



Case study – Duns Golf Club adopts a more structured approach

The challenges

From their experiences of their full year of clubgolf coaching (2007) - where offering children coaching throughout the year, and allowing them to turn up when they wanted resulted in large variations in attendance - the club felt a more structured approach to junior coaching was needed.

It became evident that the few girls who took part in coaching were unhappy being coached alongside boys.

The practice facilities for juniors were deemed unacceptable. A large practice area was available but some distance from the clubhouse and did not have green facilities. The last green was used for juniors to practise their putting and chipping but there were obvious safety issues. A practice area nearer to the clubhouse had fallen into disrepair.

Duns Golf Club does not have the benefits of a resident PGA Professional to support its volunteer coaches.

The solutions

The club's junior management group made the surrounding community aware that clubgolf coaching was taking place and that all were welcome, whether a member or not, through adverts in the local media, posters in local schools and shops and the Clubhouse. The Level 1 volunteer coaches attended firstclubgolf sessions at the local primary school.

To encourage more girls to play golf the club decided to follow the initiative working successfully at other clubs by adopting Girls in Golf coaching. Teaching girls in a separate group is working at Duns and the number of girls attending coaching has increased as a direct result.

To improve its practice facilities the junior management group worked closely with their clubgolf Regional Manager and submitted a bid to "Awards for All" in July 2008. A grant for £9445 was awarded and is being used to build a large new putting green, a deep bunker, a shallow bunker, a practice net, and to purchase a TV/DVD player to show Etiquette and Rules of Golf to the juniors.

To keep golf at the forefront of children's minds year round, winter sessions were organised using a golf driving range close to Duns. During these sessions a PGA Professional (a former Duns GC junior member) gave the juniors coaching with the volunteer coaches in attendance. The use of video equipment and other golfing aids was popular with the children and provided useful feedback for the volunteer coaches.

The club's committee has fully supported the junior management group's many initiatives. They welcomed and advised on the introduction of a junior constitution and supported social evenings for juniors and parents. Over 90 children and parents attended social evenings which included a quiz on golf etiquette and rules and issuing of Golf Passports.

The outcomes

Through the efforts of the clubgolf coaching programme many juniors have improved their skills, earned handicaps and now play in junior competitions. Some juniors have attained a sufficiently low handicap (18) to allow them to play in adult competitions.

Duns voluntary coaches' work has been recognised by the Berwickshire Sports Council, who in October 2008, awarded them a Special Recognition Award.

Having a well maintained junior register meant that children could be contacted in the event of bad weather, a frequent obstacle in 2007. Alternative arrangements were made to use the nearby driving

range. The relationship which built up with this centre meant Duns GC had some preferential treatment when required.

The challenge of having three coaches for as many as 40 children in a coaching session has been overcome by adult helpers assisting the volunteer coaches. The club will soon have a fourth qualified coach.

What's next?

Although the club's main 2008 aims were achieved, the junior management group realise that there is always room for improvement. The 2009 junior season will look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that exist and plan accordingly.

The club hopes its junior members will become adult members of Duns or another club. Those that move away from the area will be well grounded in golfing skills, etiquette and rules. This can only enhance the reputation of Duns Golf Club.

