

County Junior Organisers report to AGM

Although we had a disrupted start to the year with lockdown again affecting the Spring training, we were glad to get back into golf although somewhat delayed. When the restrictions on coaching were relaxed, we undertook to do a catch up on the training that was missed and we just completed that catch up, this August.

Unfortunately, in April everything was still very unpredictable, and we had to delay our first **Regional event** of the year at Bedale until May. It was clear the girls were keen to get going with a great number of entries and although we had some withdrawals mainly due to Covid isolating we still had 42 players on the day. My thanks to Bedale GC who were able to accommodate us on the new date. A similar pattern happened at the Cottingham parks event in early July with high entries which were affected by withdrawals. Our event at Abbeydale was very well attended as was the final event of the season at Woodsome Hall for our **Autumn meeting** indeed the initial entry was 57 girls the highest entry as yet but unfortunately the change of date due to a double booking effected those girls who had qualified with their clubs for the Junior team Championships. Overall, we had a record number of entries over the season. Well done to all the winners, results can be found on the website.

Our Order of merit winners were

Division 1 winner Layla Hitchiner (Waterfront) who stormed into an unassailable lead winning the first three regional events this year convincingly she is certainly one to watch.

Division 2 winners was Sophia Rudd (Middlesbrough) who played with consistency throughout the season

Junior Championships at Garforth was played in very hot temperatures, but the girls were sensible and kept well hydrated. Finally, we were able to do the presentation of trophies for the first time in the season. Congratulations to Abigail Taylor from Headingley, with a gross score over two rounds of 144 who became our Junior Champion 2021 and Evie Graves from Ilkley was our net champion also with 144. A big thanks to Garforth GC who despite the fact they lost their caterers a week before went to great lengths to make sure that refreshments were still available. The club and Lady Captain plus helpers were all a fantastic help on the day and I'd like to say a big thank you. We do rely on club cooperation to make these events work and it is great to see so many of you wanting to help. Abigail went onto Woodall Spa for the champion of Champions final and also as the junior Championships is a qualifying round for the Justin Rose Daily Telegraph competition, so she also went onto Walton Heath coming a respectable 6th.

Our **matches** have also resumed against the Northern Counties with some very close results. With a win against Cumbria, Draw against Cheshire and losses to Lancashire & Durham. We also introduced a fixture against Yorkshire boys which also ended in a draw. The higher handicapped girls took part in the Junior jamboree at Wynyard at the end of July with exciting prospects coming through. All these girls had not represented the County before and the tournament is held over two days with an overnight stay. Due to covid this year parents came with their children. Overall, we were placed 4th.

It was great to see the **Beginners young coaching** course held over the summer months go ahead this year with two new coaches Mark Robson from Richmond and Gareth Davies from Abbeydale making it more accessible to our young players. Thank you all for your nominations of U14 girls for these courses which gives us a feed into our main programme. It is important that the clubs keep sending us nominations so please watch these girls and indeed any others that show potential and

let us know. The usual form has already been distributed to club secretaries and junior Organisers to nominate their young players. Please will clubs make sure that Junior Leaders at their club are put on the contacts form that you complete every year so we can make direct contact with them when necessary.

With the introduction of the WHS platform we are now able to see all those juniors registered to clubs and with the opportunities not available last year many girls had clearly dropped through the cracks. So, we introduced a special taster day for these girls and I am pleased to say that we have seen 9 new girls so far all of which have been offered places in training this Autumn. One thing that arose during our Annual review of England Funding was that we need to get all youngsters registered at clubs in particular those who are starting in our programme as this is used to monitor the girls from the point they first put in cards. So, if all clubs could do that registration onto WHS even if they have no handicaps, it would save a lot of time.

Individually many of our Junior enter **Northern and National competitions** and this year has been no exception. Girls to mention

- Alex Bonfield from Fulford who was 3rd in the Scottish Girls open. With an Even Par round
- Abigail Taylor who became the North regional Schools champion.
- Amy Staveley just 15 from Ganton who won the North of England U16 Strokeplay championships at Heswall with 13 under par and was runner up in the Northern Counties Close championship at Brancepeth but taking The Kilburn trophy for best Gross and nett Rounds of 14-15 year old

Training has now begun in earnest for the Autumn and our coaches as usual are doing a great job. I would like to thank our Intermediate coach Gary Brown from Ganton for his work with the girl's junior coaching programme over a number of years he will be missed as will the experience of the girls playing on such a course. Also, our Beginners Young Coach Oliver Hunt from Alwoodley and previously Headingley GC is moving on after a similar number of years. Interviews will take place in December and January to replace these coaches. Also, thanks to my assistant CJO Barbara Taylor for all her hard work & help over the past four years.

And a final massive thank you to our County President Ann McMullen who over the last three years has fully supported nearly all of the junior events including Regional events, Junior championships, Jamboree's and fixtures the junior team cannot thank you enough and we will miss you.

My final job is to announce this year's recipient of the **Jean Rudgard award** which is a £100 cheque given to the Junior girls who started in the Bronze Division. This year's winner is Ruby Sutton from the Oaks who dropped 15.3 shots over the year finishing on 21.1 HI. She won the Division two Championship, came 2nd in the Order of merit and also represented Yorkshire at the Jamboree. Congratulations to her the cheque will be presented at next year's junior Championships at Cleckheaton

Karen Fellows County Junior Organiser November 2021