

Musselburgh Old Course Golf Club



THE CRADLE OF GOLF



Newsletter - Issue 10 Autumn 2025

24th Musselburgh Challenge

During the summer months we have a number of prestigious days within the Club, last newsletter we highlighted our Club Championship weekend. Following on in quick



succession to that we hosted the 24th version of the Musselburgh Challenge on 5th July. An invite only team competition, where the teams play with hickory clubs. This year there were 11 teams competing, two from our Club, British Golf Collectors, Bruntsfield Links, Kilspindie, Leith Rules, Musselburgh, Port Seton, Royal Musselburgh, Thorntree and from Japan Taiheiyo Club. We had apologies from 3 stalwarts of the Challenge due to other commitments The R&A,

Prestwick and Muirfield we hope to see them next year. Once again it was very competitive but as usual all with a smile, as the testaments we received later, during the competition and in the bar after



confirmed. The holders of the magnificent trophy, Thorntree, were leading after the first groups came in, and they sealed top spot to retain the trophy.



The British Golf Collectors, a previous



winner seen here with their runner up medals. It was good to see a team from Taiheiyo in Japan competing for the first time and they came a very creditable 4th. They could not resist having a photo opportunity with the Claret Jug in front of the Open Winners, we may have told them it was the actual Claret Jug, but Musselburgh does have a massive connection to the trophy.



In the week that Leith Links has a few holes cut to celebrate it being the oldest golf course, we have an annual away fixture to play with hickories, this took place on 9th July. The match was played in foursomes format with hickory clubs over ten holes - twice round the five-hole layout. Our Captain for the day Mike McVean seen here being presented with the trophy as we were

victors by a score of 3 to 1. Not only do you have to combat the course, but also the dog walkers etc and a group of people were on guard with red flags to make it safe.



Later in the week on Saturday 12th they held an open pairs competition, and although not a member this year Ian Morrison and his father in law won the scratch trophy. Ian seen in his MOCGC shirt with the hickory club trophy.

Claret Jug / Pro Am



The Sunday of The Open is always a special day at our club and assume other clubs around the world, however we also run two competitions. The main competition is for the Claret Jug, best net score on the day playing for a replica of the famous trophy. Competition was very fierce with 8 players scoring net par or better. It came down to two on the score of 66, unfortunately for Greig McVean, the winner was Paul Brown seen here with the famous Golf Champion Trophy.

Some say the second comp of the day is more important, well it's

definitely more exciting as each player picks a pro from the last day and their net score and the final round score of the pro giving the winner. We had 70 members playing, including one of our international members Mike Weaver, and by coincidence there was 70 pros playing the final round. Obviously, you require to have a decent round and hope you get the hot pro on the day. This time you are playing for The Alex Hay Phoenix, Alex was an Honorary member of our club. Bonnie (James Bonthron) had a net par and pick a pro that was 5 under. As it cannot be finalised until the last few pros finish their rounds the club stayed busy right through to the end of the evening, think Bonnie was 4 hours late for his Sunday meal.



Invitational Texas Scramble



A team from our sponsor of the day Safe Building Services won our Texas scramble on Saturday 16th August. Thank you to everyone involved.

Charity Day



Clark's Concert Party

18h · 🌐

We were the surprise recipients of the Old Course Golf Club's Annual Charity Day last week and were delighted to go along to pick up this massive cheque this afternoon!

There were 3 members of the club there today who had been in the Concert Party - and one whose sister was in it!! All were amazed that we were still going strong!

A massive thank you to all for choosing us. This will help ensure we're still going strong for the next 66 years!



A number of people have dubbed our Club as “the wee club with a big heart”, due to the amount we raise for various charities. Our main Charity Day was 10th August and on the run up to the day members donated raffle prizes and bought raffle tickets. The competition was won by our Secretary, Mike McVean, but the big winner was the Clark’s Concert Party who was our chosen local charity this year. As you can see from their smiling faces receiving the cheque from Captain Billy Alexander.



INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

International Membership for 2025 costs £250 and the proceeds from International Memberships enable us to maintain and upgrade our historic clubhouse. If anyone is interested in supporting the club by becoming an International Member or by buying one as a gift for someone else, please follow the following link ...

<https://musselburgholdcourse.com/international-members-form>

A number of the improvements that the Club has made this year are due to these members, thank you to all of our International members, hope to see you soon in the club

Another first for Musselburgh Links



In 1795 at Musselburgh, the women who worked in fish industry at Fisherrow are reported as playing golf on their days off. The Reverend Carlyle, who was Minister at Inveresk and a golfer himself, reported that the Musselburgh women 'do the work of men' and played both golf and football (steady guys).

On New Year's Day 1811, the club who would become the Royal Musselburgh Golf Club

sponsored the women's golf competition, recognised as the first female golf competition in the world.

"Musselburgh, 14th Dec. 1810"

The Club resolve to present by subscription a new Creel & Skull plus two of the best Barcelona silk handkerchiefs to the best female golfer to be intimated to the Fish Ladies by the Officer of the Club.

The 100th playing of The Musselburgh Amateur

The committee of the Musselburgh Amateur, on which our Alan Tweedie sits, decided that the 100th playing of the competition should be at the Old

MUSSELBURGH AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP MUSSELBURGH OLD COURSE 5th-6th SEPTEMBER 2025

Championship Scratch

Winner - Ross Noon MOCGC - £200
Runner-Up - Benn McLeod MGC - £100
3rd - Kenny Glen - £75

Gents

Winner - Grieg McVean MOCGC - £100
Runner-Up - Jim Currie MGC - £75
3rd - Colin Barbour MGC - £50

Ladies

Winner - Lynn Logan MGC - £100
Runner-Up - Liz Sharpe MLLGC - £75
3rd Margaret Goldberg MGC - £50

Ladies Best Scratch

Hanne Robertson RMGC - £75

Seniors

Winner - David Hill RMGC - £75
Runner-Up - Eddie Whoriskey MOCGC - £50
3rd - Brian Skilling MOCGC - £25



Course. The course was looking great, so thanks to our Greenkeepers. Not only did our club host the event and the buffet after we came out winners in the Scratch and Gents handicap. Ross Noon not only won the scratch but equalled the course record of 65 (3 under par). Here being presented by Councillor Andrew Forrest. One our youngest members Greig McVean winning the handicap competition. A busy day for Greig as after playing with an early tee, he was off to play for Musselburgh Rugby Club. Here he is seen presented after rushing back from his match still in his rugby gear. Every entrant was presented with a medal to mark the

occasion. Well done to all players, helpers and organisers.



Outside painting maintenance



The outside eaves and drainpipes of our clubhouse required to be overhauled, and the club colour of blue looks magnificent. Together with a staining of our new planters, the decking and the bench, a complete renovation. The planters have looked magnificent over the summer, thanks to Gary Grigg for his work with the plants. Special thanks to Matty

Craigie and his team for the painting work etc, once again Club members coming to the front to make us all proud of the Club we are.

Charity Day / John Jones Memorial Trophy. By Gordon Thomson



As you will have read on the previous page our recent Charity Day was a phenomenal success with over £1500 raised for Concert Party. Whilst the Committee work tirelessly to run this and every other competition the Charity Day is the one that really calls upon the membership to give it their support.....and once again did you get behind it! For the size of the membership, we certainly punch away above our weight when it comes to fund raising. The “willingness” to give is very much engrained in the clubs DNA and there is no reason for this not to continue forever and a day.

The Charity Day was first introduced in 1984 after a club member lost a loved one to cancer. John and Janice Jones had a long-

term connection with the golf club, John initially as a golf member then latterly an Honorary member and Janice as bar stewardess for many years in both the old clubhouse and the present one. In 1982, just after the club was formed, they had the greatest misfortune imaginable when they lost their eldest son to cancer at the age of 19 years. To keep his memory alive and raise funds for research into cancer, the John Jones Memorial Tournament came into being. For many years it was considered the most prestigious event on our golfing calendar. No event should ever upstage the Club Championship but for many this was the flagship event.

On the eve of the first running of the event the town was hit with monsoon conditions that lasted most of the day but on the day of the competition we were relieved to awaken

to bright sunshine. However, on arriving at the course we were dismayed to find more casual water on both fairways and greens than you could ever imagine. Only two greens were playable, three others had casual water but at least had a “dry line” to the hole, but the other four holes were a problem! We thought that three of the four greens could be playable with a bit of effort, but the High Hole resembled a lagoon and as such was a lost cause. We returned to the clubhouse and set about sourcing anything that could help us shift water from the greens. A few sweeping brushes were put into use as was a bucket and mop! A group decided to try and shift the water from the High Hole green by using buckets and a plastic dustbin! Alas despite their efforts it was not long before they accepted defeat. One golfer took his towel off his bag and started to soak up the water with that, and on seeing this a few others ran back to the clubhouse and availed themselves of every towel in the bar and copied his actions! At this point it started to get a tad crazy as a couple of guys had grabbed every packet of paper hand towels from the toilets and started to try and soak up the water with them! We somehow eventually managed to get all of the greens playable apart from the High Hole. Not put off by this we decided that we would play the High Hole, and you would just count however many shots it took you to hit the putting surface and thereafter add two shots.

It was not long before we took to the course in challenging conditions and John Jones Snr played with more focus and purpose than ever before returning a net winning score that was a few shots over par. This was the only time in the history of the Charity Day competition that the winning score was not under par.

But the actual golf was almost incidental that day, and the amount raised for Cancer Research was just a few pounds shy of £200. The tournament grew year by year and there were euphoric celebrations after the fourth tournament took place as the money raised on the day exceeded £1000. The event grew enormously in popularity and as it grew so did the charitable donation raised on the day. A combination of its popularity and getting sponsors on board led to the charitable donations on the day topping the £3000 mark. A great deal of the money raised came from raffle ticket sales, much of which came from sales made outwith the club. The raffle itself became a major event and with well over 150 prizes to be drawn there were occasions when the raffle took longer to draw than it took you to get around the course! If memory serves me right, our record for money raised on the day was £3600. Alas after twenty plus years, and over £50k raised in total, the John Jones Memorial Event was withdrawn from our fixture list as both Janice and John Jones were not in the best of health, and as such felt they could not run it anymore. Whilst it was a sad day for the club, all was not lost as the Charity Day took its place and whilst the John Jones event had supported only Cancer Research, many additional organisations have benefitted from the Charity Day and hopefully will continue to do so for years to come. Unbelievable to think that if John and Janice had not lost John Jnr, we may not have had a Charity Day event on our fixture card.