

(Sent to Fife Courier, Fife Herald, Dunfermline Press)

### **Aberdour Golf Club children given Gleneagles treat**

Seven children from Aberdour Golf Club, who were introduced to golf this year by the national junior golf strategy, clubgolf, were invited to Gleneagles this weekend by clubgolf as a reward to their commitment to the programme.

The children, from primary schools in Aberdour and Dalgety Bay, took part in various golfing activities at the clubgolf stand in the tented village, had their technique sharpened up by PGA professionals and had a chance to watch some of the Championship action.

"We had a very good response from the children when we received the invite," said one of the club's four volunteer coaches, Charlie Neilsen. "It was a great experience for them to get coaching from different people and see the professional players in action. I'm sure they will take away what they have seen and learnt here today and practice it when they get back to the club.

"It was a very inspiring experience for them and one that will certainly help keep them involved and motivated."

clubgolf is a partnership between the Scottish Golf Union, the Scottish Ladies Golfing Association, the Professional Golfers' Association, the Golf Foundation and sportscotland. It was launched by Colin Montgomerie and Scotland's First Minister Jack McConnell at Gleneagles two years ago.

The strategy has been developed as a direct result of the Scottish Executive's commitment to introduce every nine-year-old child in Scotland to the game by 2009. A lasting legacy of Scotland's successful Ryder Cup 2009 bid, the Scottish Executive is providing funding of £500,000 per year for clubgolf through sportscotland until 2009.

Last year, clubgolf exceeded its target of introducing 10,000 children to the game by more than 2,000. Early signs show that this year's target of introducing 23,000 children to golf will also be surpassed.

#### **NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

- clubgolf is a partnership between the Scottish Golf Union, the Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association, the Professional Golfers' Association, the Golf Foundation and sportscotland. The strategy has been developed as a direct result of the Scottish Executive's commitment to introduce every nine-year-old child in Scotland to the game by 2009.

- clubgolf is funded by the Scottish Executive which has committed £500,000 per year to the scheme through sportscotland until 2009.

- As Scotland's national junior golf strategy, clubgolf is backed by Scotland's most famous golfers, Paul Lawrie, Sandy Lyle, Colin Montgomerie, and Scotland's First Minister, Jack McConnell, MSP and Sports Minister, Patricia Ferguson, MSP. It aims to provide new opportunities in the game for every child in the country and to increase participation in the sport by adopting a totally new approach to the development of junior golf.

- clubgolf has been introduced at a point where, of the 260,000 members in the 580 clubs north of the border, the average age is between 42 and 44 years old. This figure is likely to rise in line with the demographic trend of an ageing Scottish population. Although memberships have grown at a rate of just under five percent during the past decade, there has been an increase of almost 20 percent in the number of courses built over the same period.

- Clubs across Scotland are already playing a vital role in the clubgolf strategy. Following the six-week firstclubgolf course, children have the opportunity to progress to the second phase

of clubgolf's Player Pathway, Stage 1. Hosted by their local clubs, Stage 1 is a 23-hour course, covering the fundamentals of putting, chipping, full swing, rules and etiquette, taught by the club's fully trained volunteer coaches. After Stage 1 there are a further four stages on the Player Pathway.

clubgolf's targets for 2009 are:

- 50,000 9 year olds introduced to clubgolf every year through firstclubgolf
- 50,000 9-14 year olds retained in the clubgolf programme at any one time
- 20,000 9-14 year olds experiencing golf in a community golf programme setting
- 200 clubgolf centres (golf clubs and community linked centres delivering some of the above)
- 20 junior clubgolf facilities (new clubgolf facilities)
- 40 affiliated junior golf facilities (driving ranges/practice facilities utilising the clubgolf brand)

- Ends -

For further information please contact:  
Rob Eyton-Jones, clubgolf Press Officer on 07775 746981

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