



## Presidents' Award winners "inspire the next generation of young golfers"

The Golf Foundation Presidents' Awards at Wentworth in May celebrated the incredible work of volunteers and professionals in offering their time and commitment to help young people to enjoy all the benefits of golf.

Thanks to support from the European Tour, the ceremony was held in Wentworth Club's elegant Ballroom, where the event's largest ever audience heard the stories of ten award winners and their projects, which all help to develop the golfers and golf stars of the future.

As a charity the Golf Foundation relies completely on the exceptional efforts of hundreds of junior organisers and 'young leaders', hundreds of PGA Pros who take the game into schools and welcome children back for club coaching and, in addition, the Foundation has trained a great many enthusiastic teachers who have embraced golf as a sport as part of the school curriculum.

The Golf Foundation's new President, Sandy Jones, presented the trophies, while Chief Executive Brendon Pyle talked the audience through the award winners and their "incredible work", which includes the following:



The Critchley Award celebrates a project that has taken golf into the community and encouraged more young people to take up the sport. The deserving winner this year is the **3 Hammers Golf Complex**, near Wolverhampton (pictured above). Using a team of five PGA coaches, a par 3 golf course, 20 bay driving range and purpose-built 10,000 sq ft 'Learn to Play Zone' for children, the 3 Hammers has provided over 3,000 local youngsters with a taster session at the facility over the past year. An impressive 42% were girls. The venue acts as a successful feeder for the junior sections of local golf clubs.



**Ingleby Barwick Golf Academy** led by **Ross Jackson**, was winner of the Bonallack Award, presented to a project that has demonstrated a successful pathway from schools into club membership. PGA Pro Ross Jackson is at the heart of this scheme which works with a number of key partners (pictured bottom, centre).

- Over 3,000 pupils were taught in schools over two years;
- 200 of them received coaching at the golf facility;
- the club hosted 54 junior competitions over the course of 2015;
- juniors were allocated their own area in the Bistro where they could play games and have fun.

The result – the club's junior membership has grown from 20 to 60 in two years.



The Burroughs Award this year (above) was presented to an individual who has made particular progress in golf in the face of personal

challenges. **Jordan Rosser**, aged 16, has been recognised for thriving at his golf, playing with physical and learning disabilities, while as a volunteer he has also helped to make the sport more accessible for other young people in the community and at his golf club.

- Jordan has been Junior Captain at Rhondda GC;
- he is a valued member of Golf Development Wales's (GDW) Youth Panel;
- Jordan is part of the Swansea Inclusive Futures Project and was an inspirational speaker at this project's camp. Jordan said he "really wanted to put something back into the game".



The Golf Foundation relies on the support of golf clubs. The Gus Payne Award is presented to the golf club that has donated the most money to the charity in the last year and for 2015 this was **Walton Heath Golf Club** in Surrey (above).

Members clubbed together to make voluntary donations and raise an impressive £3,746. Brendon Pyle said: "This is a club that really understands how a great club can make a great contribution to the future of the game."



The Montgomery Award is given to a young volunteer who has helped inspire other youngsters into golf and this was presented to **Emma Allison**, aged 17, who volunteers at weekly coaching sessions at Morpeth GC in Northumberland, alongside PGA Head Pro Martyn Jobling.

Emma, who is a county player, also supports Martyn's outreach work in schools using Tri-Golf and helps at the local driving range. Emma said: "I really like volunteering as I was their age when I started so it's really good to help them through the stages I have experienced."



The Mackenzie Award is presented to a project that demonstrates how golf can be used to promote positive life messages.

**Alan Leason**, of Sand Martins GC in Berkshire, used an HSBC Golf Roots Plus grant to tackle vandalism to the golf club by welcoming the young people involved into the club and making them 'ambassadors' for the venue. Alan set up a Feel Inspired project, linking Sand Martins GC to a local Special Educational Needs (SEN) school. As a result, the club now offers a free scholarship to children with SEN. The programme has now been expanded to include nine golf clubs across three counties, all with links to local SEN schools. Alan has raised £25,000 to support the overall project.



The Sinclair Award is made each year to a leading PGA Professional. This year, the award is made jointly to two Pros who work together, **Jonathan Pearson** and **Paul O'Donnell**, of Cookridge Hall Golf Club, Leeds. Each received an ETIQUIS golfer's watch kindly donated by Gary Butler, with their awards. In 2015, this pair coached 1,500 children in schools and community taster sessions, 400 entered through the gates of a golf club, 360 attended at least five weeks of coaching, and 25 new young members were created. Some 150 youngsters have weekly golf lessons, including 60 girls; there are sessions for youngsters with disabilities and a satellite club for teenagers.



The Laddie Lucas Award celebrates a project that has created more opportunities for girls with a strong link to the golf club.

**Girls Golf Rocks in Essex** saw the Golf Foundation, England Golf, Essex CGP, Essex County Girls, and Active Essex work together to encourage more beginner girls into golf (see more, page 16). PGA coaches at four golf clubs across Essex delivered the project with the support of 12

Essex County girl players who volunteered to act as role models/ambassadors based on their own experiences in golf.



The Gallacher Award acknowledges the work of the unsung hero, the willing volunteer.

**Judith Thornell**, of Oswestry Golf Club, became the club junior organiser in 1999. Her excellent work means:

- some 50-75 juniors regularly attend the club's Junior Friday Night;
- Judith then helps with the junior lessons for five to six hours on a Saturday;
- Judith promotes golf in the local community including a golf scheme with a girls' football club, often funding activities out of her own pocket. One parent summed her up: "A fantastic junior organiser".



The Sir Henry Cotton Award is the Foundation's most prestigious award, presented to an individual who has made a significant contribution to junior golf. This year's recipient is **David Owen** of Knowle Golf Club, Bristol. Along with the fine trophy, David receives a special grant generously provided by the Stanley Morrison Charitable Trust and an ETIQUIS golfer's watch kindly donated by Gary Butler. David Owen became Junior Organiser of Knowle GC in 1999, when his daughter Sally joined as a junior member. There are now 23 girls in the junior section, compared with 22 boys.

Over 40 children under the age of 10 attend a Monday night academy session run by our recipient. With the club situated beside one of the most deprived areas of the UK, David set up a support fund with the help of Knowle members, which ensures that finances are not a barrier to any child playing the game at this club. Five pupils from a local secondary school have been given free membership. On receiving his award, David Owen said being a Junior Organiser isn't always easy but is always worth it "when you see that sense of joy and achievement on the faces of the children." David added: "One final and very important thank you goes to my wife Jennifer who has shown me so much support."