Leinster Gents Strokeplay Championship @ St. Bridget's
- June 17th to 18th:** Munster Ladies Strokeplay Championship @ E.S.B.
Munster Gents Strokeplay Championship @ E.S.B.