The 2012 Scottish National Tournament took place at Ratho Park Golf Club on Wednesday, 20th June. Ratho Park, situated 30 minutes from Edinburgh city centre, provided an excellent setting for the competition. The parkland golf course, designed by James Braid was first established in 1928, although the history of the club can be traced back to the turn of the 19th Century through a merger with Corstorphine Golf Club on land that is now part of Edinburgh Zoo.

In 1955, the club purchased the estate of Ratho Park with the mansion house transformed into a magnificent clubhouse. Playing conditions were excellent for competitors considering June’s inclement weather. The course was in fact usually playable over the previous weekend, and Billy Hudson and his team are to be congratulated for producing a course in superb condition for the tournament. As with all golf tournaments, the weather plays a significant role in competition scoring and the enjoyment for players. With the exception of a couple of light showers in the afternoon, the weather was excellent and very much welcomed by all.

Although playing numbers were down on the previous year, a very competitive field assembled for the tournament. This was highlighted by an extremely close and hard-fought duel between 3 times winner David Simpson of Crieff Golf Club and Scottish Regional Chairman, Stuart Taylor of Glasgow Golf Club for the Scottish Championship. Both returned an excellent one under par score of 68 with the Chairman prevailing on count back over the last nine holes.

Kenneth Mitchell from St Andrews Links Trust won the Friendship Trophy for the best nett score of 67 using his handicap of 5 to good effect. After receiving the Scottish Challenge Cup, Stuart Taylor thanked Vice Captain, John Dea, the committee and members of Ratho Park for their hospitality and for the courtesy offered to players.

A Quaich was presented to the Vice Captain, who then paid tribute to the hard work of all greenskeeping staff and remarked that the club was delighted to host the tournament. Congratulations to all who took part and we hope to see everyone next year at Laas Golf Course for the 2013 tournament.

THE 2012 SCOTTISH NATIONAL TOURNAMENT PRIZE LIST

SOGA CHALLENGE CUP (SCRATCH CHAMPION)
Stuart Taylor, Glasgow GC 68

FRIENDSHIP TROPHY (NET CHAMPION)
Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews Links Trust 72 5 67

RANSOMES TROPHY - 1st CLASS
1. David Simpson, Crieff GC 68 +1 69
2. Paul Murphy, Fife Golf Trust 78 5 73
3. Gavin Neil, St Andrews Links Trust 81 6 75

PARTITION TROPHY - 2nd CLASS
1. Graeme Bolton, G West 78 9 69
2. Ian MacLeod, Tain 78 7 71
3. Thomas Adams, Crieff GC 83 12 71

STRI TROPHY (ST IVES RUBLER) - 3rd CLASS
1. Dale Robertson, Newcastach GC 83 15 68
2. Gerard Broadley, Glasgow GC 94 17 77
3. Ryan Bamney, Glasgow GC 94 16 78

DICK ATKINSON TROPHY - BEST HEAD GREENKEEPER
Euan Grant, Turfberry Golf Courses 13 8 49

M & M TROPHY - BEST ASSISTANT
Craig Berry, Leven 77 7 70

SOGA TROPHY - BEST VETERAN
Charles MacDonald, Crieff GC 73 3 70

ST MUNGO TROPHY - SECTION TEAM WINNERS - Central Section
Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews 67
David Simpson, Crieff 69
Graeme Bolton, G West 69
Charles MacDonald, Crieff 70
TOTAL 275

QUAICH – TRADE PRIZE
Kevin Brunton, Greentree 74 0 74

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS
Scratch, Stuart Taylor, Glasgow GC
Nett, Kenneth Mitchell, St Andrews Links Trust

Widespread recognition of golf’s positive social and environmental impacts is gathering pace – and is being led by a group of clubs who have shown the way toward ever-stronger achievements and credible communications through the GEO Certified™ ecolabel.

Sweden’s Forsgården Golf Club is a leader among leaders, stepping up in 2009 as one of the very first golf clubs to become GEO Certified™. Three years later, they are the first club in the world to be re-certified by the Golf Environment Organization. Re-certification is a vital point of credibility for all ecolabelling, demonstrating how sustainability can extend deeper into decision-making and communications over time, and affirming the important ‘continual improvement’ principle that makes sustainability a mindset and a journey rather than a static destination.

The announcement represents a milestone in golf’s sustainability journey; the first time that any golf club, anywhere in the world, has been re-certified via a dedicated, third-party verified and transparently reported process for golf.

Garden Shepherd, GEO Board Member and Keeper Head of Global Policy for WWF International recognized the significance:

“Having worked on the development of many industry certification programmes and ecolabels, from forestry to fisheries, I have seen landmark points in time, when something significant demonstrates a clear path to a more sustainable future. This is one of those moments.”

“GEO was founded to support clubs in their sustainability actions and bring forward real, transparently reported results; steering away from one-time awards that risk bringing complacency, in favour of driving continual improvement.”

It is to Forsgården’s considerable credit that through this re-certification, they demonstrate clear and quantifiable improvements across a comprehensive range of issues. Amongst all the processes and protocols, we are reminded that it’s positive individual, personal engagement and action that environment and society needs.”

Ole Rager-Kusin, an independent verifier accredited by GEO, conducted the initial certification and the recertification and found that Forsgården upheld and strengthened a solid environmental performance.

Making more improvements in the three years since becoming GEO Certified™, especially around landscape and ecosystems, energy and resource conservation, waste management, and also more communications with authorities and the surrounding community.

Southwood and Brockenhurst Taste Victory

The first of the South West and South Wales Region’s Golf Management Competitions, sponsored by Tacit, have taken place and two clubs have secured their places in the finals of the event.

The South Coast Section event was recently held at Liphook GC where the winning team from Southwood GC came in with 82 points and Test Valley GC in fourth place on 79 points. The nearest the pin competition was won by Paul Cooper from Wareham GC and the longest drive winning team from Southwood GC came in with 82 points. In second place was the team from Brockenhurst GC with 81 points. Both teams have won a place in the finals.

The South West and South Wales Region’s Golf Management Competition was won by Paul Cooper from Westwood GC and the longest drive competition was won by Chris Hudson from Southwood GC.

BIGGA South West and South Wales Region would like to thank Tim Webb and Tacit for their support of the region in sponsoring these events.

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Coventry GC First in England to be GEO Certified™

Coventry Golf Club is the first golf club in England to be awarded the international ecolabel GEO Certified™ in recognition of outstanding sustainability efforts.

Established in 1887, the club celebrated its 125th anniversary this year and also the centenary of the re-location of the course to Foleshill. Many of England’s nearly 2000 golf courses are community based clubs like Coventry, making this an important example of how sustainability can be embraced with positive results for the environment and the economic performance of the golf business.

Phil Weaver, Coventry’s Head PGA Professional & Course Manager and Chairman of the PGA of Great Britain and Ireland, was part of the driving force behind the journey through the programme that led to the GEO Certified™ ecolabel, and remarks:

"We recognise the pressures on the environment at large and understand that golf clubs have an important responsibility to take their stewardship of the land seriously. In the last five years we have become much more aware and active, making sustainability a consideration in every decision we make."

“GEO's OnCourse™ programme was easy to follow and made sure we thought about a wide range of practical areas and there were suggestions for improvements as we went along. The on-site verification with Matt Johnsa was extremely constructive and left us with new ideas and motivation for the future. We will fly the GEO Certified™ flag with a great deal of pride.”

Weaver worked in close conjunction with colleagues Club Captain Keith Lindsey, Club member Professor Ian Foster, and past Captains and President Robin Bussell in drive the project forward and become the first Golf Club in England to achieve this prestigious award.

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