

## CLWB GOLFF BETWS Y COED - CASE STUDY

### Why - Just a bit of background about the club/initiative

Betws y Coed Golf Club was founded in 1977 and it is located in a very scenic location on the banks of two rivers the river Conwy and the River Llugwy. It provides very easy walking and has attracted golfers from far and wide. Although it is relatively short ion yardage and a nine hole course it is a tricky test of golf and even the most proficient golfers find it challenging.

Like so many other golf clubs Betws y Coed Golf Club has had its ups and downs with the current financial situation proving challenging in attracting new members. It has the advantage of being some distance from the other golf clubs on the North Wales coast e.g. Conwy, North Wales and Maesdu.

Many years ago the club had a thriving junior section but over the years this section gradually dwindled until there were no junior members at the club. With an aging golfing population, as is the case with so many golf clubs these days, the future looked bleak.

An application for finance from Conwy Council's community Chest was submitted by Jason Musgrave and this with the intention of introducing golf lessons into the local secondary school and to provide coaching skills for three younger members at the club. The club is fortunate in having historical links with North Wales Golf Club, Llandudno. Richard Bradbury, professional at North Wales Golf Club, has always been very supportive of the club and it was through this contact and with the help and assistance of Kim Ellis, Wales Golf, that it was arranged that Robin Hughes from North Wales golf Club would take responsibility for the coaching.

Golf tuition started at Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy at the start of the current year and this has now been extended to lessons at the golf club on Monday afternoons. The three young members of the club will follow level one tuition at Abergele Golf Club at the start of October and this will provide support for Robin Hughes with the lessons.

At the same time an application was made for funding from the Golf Foundation for £500 to introduce golf lessons into some of the primary schools in the area. Robin Hughes introduced golf to schools which had never had golf before and the children responded very enthusiastically. On some days Robin was teaching over 100 children at schools such as Capel Garmon, Betws y Coed and Bro Gwydir, Llanrwst.

With the support of Kim Ellis an application was then made for funding from New2Golf and this with the intention of continuing with the junior lessons and also to introduce golf to ladies who were new to golf. Robin Hughes is currently holding three coaching sessions at Betws y Coed Golf Club on a Monday evening - junior schools pupils, secondary aged pupils and then new lady golfers. A Monday evening is now a joy to see with young golfers, lady golfers and parents enjoying the activities. Robin, with the help of Shauna Lyons (who also helps Robin with the tuition at North Wales Golf Club), Joshua Payne-Evans, Luke Snape and Iwan Jones has succeeded in transforming a club which had no juniors and few lady members into a club which is now far more confident about the future and with an increasing membership in all sections.

### What - What the project is about and what worked well?

The problem facing the club was a diminishing membership with no junior members coming through. The support received from Kim Ellis, Wales Golf, has been excellent by providing access to funding and the appropriate personnel to provide the tuition. Contact with the local schools has been vital in delivering the lessons as it is still the case that few new golfers will simply turn up at a golf club. The support from all of the schools involved in the project has been fantastic and they have been only too happy to accommodate the golf lessons during the school day. Some of these schools have very limited sporting facilities but this was no problem to Robin who utilised the smallest school yards with a variety of golfing activities.

### How - Was the project delivered? And how well was it received?

The project was delivered through the local schools and was received very well by all involved.

### Who - Delivered and the background

The support of Robin Hughes and North Wales Golf Club in general has been crucial as the club does not have a PGA professional. Robin and Shauna Lyons have both received awards recently for their work with promoting golf in North Wales. Robin is able to communicate with both youngsters and adults so effectively and his ability to provide tuition in Welsh has been very well received in the area. His enthusiasm is catching!

### Any top tips for other clubs to learn from?

Advice to other golf clubs in a similar position would be:-

get the support of your local Wales Golf organiser;

make applications for funding from various sources e.g. Community Chest, Golf Foundation and new2Golf;

make contact with the local schools - this is essential if potential new members with no golfing background are to be attracted to the game;

find coaches with enthusiasm such as Robin Hughes;

ensure the support of the executive committee at the golf club - this support has always been forthcoming at Betws y Coed Golf Club;

explain to established golfers who may have their doubts about the project that the club will not be in existence if new and young golfers are not attracted to the game.

### What are the aspirations for the golf club moving forward?

The club is looking forward to a secure future with membership increasing and golf tuition being provided for a new and enthusiastic generation of golfers. Some of the younger golfers may devote their time to other activities as they grow or may move away from the area but there is the hope that they may return to golf at some future time in their lives.

