

Musselburgh Old Course Golf Club



THE CRADLE OF GOLF



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25th Musselburgh Challenge

On Saturday 4th July we hosted the 25th Musselburgh Challenge, an invitational team event played with hickory clubs. Teams from Muirfield, The R&A, Bruntsfield Links, Musselburgh GC, Kilspindie, Port Seton, The Thorntree GC, Dunbar, British Golf Collectors,



Leith Links and two teams from MOCGC, arrived on a windy day to

compete. The first match saw one of our pairings play with a pair from the current holders The Thorntree. At the halfway stage one of our pairings Euan Glen and Kevin Wyllie led the way with an



impressive 36 for 9 holes, with The Thorntree holding second spot. Our last pairing of Kieran Blyth and Alan Tweedie playing the absolute last match of the day. At this point The Thorntree pairs had accumulated a total of 77 and were leading the pack. However, our



pair returned another 36 to win the trophy for the first time in 20 years by a margin of 5 shots. Both the winners and the runners up received medals and the Thorntree received theirs from our Captain Gordon Henderson. Although the rain stayed off, it was a very windy day and the added difficulty





of playing with hickories made the great scoring even more impressive. It was the first time playing with hickories for some and the general comments were that everyone had a great time. As the players came back into the clubhouse they were served a roast dinner by Carol and her

helpers followed by cheese and biscuits. Following the



presentation a few speeches took place and the majority of those attending stayed to toast the winners, and all that took part. We had keen photographers on the course getting some action and team photographs, which we displayed on the TV screen..



The committee would like to thank all those that attended, and all the thank you's that we received. Already planning for the 26th next year.



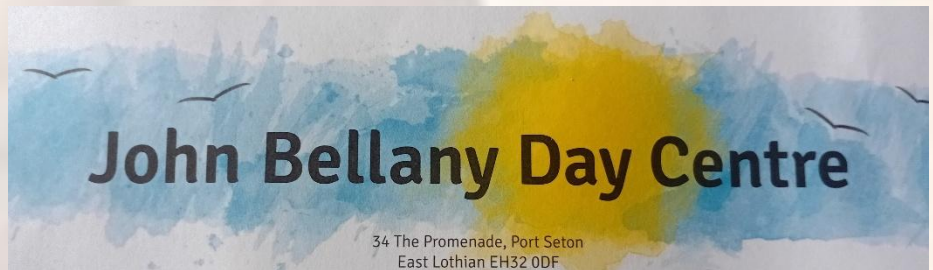
Claret Jug / Pro Am



On the Sunday of The Open, the club has a double competition. A medal round to claim the Claret Jug and before you tee off you draw a golfer playing in the last round of The Open. The sum of their score and your net score giving the winner of the Pro Am. Jackie Brown won the Claret Jug, by an amazing 8 shots. With Eddie Whoriskey who came second in the medal having drawn Thomas Detry winning the Pro Am. As usual it was a great day in the club with most staying to see the winners.

Charity Day

Once again, the phrase “The wee club with a big heart” comes to the front when we have our annual Charity Day. For the last few years, we have



decided to support a charity with local connections rather than a national charity. This year we chose The John Bellany Day Centre, as they are based in Port Seton, but look after the Musselburgh Meeting Centre, who provide weekly meetings for those suffering from dementia. The day was an incredible success not only on the course as some great scores, but also every player donated and bought raffle tickets for prizes that had been donated by the members and friends. The main sponsor of the day was Toon Taxis, thanks. The Committee cannot thank the members enough, every time we ask for help, the response is tremendous. For a club with about 100 playing members, to raise £2,000 was just mind blowing, thanks.

A few weeks later on 3rd September we presented the cheque to the Group that meet at our Clubhouse every Thursday. Our Captain, Gordon Henderson seen presenting to Avril and Dominika from the group. As the real beneficiaries were those that come to the meetings, it was only right that they are there to accept the cheque too.



Naylor Trophy



One of the nicest and unusual trophies we play for is The Naylor. A small hickory shafted club mounted on a board, as seen here being presented by Club Captain, Gordon Henderson to the winner Mark MacWhinnie. Some competitions can be very competitive, but maybe not as tight as this one. No fewer than 6 players tied on the same net score of 65, with Mark winning on countback.

Junior Section - Golf Sixes

Over the summer months, our U12's took part in their Golf Sixes League. The other teams in the league were Royal Musselburgh GC, The Musselburgh GC, Longniddry GC and Haddington GC. Each club hosted a Golf Sixes match day, so the juniors played on several courses for the first time.

With one fixture to go, only Haddington and us could finish in top spot and at the final match day at Longniddry it was Haddington that came out on top to win the league.

Congratulations to Haddington but our team had a very good season to finish in runner-up spot and pick up the silver medals. Unfortunately, only 4 of the 6 could stay to be presented.



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.

Exhibition Match



the 4th green, Willie Park Junior v J.H. Taylor, 1896

For those that have stood at the 2nd tee and looked at the pictures on the fence between our course and the racecourse, you may have seen the above. We will all know one of the names Willie Park Junior, but J H Taylor? and what happened on June 16th 1896. Also look at that crowd for what was an exhibition match that was played at our course arranged by Royal Musselburgh Golf Club when they had their clubhouse on Golf Place (Balcarres Road). At that time Willie Park Jnr was a two times Open Champion, and so was John Henry Taylor as he won the Open in 1894 and 1895, he would later go on to win it five times. The match took place just a few days after The Open that was held at Muirfield in 1896. These exhibition matches had become huge in the late 1800s. In the Muirfield Open Taylor lost to the great Harry Vardon in a play off on 13th June so he was a great prize for the exhibition. The match above was played over 36 holes at the Links and it was Willie that triumphed. It is recorded that the purse for the match was £100, however the betting and side bets probably exceeded this figure. As a reference the average wage for a working class person was about £50 a year with skilled workers closer to £100 a year. The two of them would have regular exhibition matches, Scotland versus England matches. Taylor played in his first Open in 1893 at the age of 22, and his last when he was 55 in 1926, when he came 11th.

Although the two of them were renowned golfers they may be better known worldwide as golf course designers. With Willie credited with 170 throughout UK, Europe, Canada and USA. Taylor was credited with numerous courses, however mostly in England, so Willie will be better known abroad, for this part of his career.

Royal Burgess Golfing Society



The Captain was invited to The Royal Burgess for a round of golf by their current Captain. This followed their invitation to our Musselburgh Challenge and therefore a nice gesture. As most will know we occupy and now own their original clubhouse when they played at our Links in the late 1800s. On the outside main wall of their clubhouse in Barnton are these stone carvings. The inscription below it shows golfers playing at Bruntsfield Links with the castle behind, but *“The above two stones was originally located in the Society’s*



Clubhouse in Musselburgh when it opened on 24th June 1875. The coat of

arms is that of the City of Edinburgh and was above the front door.” It is interesting that it says in the clubhouse, not outside.

It is obvious that they also have a great historic past, and very proud of being the oldest Golfing Society in the world, and are proud of their Musselburgh heritage. Within their main bar is a display of a series of their past and again Musselburgh is mentioned. Their move to Musselburgh in 1874, the year of the first Open played at our course, with the Clubhouse, sorry Our Clubhouse, being built for entry in June the next year. They stayed a Musselburgh until 1895, but due to overcrowding on the course they moved to their current location at Barnton and an 18 hole course.

