

Musselburgh Old Course Golf Club



THE CRADLE OF GOLF



Newsletter - Issue 12 Spring 2026

Welcome to another great year at MOCGC

2026 Annual General Meeting



Friday 20th February 2026 saw the AGM take place within the Club Lounge, with 38 members attending, which included 11 Committee Members. The financial situation of the Club was relatively good and therefore the Committee decided to freeze the membership fees for all categories and locker and trolley shed fees. The key office holders all made statements, the Captain, Secretary, Treasurer and Competition Secretary. It was the last actions of the current Captain Billy Alexander, as he handed over to his current Vice Captain Gordon Henderson. Gordon then announced that Clifford Livingstone would be his Vice for the coming two years.

It was a good meeting lasting about an hour and there were no contentious questions or points, mostly as the Club is running smoothly and in a good financial situation unlike a number of other clubs. The Musselburgh Challenge this year will be on 4th July and will be the 25th running of the event. The Club Championship will take place in June with the Finals Day on 28th. Fixture cards were available after the meeting and also on the website.



One of the pieces of information was that we have a

new sponsor, Musselburgh Roofing (Gary Grigg), and he has proposed that a competition runs through the summer with a finals day. As with all our sponsors throughout the year THANKS so much, you all make this club what it is, “The best wee Club in Scotland”. Or is it the world.....



Our annual Presentation Night, when the major winners of the last season are celebrated took place on Saturday 14th March, just along the road from the Clubhouse, at the Masonic Hall. The night included a magnificent

buffet and live music, to dance the night away. We are very fortunate that the majority of our competition sponsors are members of the Club.

Therefore as tradition a number of them presented some of our major trophies. A few to mention are our Senior and B Section winners Alan Tweedie and Terry Gillan,



presented by Eddie Whoriskey. Then Eddie presented the C Section trophy to Billy Finnigan, a bittersweet moment for Eddie as he was the defeated finalist. Also the top qualifier to our Club Championship Kieran Blyth. Although a number of our members

think that the Club Championship is THE most important trophy in our calendar, but for most it is the yearly match between our Hearts supporters versus our Hibs supporters. Callum Livingston (Hearts) seen being presented by Ryan Henserson (Hibs) in a Hearts win. We



have some invitational competitions, and it was great to see Anton Larner and his guest Gordon Souness, who won the Invitational Silloth. Martin Mulligan, presented by our new Captain next year,



Gordon Henderson. One of the Broons, Paul and Neil Porteuos again with Gordon.



Our Secretary Mike McVean seen presenting to Euan Glen, and then actually winning however there may be a stewards enquiry.



So good to see one our oldest

members Rab Little presenting a trophy he sponsored to



Liam Smith, thanks Rab. As you can see some were very excited to receive a trophy, get a room boys, it's a respectable club. Congratulations to all that made this wonderful night happen. All photos of the dancing had to be censored.

The Hickory Championship

One of the newer Champions Boards that we have is our Hickory Champion. A great turnout and reasonable weather for 1st March so lots of serious scoring and some just having a great time playing with a lump of wood, some for the first time. The competition keeps up the traditions of how the game was played on our course when The Opens were played. Many of our previous winners have either won the Club Championship or have been finalists. This year was no different. Played over 9 holes with hickory clubs it came down to a previous Club Champion Ross Noon and our current Seniors Champion Alan Tweedie. Both shot a 36, but Ross is seen here with the trophy as he won on countback. Fantastic scoring using clubs that are pre 1935, so many are over 100 years old. Goes to show a good swing and you don't need an expensive driver or a Scottie Cameron putter to score well.



New Season 2026/27

Welcome to all the new members that have joined MOCGC this year, and thanks to all those that have shown their commitment to be part of such a wonderful Club by renewing your membership. All the usual competitions and medals have found their way back on to our fixture card, with a new exciting summer feature. Gary Grigg (Musselburgh Roofing) is sponsoring a competition that will span the summer months. Four qualifying rounds where players will receive points that accumulate to provide a finals day for the top performers through the year. Its been designed to reward regular performers not just one-off winners and will be like the "Road To Dubai" but to avoid copyright complications will be "The Road To Goose Green". Thanks Gary, this is much appreciated by the Committee and the members. The Committee has seen a number changes with two ex Captains deciding to leave both after many years of service to the Club, enjoy your golf guys. Not only have they been Captains but Secretary and Chairman respectively. A new committee member has joined, but more required, speak to any of our current Committee for information if interested.

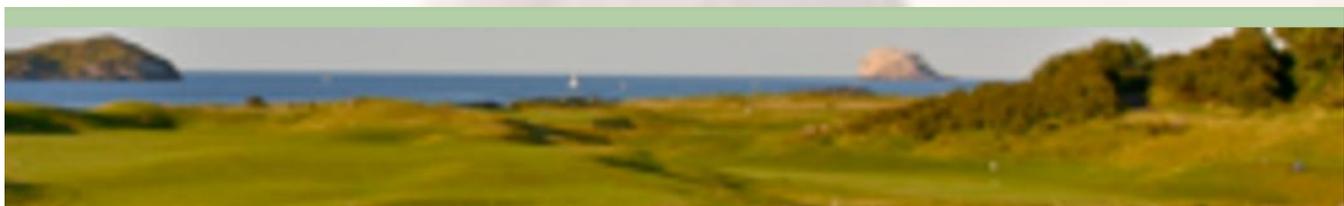
Junior Section

We have joined forces with Winterfield GC to enter a joint team into this season's East Lothian Junior Golf League. This is the first time for many years that we have had a few junior members who are proficient enough to compete alongside the cream of East Lothian's junior golfers on some of the finest courses in the county.

The first League fixture was played over Gullane 3 on 22nd March and the team performed well on a very windy afternoon.

Our younger juniors will compete in this season's Golf Sixes League against Royal Musselburgh GC, Musselburgh GC, Longniddry GC and Haddington GC.

East Lothian Winter League



Leagues / Division 3

Team Standings

[VIEW SCORES >](#)

#	Team	GP	W	L	T	Pts
1	Glen	8	6	2	0	12
2	Kilspindie	8	5	2	1	11
3	Musselburgh Old	8	5	3	0	10
4	Gifford	8	1	5	2	4
5	Thorntree	8	1	6	1	3

The team play 8 matches throughout the winter months and the final standings show a close-run affair falling just short of the title or even a playoff game. The format is 5 pairs playing alternate shot, and most clubs have a larger pool of players to call on. We also went down narrowly in our away fixture to division 1 Dunbar 3-2 in the cup.

Kieran Blyth and Ross Noon had a 71 tied 2nd best at the Strokeplay at Craigielaw on 1st March, team unfortunately couldn't post a total due to a late medical call off.

A little history

For a number of our older or long term members, they will be aware that over 21 years ago we nearly lost our course. However for our younger and new members below is an article from the London Times that explains what the racecourse wanted to do and how close we came to losing "The Cradle of Golf". This is the report, by Shirley English

Turf war to send cradle of golf's history to grave

Saturday October 29 2005, 1.00am, The Times

MARY Queen of Scots is said to have played there, while Oliver Cromwell ignored golfing etiquette on his visit and camped his army on the links before sacking Edinburgh. For historic anecdotes, the Old Course at Musselburgh, reputedly the world's oldest playing links, is hard to beat. And when you consider it hosted some of the first Open Championships and is birthplace to no less than five champions, its pedigree is virtually unmatched.

Yet a £10 million racetrack development now threatens this sporting Mecca, listed among the world's top 100 "must play" courses and whose hallowed turf attracts thousands of golfers each year from as far afield as America, Hong Kong and Australia. For almost 200 years the links has coexisted peacefully with its neighbour, Musselburgh Race Course, which moved there from nearby Leith in 1816 at the golf club's invitation, and now encircles the old fairways and greens.

The newcomer is now being likened to a "cuckoo in the nest" because of a planning application, before East Lothian Council, to build an all-weather racetrack and expand existing turf facilities. If the proposals go ahead, they will alter all but two of the original nine holes at the course, with the legendary 1st green disappearing altogether. The plans include the erection of more than 40 floodlights to allow night racing over the winter and an increase in the number of race meetings from one a fortnight to two a week.

Opponents say that the scheme will not only destroy the character and historic integrity of the Old Course, scene of six Open Championship finals between 1874 and 1889, but will also disturb a protected wildlife haven at nearby Musselburgh lagoons and greatly inconvenience local people while robbing them of their heritage.

Ian Colville, 64, a Musselburgh golfer and spokesman for the Hands Off Our Links (Hool) campaign, whose posters adorn windows of entire streets in the town, said: "You would think that the cradle of golf would be spared any such development and I have yet to speak to a local who is in favour. The Old Course still retains much of its original character from when the Open was held here and people come from all over the world to experience its unique atmosphere. But that proud heritage will be totally lost because of the monumental scale of these plans."

Historians believe that the game was born on the east coast of Scotland, around Edinburgh and farther north at St Andrews, before spreading to the wider world. While

St Andrews is now the undisputed “home of the game”, with the world’s oldest golf club, the Royal and Ancient, Musselburgh is widely accepted as its “cradle”, with the world’s oldest course.

Apart from its legendary association in 1567 with Mary, Queen of Scots, who allegedly squeezed in a round just three days after the murder of her unfortunate first husband, Lord Darnley, other illustrious Musselburgh guests include Queen Victoria’s son, the Duke of Connaught, who was an honorary club president.

Peter Lewis, historian at the Royal and Ancient, the game’s ruling body, said: “Musselburgh is a very historic golfing venue and many famous names played there, particularly during the 19th century. We cannot say for definite whether it is the oldest course, due to a lack of evidence. We have documents showing golf was being played at Musselburgh in 1672 but we know it started there much earlier.”

To this day it remains a public course, built on common good land held in trust for the people by the local council, which not only manages both the golf and the racing, but is the main proposer of the controversial development and must decide on it.

About 3,000 objections have been lodged, including from Musselburgh Community Council and Scottish Natural Heritage, the government’s environmental agency, which has concerns about the impact of floodlighting on colonies of golden plover, red-throated divers and grebe. Campaigners want the planning decision to be referred to the Scottish Executive for an independent ruling or a public inquiry on the grounds that the council cannot be an impartial judge.

But Bill Farnsworth, racecourse general manager, claims that the development could be worth £3.4 million to the local economy, with the number of race meetings almost tripling from 26 to 66 a year and only a “slight” impact on the environment. “We want to improve the track quality and attract better horses, which will take us from the racecourse equivalent of the first division into the Premier league,” he said.

“To do that we have to change parts of the golf course. I understand some people would like to keep Musselburgh as it is but in today’s commercial world that is not an option. If we stand still we go backwards.” The planning committee is expected to look at the application next month.

I would not be writing this item if it happened, as thankfully Planning did block it.

International Membership

International Membership for 2026 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.