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East Lothian News – October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009

News, October 2, 2009

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# Golf challenge success at oldest playing course in the world

Musselburgh Hickory Challenge, held on Sunday September 20 and Monday September 21, has been voted a huge success.

The two-day event saw professional and amateur golfers, playing with hickory clubs, at Musselburgh Old Links Golf Course. This would appear to be the first professional competition held on that course since Harry Vardon won the last Musselburgh Open in 1906. The event was supported by East Lothian Council and Scottish Homecoming, and due to its great success, could possibly end up being an annual event.

Apart from the Scottish golfers who took part, other professional and amateur golfers came from France, Germany, Sweden and Australia, and included Andrew Oldcorn (Kingsacre), past PGA champion, Dean Robertson, (Mearns Castle), former winner of the Italian Open, Perry Somers from Australia and Klas Ohlsson, Lunds Academica, Sweden.

On Day 1, the professionals played in an 18 hole medal format on the links, which had been prepared to a very high standard by East Lothian Council's greenkeeper Alistair Patterson.

The winner was Robert Arnott (Bishopbriggs GR) with a score of 71. In second place was Lindsay Mann (Carnoustie) with 73 and joint third was Fraser Mann (Musselburgh), Klas Ohlsson, Sweden, and Perry Somers (Australia) on 74. Amateur scratch winner was Alan Minto (East Lothian Council's golf officer) on 77 and the handicap winner was Boris Leitow, (Germany) with 76.

Monday saw an exciting match between the professionals and amateurs in a Ryder-Cup format of nine holes fourballs, nine holes foursomes followed by nine holes singles. After the first nine, the amateurs were in the lead by five points and the second nine holes gave the amateurs a lead of 12 points to eight. However, after the final nine holes singles, the pros redeemed themselves and the final score was

Professionals 22, Amateurs 18.

All the competitors and guests were entertained to a marvellous dinner in the Old Weighing Room Bistro at the Racecourse. It was great to see the friendly banter of professionals and amateurs sitting down together in a relaxing atmosphere, after the two days they spent competing against each other.

The prizes were presented by Provost Sheena Richardson of East Lothian Council, who made a special journey to support the event. The Provost pledged her continued support for the game of golf, and the fact that East Lothian is very rich in top class golf courses. She was particularly pleased to see a competition of this standard being played by both professional and amateur golfers on this historic course, which is recognised as the oldest playing course in the world.

Guest speaker for the evening was Professor David Purdie, of Royal Burgess, Sunningdale and Pine Valley GC, who gave a speech of great quality. Grace and benediction was given by Archie Baird, the well-known golf historian. Archie was accompanied by his wife Sheila, grand-daughter of Willie Park Snr.

Other guests in attendance were Glen McPhee the PGA representative who ran the competition over the two days, Councillor John Caldwell, who worked with Lionel Freedman in setting this event up, Alastair Patterson, the greenkeeper, who was praised all evening for the excellent condition of the course, Tom Shearer ELC Community Well Being, Bill Axon of Sports Plus, and Irene Tait and Alan Hay from Musselburgh and Inveresk Community Council. Everyone concerned admitted that playing hickory golf on the Old Links was most enjoyable, with many, including representatives from the PGA, commenting on the great condition of the course.

Perry Somers, the Australian professional, said afterwards that it was the best day's golf in his 45 years as a player.



**HICKORY SUCCESS:** At Musselburgh, above, are Glen McPhee of the PGA, Provost Sheena Richardson, and Dean Robertson, winning captain of the professionals. Below, kitted out at Gullane Golf Club are Beth Freedman (Musselburgh), Heather MacRae (Gullane) and Eilyn Raistrick (Kilspindie).  
Staff Photo: Below 02/10/09/ELN/HICKORY1



## Mark is king of hickory shafts at Gullane No.2

Joint sixth overnight, Mark King forged to the front with the best second round of two-over-par 73 to win the world professional hickory championship by two shots with a two-round total of six-over 148 over the Gullane No 2 course last Friday.

King, Scottish boys' matchplay champion at Dunbar in 1989, was winning on the Tartan Tour for the fourth time this season — and the cheque for £2,011 was almost double his previous best in 2009.

Runners-up on 150 were last year's winner and 1983 Walker Cup player, Lindsay Mann (Carnoustie) and Gullane's Alasdair Good, playing only his second ever competitive round with hickory-shafted clubs.

Mann's rounds were 76 and 74, Good's 73 and 77. Each earned £1,408.

There were two Manns in the top six with Lindsay's brother Fraser sharing fourth place with Paul Wardell (Whitekirk) and Andrew Oldcorn (Kings Acre) on 151 for which the trio received £742 each.

Fraser Mann and Wardell both scored 74 and 77, Oldcorn, joint overnight leader with Good and Steven Taylor, had rounds of 73 and 78.

Former British women's open amateur stroke play champion Heather MacRae, who is doing her PGA training with Alasdair Good as her boss and mentor, finished one shot outside the money.

She had scores of 84 and 82 for 31st place on 166. The £12,500 prize fund stretched as far as 30th place.

Craigbrae, Kirkliston, West Lothian, EH29 9EL Tel: 0131 319 1477, Fax: 0131 319 1476

e-mail: [comproPR@btconnect.com](mailto:comproPR@btconnect.com)