

# Closest hickory shoot out for almost a century!

Wednesday 17 October 2018, 20:45

## Closest hickory shoot out for almost a century!

**Luffness New Golf Club, East Lothian** - In still and beautiful conditions, the players of the 14th World Hickory Open showed amazing patience, concentration and above all their sense of humour as they tee'd off at Luffness New Golf Club and Gullane Golf Club on Scotland's Golf Coast this morning. Today has been the closest hickory shoot out for almost a century as 10 players within 3 shots, performed for a £6000 GBP purse, for what has been a historical moment in golf.

With players from 13 countries from around the world, from as far as the USA, Japan and Scandinavia, competition was fierce. However, it was a Swede who walked off as the World Hickory Open Champion. Johan Moberg from Sweden, after several years of trying, is the 2018 World Hickory Open Champion. His scores of 73 and 71, for a total of 144, are impressive scores in any period, but even more surprising when achieved with clubs that date back 100 years. Yet skilful players such as last year's winner Fraser Mann and former Masters Champ Sandy Lyle are still able to hit powerful near-300-yards yard drives and record scores of as little as 67, although this has only been achieved twice in the tournament's history.

Competition consisted of a large number of international amateur and professional golfers. As in past years, the field reflected many of the world's best hickory golfers. Organizers were delighted with entrants from more than a dozen countries. Out of the 120 plus competitors, over 20 arrived from Switzerland, a country that counts some serious hickory golf experts.

Sweden is another European country that has embraced hickory golf at a very accomplished level, with literally thousands playing the game back home. The World Hickory welcomed over 20 of them this year.

The next largest team was not unsurprisingly from the USA, led by Mike Stevens, former champ and U.S. champion. In addition, England, led by Andrew Marshall from Norfolk, has been well represented this year. Andrew was Open champion at Carnoustie in 2015. Other nations entered included both Austria, Denmark, and another half-dozen countries, emphasizing the rapid growth of the game in Europe.

Defending champion, Fraser Mann was but one of Scotland's representatives, including junior golfers from Loretto's much vaunted Golf Academy, led by former hickory champion Rick Valentine, has also been playing this week.

More than 80 percent of the 2018 tournament's entrants have competed in the past and are likely to return as the game continues to grow in this extraordinary but incredibly beautiful location of Scotland's Golf Coast.

Hamish Steedman, Chairman of the World Hickory Festival commented, "We were very fortunate with the weather this week and as a result we saw some extremely good and competitive golf. We had our largest international field to date and it so exciting to see the World Hickory Festival go from strength to strength. The camaraderie amongst the participants was evident all week. We look forward to welcoming all participants back to East Lothian again next year."

Councillor John McMillan, East Lothian Council spokesperson for Economic Development and Tourism, welcomed the players and the attention they brought to Scotland's Golf Coast. He said: "Hopefully the players will return, year after year, encouraging friends and family to discover all that East Lothian has to offer, on and off the golf course. East Lothian Council was proud to support this unique event, which reflects the long history of golf here on Scotland's Golf Coast, where Mary Queen of Scots is believed to have once played at Musselburgh Old Links, using

hickory clubs similar to the ones used here. It's great to see history and tradition celebrated at such a fun and entertaining event."

Scores were as follows:

Johan Moberg	Sweden	73	71
Andrew Marshall	England	71	74
Perry Somers	Australia	73	73

World Hickory Amateur Champion is James von Lossow with a total of 151, runner up John Henry Williams, third Andrew von Lossow.

[Click here to visit the website of the World Hickory Open and a page where scores of the Open and Net divisions may be found.](#)

**World Hickory Festival 15 Oct – 19 Oct 2018** [www.worldhickoryopen.com](http://www.worldhickoryopen.com)