



IN THE SWING

**Portarlington Golf Club
News & Views**

Issue 14

September / October 2006

Articles in this issue of the newsletter are as detailed below. As always comments, suggestions and feedback is always appreciated. With the Ryder Cup nearly upon us there is a focus on this fantastic competition.

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Ryder Cup 2006



The event that the majority of golf enthusiasts in Ireland have been eagerly awaiting is nearly upon us .. only a matter of days to go. To get us there we will have the final instalment of the history of the cup and we look at when the format changed.

From the beginning of the series through 1959, The Ryder Cup competition was comprised of four foursomes matches on one day and eight singles matches on the other day, each of 36 holes.

The format was changed in 1961, to provide four 18-hole foursomes matches the morning of the first day, four more foursomes that afternoon, eight 18-hole singles the morning of the second day and eight more singles that afternoon. One point was at stake in each match, so the total number of points was doubled to 24. In 1963, fourball (better-ball) matches were added for the first time, boosting the total number of points available to 32.

The format was altered again in 1977, this time with five foursomes on opening day, five four-ball matches on the second day, and ten singles matches on the final day. This reduced the total points to 20.

In 1979, when the Great Britain & Ireland Team was expanded to include players from Continental Europe, the format was revised to provide four fourball and four foursomes matches on each of the first two days and 12 singles matches on the third day. The total points awarded were 28. This format continues today.

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The man who started it all, Samuel Ryder, died on January 2, 1936. He was 77. Ryder's youngest daughter, Joan, was her father's constant companion at all his golfing events. She witnessed all The Ryder Cups in Great Britain, and once in America, in 1983, when the U.S. edged the Europeans at PGA National Golf Club in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

In 1981, Joan met the Duke of Kent at The Ryder Cup at Walton Heath Golf Club in Surrey, England. She told the royal guest that her father had been surprised by the success of the matches. "He had the idea that when the Americans came over for a match he would give a 'small friendly lunch party' to both teams," said Joan. The Duke gazed at the spectators swarming near the 18th green, and said: "I wonder what your father would think of this little lunch party!". Joan Ryder's final appearance at The Ryder Cup was at The De Vere Belfry in 1985. She called that edition of The Matches "the most exciting ever." Later that year, she died at her home in Sussex at age 81.

Sponsors

The club appreciate the generous sponsorship of those listed below for competitions in September & October. Please show your support to your sponsors at prize giving.

G-Mack Racking
Tullamore Cinemas
Livewire products
Finline Furniture
Michael Moore Car Sales
Patricia Egan
O'Neill Refrigeration
Lyles Footwear
McDonald Auctioneers & Valuers
Turley & Kelly Solicitors

Frank Kennedy & Co.
Super Valu
Pauric O'Rourke
Brian Walsh Car Sales
Andrew & Michael Turley
CPM Ireland Ltd
Portlaoise Windows
Michael Luttrell & Son
Billy Moore Plant Hire
O'Riordan Financial Services

Attendance at the prize giving has been very poor and is a sad reflection on the esteem that our very generous sponsors are held in by the club. Without these sponsors the club simply could not continue to offer the number of competitions we currently do with the wide array of prizes. All those people who give of their time freely to run these competitions would appreciate your support in attending prize giving nights.

Courses of the world

Okay so Dunmurry Springs would not rate high on the worlds golf



courses but as it is new and relatively local I though I would take a look at what is on offer. First opened in late 2005 it was voted in the top 10 of Europes new golf courses. In recent years the world of golf course design has seen a move towards the classic design philosophies, which have produced some of the world's great courses. Some developers have chosen to ignore this move by implanting features that do little for the local environment and copy styles from across the world. However, at Dunmurry Springs Golf Club in Kildare there has been a committed approach to create a wonderfully classic golf course that is the epitome of a golf development showing an appreciation of the spirit of the game.

Born out of a passion to utilise a very special site beside The Curragh, the designer, Mel Flanagan, and his team have gone about crafting a classic piece of golf architecture in the mould of the great romantic courses like Sunningdale and Gleneagles, but with a distinctly Irish blend. Golfers of all abilities will admire the skill with which he achieved his aim, as this is clearly a course that combines traditional design philosophies utilising the natural springs, movement and grasses of the land with some of the most spectacular views in Ireland. There is no doubt this course will be capable of hosting the very best of international events.

The green fees costs vary around low, middle and high seasons and depending on the day and time you wish to play. It is an innovative approach which means you could play a round for as little as €40 and up to €80 in the peak times during the summer months. Becoming a loyalty and rewards member for just €40 will entitle you to discounts on the green fees which will increase the more you play the course during the year. The same loyalty discount exists for societies who book more than once within the same year.

It is a beautifully designed course which has water in play on 11 holes, fairway bunkers are strategically placed to offer a new challenge on every hole. The course is a par 71 of 6757 yards which includes a turn of the imposing 571 yard par 5 10th hole, 185 yard par 3 11th over water and the 485 yard par 4 12th. Just something to look forward to after the short 407 yard par 4 9th hole to a green with water to the front side and back. Each of the holes has been named after a local landmark or a feature of the hole which give a finish to this course and club which is still developing into one of the jewels of the growing list of classic Kildare golf clubs

Competitions

The Competitions for September & October are as follows (*Ladies competitions in Italics*),

September

- 2nd/3rd 18 Hole Tournament
4th *Ladies outing to Rathcore*
5th *St Vincent de Paul*
18 Hole Stableford
6th 18 Hole Men's Open Singles
9th Michael Moore Cup Final
Michael Moore Car Sales
10th *Lady President's (Patricia Egan) Prize*
18 Hole Stroke
Men's 9 Hole Comp. from 5.00pm
12th *18 Hole Stroke – Medal*
13th 18 Hole Men's Open Singles
16th/17th 18 Hole Open Fourball
19th *18 Hole Stableford* (Tea)
20th 18 Hole Mens Opens Singles
25th Rolleston Cup
18 Hole Stroke
26th *18 Hole Open Fourball*

October

- 30th/1st Men's Open Scotch Foursomes
18 Hole Stroke
3rd *18 Hole Stableford*
8th Men's Club Hamper
18 Hole Fourball Stableford
10th *Winter Competition*
15th Michael Culliton Cup (Ladies)
21st/22nd Open Mixed Hamper
18 Hole Foursomes
29th 18 Hole Stableford (Ladies)
30th 14 Hole Invitation Scramble

Centenary Year 1908 - 2008

Only a little over a year away now the plans for our centenary year are underway. We will be hosting competitions prestigious tournaments for the GUI and ILGU during the summer and we are investigating other options in regard to pro-ams etc.

There will be social events to mark the Centenary year also and these will be planned in the month to come.

The committee charged with plans for the year have met already but would appreciate any input or suggestions the members would have. Contact any of the club officers for more details.

Golfing Rhyme

*My ball is in a bunch of fern,
A jolly place to be;
An angry man is close astern—
He waves his club at me.
Well, let him wave—the sky is blue;
Go on, old ball, we are but two—
We may be down in three,
Or nine—or ten—or twenty-five—
It matters not; to be alive
Is good enough for me.
- A. P. Herbert*

*The golf course being rather far,
I have an excuse to take the car.
And since the holes are far apart,
I have an excuse to use a cart.
But one thing has me still defeated—
You cannot hit the ball while seated.
- Donna Evleth*

*Here's to the man with club in hand
Here's to the king of bogey land;
Here's to the clubs with outlandish names
And here's to golf, the game of games!
- The Father Gander Golf Book (1909)*

*When hitting wedge shots, I've a flair
That's turning my hair gray;
They stop, I swear, right next to where
The pin was...yesterday.
- Dick Emmons*

If anybody has some golf rhyme (we can publish !) please let me know.

Rules Corner

1. A player is three down after three holes of a match. Before playing from the fourth tee, he discovers that he has 15 clubs in his bag, breaking the 14-club limit. What is the ruling and the status of the match?
2. After declaring his ball unplayable and accepting a one-stroke penalty, the player measures two club-lengths from the ball and drops a new ball. The new ball strikes the ground within two club-lengths (not nearer the hole), but rolls back into the same unplayable lie. What is the ruling?
3. On the putting green, a player marks his ball with a coin, lifts the ball, cleans and replaces it, and ensures that the ball is at rest, but leaves the coin in place. As the player walks to the other side of the hole to look at his line of putt, a gust of wind moves the ball two inches closer to the hole. What is the ruling?

Answers at the bottom of page 6



The Ryder Cup Stats

Taking a look at the last 10 playings of the famous tournament, basically since the continental European players we included, there have been some great battles with the USA winning three, Europe winning six with one tied. In the ten playings previous to this the USA won 9 with one tied. The overall stats read USA 24, GB/I/Europe 9, Tied 2.

Year	Site	USA	Europe/GB/GBI	Winner
2004	Oakland Hills CC, Bloomfield Township, MI	9 ½	18 ½	
2002	The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, England	12 ½	15 ½	
1999	The Country Club, Brookline, MA	14 ½	13 ½	
1997	Valderrama GC, Sotogrande Spain	13 ½	14 ½	
1995	Oak Hill CC, Rochester, NY	13 ½	14 ½	
1993	The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, Eng	15	13	
1991	The Ocean Course, Kiawah Island, S.C.	14 ½	13 ½	
1989	The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, Eng	14	14	
1987	Muirfield Village GC, Dublin, Ohio	13	15	
1985	The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, Eng	11 ½	16 ½	

As far as player records go Nick Faldo holds the record of most appearances with 11, while Billy Casper having played in 3 matches less holds the points record with 23 ½. Sergio Garcia is the youngest player to play when he represented Europe in 1999 aged 19 years, 8 months and 15 days while Raymond Floyd played in 1993 aged 51 years and 20 days making him the oldest player. The best percentages shown by any player (with a minimum of 3 Ryder Cup Matches) is Jimmy Demaret who played 6 games in 3 matches for the USA in 47, 49 & 51 and won them all – a 100% record which surely will never be matched. Colin Montgomerie's 66% win record is the best of the European team.

Ireland's most famous participant is surely the great Christy O'Connor Snr who played in 10 consecutive Ryder Cup matches between 1955 and 1973. In 1973 he played aged 48 years, 8 months and 30 days making him the third oldest player in the history of the competition behind Ray Floyd and Ted Ray who played for GB/I in 1927. Christy played in 36 matches, 14 singles, 13 foursomes and 9 fourballs. He holds the dubious record, with Neil Coles, of having lost the most games in 21. A true legend of Irish and Ryder Cup golf history.

Lets hope some more Irish men can have a positive impact on the European stats as we get ever closer to the 2006 event in the K club at the end of September.

Full coverage of the Ryder Cup can be seen in the club house from 22nd – 24th of September

"If profanity had any influence on the flight of the ball, the game of golf would be played far better than it is."

A vast majority of men, when turning on the radio in the morning, will turn to the sports news. People calling in will voice their opinions on why their favourite team blew it the day before. There will be a quick glance at the headlines in their newspaper, and then turn to the sports page. Presidents will make personal calls to individuals, or teams, who have achieved something of heroic proportions the previous day. Stadiums are built to accommodate large crowds of screaming spectators. Without sports for people to let off steam, can you imagine the hell that politicians would have to take from the masses.

Golf is getting so technical today that it is beginning to rival Einstein's theory on relativity. Announcers are continually commenting on the "routine" the players go through before hitting a shot. Unfortunately, many ninety shooters are trying to establish routines before hitting their shots, causing slowing down of play.

My golf started in the wooden shaft age, and I have had many routines over the years. They usually started with a prayer, and then facing as far away from the most severe trouble on that particular hole. My serious golfing days are now well behind me and now my main routine starts in the morning when trying to pick my choice of clothes for the day. My closet is divided equally. All basic browns are on the left and the blues are on the right. My socks are all rolled up in a drawer. I pick out a pair at random. If, upon unrolling a pair, one sock has a hole in the toe, I pick another. When I find a pair without holes, that is my colour for the day.

The average golfer, who incidentally is the largest financial supporter of the game, goes out to the golf course with the intention of having a good time. Not being a good golfer, and not having too many opportunities to play, makes it important for him to get off to a reasonable start. All sports have warm up periods before starting. Golf pros have extensive warm up periods before going to the first tee. Mr. Weekend golfer usually has no warm up at all, and his first shot can set the trend for the rest of the round. I am a firm believer that all golf courses should have very easy starting holes. In order for the golf traffic to thin out, the first par 3 should be no sooner than the third hole. And whenever possible, the last hole should not be going into the setting sun. Many of the newer courses have several sets of tees, which can help make the first hole easier. Let the masochists play the long tees if they want.

History has a habit of repeating itself. Golf courses, and clubs, are listed very high as non-essential businesses. In World War II thousands of golf courses were closed, while some others reduced the number of holes. Those that were able to stay open, were having to go back to basic maintenance. Too many courses being built today are too elaborate and require too much costly maintenance. Golf courses should be made to encourage new golfers, both with simplicity, and lower costs to the golfer.

"If we played a golf course like this every week, there wouldn't be anyone left at the end of the season. We all would quit the game." Mark Calcavecchia.

So many parents have their youngsters take golf lessons to become another "Tiger." These parents do not have a clue as to what it entails. In some aspects it is similar to learning how to play a musical instrument, however it more complicated. Your musical instrument can be played and practiced at home. Usually at least an hour a day is required. Learning golf also requires practice every day, but where? If they do not have a place to practice, learning will become a long drawn out process, and with less than anticipated results.

I took up the trumpet when I was in the eighth grade. I drove everybody nuts with my practicing. One day my uncle came for a visit, and asked me how long I practiced. I told him an hour a day. He said he would give me a dollar if I practiced an hour. After about fifteen minutes he gave me the dollar to shut up. We had very nice neighbours, and didn't want to lose them, so I hung it up. I did master the triangle for the Christmas play when I was in the fifth grade.

All playing professionals practice constantly. That is their job. They are not salaried, and if they can't produce they lose their playing privileges, and have to play at a lower level. Similar to being taken off as a starter on the first team, and having to work your way back.

Cont.

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Out of your top 150 players on the PGA Tour, you would not recognize the names of 125 of them. They are the ones who are just making a living and hoping to make cuts and win a little each week.

There was the case of a young pro who was having a hard time. His money had run out, and he had just missed the cut. He was sitting on the curb in front of the clubhouse wondering what he was going to do next. All of a sudden a gust of wind blew a little piece of paper in front of him. His reflexes made him stomp down on that piece of paper with his heel. It turned out to be a meal ticket and his spikes had punched out all of the free meals.

McIlroy is new European Champion

Following a 54-hole cut, 70 of the 144-player starting field contested the final round of the International European Amateur Championship in Biella, Italy. The scene was set for a wonderful day of golf with the perfect conditions the players had enjoyed all week.

Rory McIlroy's two-shot overnight lead was extended immediately into the fourth round after playing partners, Anders Kristiansen (NOR) and Paul Waring (ENG) double-bogeyed and bogeyed the first hole respectively. It was Stephen Lewton (ENG) playing in the group in front who made a move with five consecutive birdies from the 7th to move to 14-under. McIlroy, however, had a steady start and turned the front nine 2-under to retain a narrow lead. A bogey on the 10th lost him the advantage briefly before a birdie at the 11th. Lewton continued steadily but did not increase his sub-par total until a birdie on the 18th gave him a clubhouse lead of 15-under. Kristiansen was making a heroic comeback following a double-bogey, bogey start to bring himself back to 12-under. Jamie Moul (ENG) shot a 66 to be -14 for the championship and Ross McGowan had the low round of the day, a 65, and was -10. Last year's champion, Marius Thorp (NOR) had his best round of the championship - 68 - to finish on -12.

McIlroy's controlled aggressive style of golf did not waiver under the pressure of the situation and he followed his birdie on the 11th with two more on the 15th and 16th. A narrow miss for birdie on the par 3 17th kept him at 17-under and the tournament was then his to lose on the 18th. A magnificent drive gave him a mere 8 iron to the par 5 final hole, which finished three metres from the pin. The eagle putt slipped by, but the birdie was a formality taking him to a winning score of -18, three ahead of Lewton.

The new International European Men's Amateur Champion, Rory McIlroy of Ireland, will enjoy an exemption to The Open Championship next year at Carnoustie.



Committee 2006 / 2007

It is only a matter of a few weeks now until the notices will be sent out in relation to the club AGMs. Prior to this, the incoming captains Pat Byron and Margaret Watchorne, will be trying to get their officers and committees together

It is now that people start to think about what they can offer to the club, is there something you would like to do ?, is there something you would like to change ? This is the time when you stand up and be counted.

A massive amount of work goes on behind the scenes that very little people see, next year will be no exception. Pat and Margaret will need people on their committees who will help with this effort. If you feel you would like to get involved then keep an eye on the notice boards over the next few weeks when applications for committee will be requested. All applications must be received in writing two weeks prior to each AGM and with the mens club AGM in early November we are probably only 6 weeks from this time.

Rules Corner Answers

1. The player would be 5 down after three holes, with a maximum deduction of two holes applied to the status of the match.
2. The player must play the ball as it lies or declare it unplayable again, taking another one-stroke penalty.
3. The ball must be played from its new location.

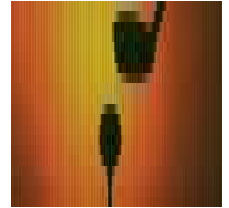
Colonel Bogey and Golf

Yes you heard it right .. and yes this is scraping the barrel a bit but what the heck – you can't beat totally useless trivia. Firstly who was Colonel Bogey and why is there a march named after him? Let's start with Kenneth J. Alford. That was the pseudonym used by Frederick Joseph Ricketts (1881-1945). Alford was an accomplished musician and composer. While America had John Phillip Sousa, Britain had Kenneth J. Alford. For nearly twenty years Alford was bandmaster of the Second Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. While in Scotland, playing golf, he heard two-notes whistled in warning out on the course. Those two notes, a descending minor third, sparked his imagination and inspired an entire march. The name, *Colonel Bogey March*, is a tip of the hat to its golfing origins. A liberal adaptation of this march is better known as the theme for the movie, *The Bridge On The River Kwai*.

(I bet that you are now whistling the march to yourself – I did when I first read the article !! Ed)

The Michael Moore Cup final

This year's final will be between the holders Nenagh and Boystown and will be played on Saturday September 9th. It is always a great day in and around the club with some excellent competition. Come along and show your support for the teams and the Sponsor.



GUI National Academy Now Open to Public

If you see an Irishman salute the crowds as he makes his victory walk up the 18th fairway of a future major championship, it is quite likely that he will have honed his skills in the idyllic surroundings of the Golfing Union of Ireland National Academy at Carton House

This spectacular new complex, which sits at the heart of the 800 year old demesne just 14 miles west of Dublin city near Maynooth in Co. Kildare, has just opened its doors to the public and is the jewel at the centre of a €7.5 million development that includes the GUI's new offices and Golf Museum.

Any member of the public is entitled to use the state-of-the-art facilities, which will put Ireland at the very forefront of golf development worldwide. A joint-venture between the GUI and Carton House, the National Academy features a magnificent driving range with a vast grass teeing area, 12 covered bays and two central teaching bays, equipped with the latest swing analysis and putting technology.

The range itself features dozens of pop-up greens at varying distances as well as three large practice greens, dedicated in turn to putting, pitching and bunker play. Ryder Cup star Padraig Harrington has also made several suggestions which have been incorporated into the design, including a second grass teeing area at the opposite end of the range, offering an alternative when wind or light conditions are unfavourable.

After a series of talks between the GUI and Conor Mallaghan, the Managing Director of the Carton House estate, a deal was hammered out whereby the Union would purchase a site for its Headquarters and National Museum. But in a separate agreement, the Mallaghan family also generously agreed to provide the GUI with an adjacent 22-acre site on a 999 year sporting lease, where they would build the Academy.

National Coach Neil Manchip, one of the most respected teaching professionals in the county, will be based at the Academy while Carton House professional Francis Howley will also give lessons there.

Members of the public are welcome to use the driving range and book lessons with the teaching professionals, who have access to the latest swing and putting analysis equipment. Little wonder, then, that the complex has already proved to be a huge success with some of Ireland's up-and-coming touring professionals.

Junior Golf Ireland (JGI) which was formed in 2003 as a partnership between the Golfing Union of Ireland, the Irish Ladies Golf Union and the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) Irish region, also hopes to make full use of the facilities. A small, artificial green supplied by Tourgreens Europe lies tucked away in the courtyard of the National Headquarters and will prove irresistible to groups of children who are set to visit the National Headquarters, Museum and Academy on organised school trips over the coming years.

Article written by Brian Keogh for GUI Official Magazine.

Junior Golf

At the end of August the club hosted a junior open competition which drew players from numerous surrounding clubs. Incorporated in this competition was the inaugural playing of the Garryhinch cup for girls which was won by the Curragh Golf Club. A fantastic day of golf and a well attended prize giving afterwards which was attended by the senior officers of the club was a credit to all the juniors who participated.

An immense amount of work has gone into the promotion of junior golf within the club by Frank Smith, Sharon Culleton, PJ O'Donoghue, John Lawlor and Niall Cooke. Their combined efforts are only now showing results with some fantastic golfing talent which puts many of us to shame. I'm sure a bright future exists for many under their guidance.



"I could get there with a wedge
...you better hit a seven."



To round off this newsletter we will take a Irish specific look at the Ryder cup.

Seventeen different Irishmen have played in the Ryder Cup over the years and their records are as listed below.

FRED DALY	1947, 1949, 1951, 1953	W3 L4 H1
HARRY BRADSHAW	1953, 1955, 1957	W2 L2 H1
CHRISTY O'CONNOR SNR	1955, 1957, 1959, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1973	W11 L21 H4
NORMAN DREW	1959	WO LO H1
JIMMY MARTIN	1965	WO L1 HO
HUGH BOYLE	1967	WO L3 HO
EDDIE POLLAND	1973	WO L2 HO
EAMONN DARCY	1975, 1977, 1981, 1987	W1 L8 H2
CHRISTY O'CONNOR JNR	1975, 1989	W1 L3 HO
JOHN O'LEARY	1975	WO L4 HO
DES SMYTH	1979, 1981	W2 LS HO
RONAN RAFFERTY	1989	W1 L2 HO
DAVID FEHERTY	1991	W1 L1 H1
PHILIP WALTON	1995	W1 L1 HO
DARREN CLARKE	1997, 1999, 2002	W4 L6 H2
PADRAIG HARRINGTON	1999, 2002	W3 L3 H1
PAUL MCGINLEY	2002	W0 L1 H2

As you can see from the list, and as previously covered, Christy O'Connor snr, is the most successful Irishman having scored 13 points for the team, next in line is Darren Clarke with 5 points with Fred Daly and Pdraig Harrington with three and a half points each next. Not spectacular by any means but key points by Irish men over the years have made all the difference.