REGIONAL SECRETARY’S REPORT
2015

Dear Member

2015 proved to be a year of change for The PGA in Scotland, with the former Secretary leaving the organisation in June, followed by my appointment in August. I have very much enjoyed my first few months at the helm, and firmly believe that many opportunities will present themselves which will allow us – members, committee and the executive team working together - to further develop and promote The PGA in Scotland as the premier golf organisation in this country.

I thought it might be helpful to reflect on the past twelve months, and share with you some plans for 2016.

2015 Tournament Review

Tartan Tour Order of Merit Winner – Chris Kelly

- Scottish PGA Championship, Kings Course, Gleneagles – Chris Kelly
- P&H Championship, The Renaissance Club – Paul Robinson
- Northern Open, Cruden Bay – Chris Kelly
- Aberdeen Asset Management Qualifier - Craig Sutherland
- 36 Hole (Duddingston) – Chris Kelly
- 36 Hole (Dundonald) – Paul McKechnie
- 36 Hole (Musselburgh) – Kenneth Hutton
- Deer Park Pro-Am – Greig Hutcheon
- Kerr Investments Pro Am – Graham Fox and Paul O’Hara (tied)

2015 saw the inaugural Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open Qualifier being held at North Berwick Golf Club the weekend before the Scottish Open itself at nearby Gullane. A successful new Order of Merit event introduced as part of the Tartan Tour schedule with a view to providing opportunities for Scottish professional golfers to play in their national open, it carried a £50,000 prize fund and offered 5 places in the Scottish Open. The event attracted extensive media coverage and over 2,000 spectators turned up to watch the action over the two tournament days. The second staging of the event will be at Moray Golf Club, Lossiemouth on 2-3 July 2016.

Tartan Tour Young Professionals Order of Merit Winner – Paul O’Hara

- Shotts Young Professionals Pro-Am – Paul O’Hara
- Scottish Young Professional Championship – Paul O’Hara
- Greenburn Assistants Matchplay – Paul O’Hara
- Sandy Pipey Masters – Paul O’Hara

Ladies Tartan Tour Order of Merit Winner – Laura Murray

- PLGCLTT Murcar Links – Michele Thomson
- PLGCLTT Montrose – Maria Tulley
- PLGCLTT Deer Park – Kylie Walker
- PLGCLTT Dalmahoy – Laura Murray
- PLGCLTT Championship Deeside – Nastja Banovec (a)
Other Notable Winners:

- Paul Lawrie Invitational, Deeside – Paul McKechnie
- Scottish Senior Strokeplay Championship, Dalmahoy – Kenneth Walker
- Carnegie Invitational – Paul McKechnie, Alastair Forsyth, Scott Henderson (tied)
- Tomatin Single Malt 3 Day pro-am – Neil Fenwick

Representative success – on and off the course

**PGA Cup (Llandudno Trophy)** – Tartan Tour players set the twitter feeds alight in September supporting compatriots Graham Fox and Gareth Wright as they played their part in the historic Great Britain & Ireland victory in the PGA Cup at CordeVale, California.

Congratulations go to Captain John Bevan and his team who etched their names in the history books by defeating the United States 13.5-12.5, winning the Llandudno Trophy on American soil for the first time.

**PGA play-offs** – in November, Gareth Wright continued his great form by winning the PGA Playoffs in Antalya, Turkey, and securing his status as the PGA’s number one player.

**International Team Championship 2015** - The PGA in Scotland Team of Graham Fox, David Orr and Gareth Wright put up a valiant defence of the title they won last year at Gloria Golf Club’s Old Course in Turkey, finishing on the same score of -18 as the French team, before ultimately losing out on the top prize in a play-off situation.

**PGAs of Europe – 5 Star Professional Award** – Paul Lawrie (Paul Lawrie Golf Centre and Foundation) was recognised when he received the PGAs of Europe’s 5 Star Professional Award which “seeks to recognise and honour the best in the business.” An accolade from his peers, this well-deserved award recognises that, through his contributions to the game, Paul has proven himself to be a role model for golfers of all ages and abilities, and both genders.

2016 Tournament Schedule

Details of The PGA in Scotland’s 2016 Tartan Tour Schedule are available to all members on the BlueGolf system.

Everyone at The PGA in Scotland is grateful for the support of our partners and sponsors, including Palmer and Harvey, Aberdeen Asset Management, Event Scotland, The Gleneagles Hotel, The Muir Group (Deer Park) and Kerr Investments.

2016 Tartan Tour Order of Merit Series

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23rd-25th May</td>
<td>The P&amp;H Championship</td>
<td>The Renaissance Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>21st-24th June</td>
<td>The Northern Open</td>
<td>Royal Dornoch Golf Club</td>
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<td>2nd-3rd July</td>
<td>Aberdeen Asset Scottish Open Qualifier</td>
<td>Moray Golf Club (Old)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd-3rd August</td>
<td>Deer Park Masters Pro-Am</td>
<td>Deer Park Country Club</td>
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<td>27th-28th August</td>
<td>Kerr Investments Pro-Am</td>
<td>Dumfries &amp; Galloway GC</td>
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<tr>
<td>17th-20th October</td>
<td>The Scottish PGA Championship at Gleneagles</td>
<td>King’s Course, Gleneagles</td>
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2016 sees the 100th staging of the Scottish PGA Championship and details of any celebratory events will be advised in due course.

2016 also sees a celebration of 400 years of golf in Dornoch, so it is fitting that the Northern Open is to be played at Royal Dornoch from 21-24 June.

The scheduling for the 2017 Order of Merit events is already well advanced and work is continuing to secure additional Order of Merit events and additional playing opportunities for future years.
Ladies’ Tartan Tour

Regretfully, the 2016 schedule does not include any Ladies’ Tartan Tour events after a decision was taken to drop them based on participation figures and a consequent lack of sponsorship. Of 5 events last year, only 16 PGA professionals participated in total and, while the events were open to top amateurs, only 3 played during the season. While the concept of the tour was good, the lack of support made it unsustainable. With no gender discrimination in the PGA, members are entitled to play in events on the main schedule.

2016 Assistants’ Order of Merit Series

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>14th-15th August</td>
<td>Shotts Young Professionals Pro-Am</td>
<td>Shotts GC</td>
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<tr>
<td>22nd-24th August</td>
<td>Scottish Young Professionals Championship</td>
<td>West Lothian GC</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th-19th September</td>
<td>Sandy Pipey Masters</td>
<td>Royal Dornoch</td>
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Everyone remains committed to delivering a mix of competitive golf and education for PGA Assistants in Scotland. Last year saw the announcement of an exciting new strategic partnership between the PGA and the University of the Highlands & Islands ("UHI") which in practice will enable Assistant Professionals to pursue the PGA degree programme under the Scottish educational system and funding model via UHI rather than through Birmingham University.

In the past, with variances in the funding models in Scotland and England, Scottish students were at a disadvantage when accessing the PGA’s vocational degree programme. Consequently, the PGA sought to establish a partnership with a Scottish university and is delighted to enter into a long-term relationship with UHI.

It was encouraging to see that the first “graduate” from The PGA in Scotland’s Modern Apprenticeship Scheme has successfully completed his apprenticeship at Inverness Golf Club and has been retained as an Assistant Professional. David Grindell worked under the watchful eye of PGA professional Mel Douglas and has decided to further his studies by enrolling on the PGA Foundation Degree Programme.

An often overlooked fact is the support provided by the PGA in Scotland Patrons Club to the Assistants’ programme. Any surplus on the Patrons’ Club each year is vested in the future of emerging PGA professionals. I am looking to drive interest in the Patrons’ Club this year and am seeking your support in encouraging new members of this group which has been described by a current member as "a golf society with a difference – the only one whose aim is to support and nurture young golf professionals while at the same time enjoying some great courses". Further information is available on the Patrons Club page of the website [http://www.pga.info/regions/scotland/patrons-club.aspx](http://www.pga.info/regions/scotland/patrons-club.aspx)

2016 pro-am series

Once again, a busy season of Pro-Ams will be held throughout the country. The calendar has been adversely affected by the economic situation in the oil industry, with a number of pro-ams in the Aberdeen area having been shelved for this year. Throughout the season, I will continue to work with the sponsors and host clubs that previously held pro-ams in that geographical area, with the aim of them returning to the schedule in 2017.

Two new pro-ams have, however, been introduced. The Gleneagles International pro-am, the week before The Open Championship in July, provides a great opportunity for members to bring a team for a top quality golfing experience, and, in the central belt, Alzheimer Scotland will introduce a fund-raiser for a charity close to many hearts, to be held in September at Cawder Golf Club.

2016 PGA in Scotland Winter Fourball Series

This year’s PGA in Scotland Winter Fourball Series commenced in January 2016 at Craigielaw GC. The series was devised to offer competitive, sociable playing opportunities throughout the winter. Participation levels have remained consistent with last year and the support provided by the host PGA professionals and clubs is much appreciated.
Business Relationship Officer (“BRO”)

The BRO activity has continued apace throughout 2015. Since 2013, BRO services have been provided to over 2,200 members, 282 of which were in Scotland. The objectives of the BRO service include increasing support, information and advice available to PGA members, coupled with forging stronger links with the golf industry. Thanks are due to Kenny Hutton and David Gemmell, the BROs for The PGA in Scotland, for their contribution during the year.

The BRO service continues to evolve, with the aim of influencing golf clubs and employers by promoting the value of the PGA professional.

Coach Education

The Coach Education Team works within The PGA in Scotland to support PGA professionals in developing their coaching skills, knowledge and experience through provision of comprehensive coach education and development programmes. Sustaining strong partnerships with sportscotland and others provides PGA members with access to cutting edge coaching expertise, enabling them to provide the best possible experience for those they coach.

PGA in Scotland Annual Lunch

In December 2015, the Annual Lunch was held in The Hilton Hotel in Glasgow. The event was hugely successful and was well received by the 700 plus attendees. The Guest of Honour was Paul McGinley, who gave a fascinating insight into his approach to his successful Ryder Cup captaincy.

The Stewart Thom Award to the leading PGA in Scotland Trainee in the final exams went to Julie Otto. Douglas Gillespie of Gillespie Plant Hire Ltd once again sponsored this award and our thanks go to Douglas for his longstanding support.

The John Panton Memorial award was presented to Jack Steven, Head Professional at Glasgow Golf Club for 37 years before retiring in 2007.

Obituaries - 2015

Inevitably, 2015 saw the loss of some of the PGA’s Scottish members, including John Boath, Raymond Issitt, Finlay Morrison, John Nicolls, Duncan Sinclair and George Small. I am sure you will join me in sending the condolences of everyone in The PGA in Scotland to the families of these members.

Staff

2015 saw the end of an era, with the retirement of Janette Miller after 35 years with The PGA in Scotland. Janette is enjoying her retirement and has asked me to thank everyone for their good wishes and gifts.

Administrators Claire Wilson and Lesley Bernard have been a great help to me since I joined the organisation last year, and I’d like to record my thanks to them, as well as to the Coach Education team of Heather Gaunt and Donna Holmes. Congratulations are due to Heather and her husband on the birth of their little girl at the end of last year. Heather is currently on maternity leave, and her responsibilities will be covered for the next few months by Jane Booth.

Thanks are also due to Tournament Controller Glen McPhee and his seasonal colleague Roy Murray for delivering the calendar of events to a high standard throughout the year, sometimes in adverse weather conditions such as those encountered at the Scottish PGA Championship last April. Their knowledge and experience of running golf tournaments are much valued. It is the intention to recruit a second seasonal Tournament Controller for 2016, with the interviews due to take place in early March.
I should also mention our team of casual support staff who assist primarily with starting and recording duties at the PGA in Scotland’s events. Many of these individuals have worked with the PGA for many years, and indeed 2016 sees the 25th anniversary of Ronnie Thomson joining the PGA to support the tournament function.

The entire team, whether based in the office providing services to the wider membership or out in the field running events on the Tartan Tour, will work together throughout 2016 to make sure that the members’ interests are served in the most efficient, effective and engaging manner.

Summary

2016 represents another important year in the history of The PGA in Scotland, with a particular highlight being the 100th staging of the Scottish PGA Championship. In addition, I am keen to develop a vision for future tournament schedules, providing playing opportunities not just on the main Tartan Tour, but for assistants, seniors and club professionals, some of whom might be searching for networking opportunities as much as competition.

I’m also keen to engage, not just with those members who play on the Tartan Tour, but those involved in all other aspects of the life of the PGA professional, and I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming year.

Scotland is the Home of Golf, but the PGA professionals are the Heart of Golf.

Let’s collectively make sure that The PGA in Scotland shouts its corner loudly and delivers a quality and visible service to the game of golf.

Aye

Shona Malcolm, Secretary – The PGA in Scotland