



## HERTFORDSHIRE GOLF UNION

### WHAT HERTFORDSHIRE DOES FOR JUNIOR BOYS GOLF.

This document sets out the structure of county junior golf within Hertfordshire and provides comprehensive information on the opportunities for young golfers aspiring to play county level golf and beyond. It lists all county run events, including matches, and numerous regional and national competitions for junior boys (and some girls) of all ages.

### CONTENTS

<b><u>1. HERTFORDSHIRE GOLF UNION.....</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b><u>2. CHAMPIONSHIPS &amp; TOURNAMENTS.....</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b><u>3. BOYS ORDER OF MERIT - BOOM.....</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b><u>4. JUNIOR OPENS.....</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b><u>5. HERTS SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIP.....</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b><u>6. JUNIOR CHALLENGE TROPHY.....</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b><u>7. HERTFORDSHIRE SELECTION.....</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b><u>8. BOYS COUNTY TRAINING/COACHING.....</u></b>	<b><u>5</u></b>
<b><u>9. EGU S E REGION (NORTH) AND EGU SQUAD TRAINING.....</u></b>	<b><u>6</u></b>
<b><u>10. COUNTY FIXTURES.....</u></b>	<b><u>6</u></b>
<b><u>11. JUNIOR DELEGATES MEETING.....</u></b>	<b><u>7</u></b>
<b><u>12. CLUB JUNIOR LEAGUES.....</u></b>	<b><u>7</u></b>
<b><u>13. NATIONAL EVENTS.....</u></b>	<b><u>7</u></b>
<b><u>14. JUNIOR SPONSORSHIP.....</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>
<b><u>15. HGU WEB SITE.....</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>

## 1. HERTFORDSHIRE GOLF UNION

The Hertfordshire Golf Union (HGU) is responsible for men's and boys' golf throughout the county, organising and running numerous championships and tournaments for various age groups including: men's, colts, juniors and seniors. It arranges inter-county fixtures and oversees handicap responsibility on behalf of the English Golf Union (EGU). It runs the County Scratch Leagues and both Men's and Boys Order of Merit.

The HGU provides information and feedback to the EGU on promising players, both men and boys, whose talent display consideration for selection for training and representative honours.

It liaises with affiliated county clubs, and other county unions, and is represented at the EGU and the South East Region (in which there are 11 counties) by elected Executive Members. It oversees all golfing matters relating to affiliated clubs and their members.

Through its appointed County Secretary, elected Executive Members and officers, it provides expertise on course rating for SSS, Rules of Golf, delegates to affiliated clubs responsibility for the application of CONGU handicapping rules, including responsibility for any general play adjustments. Runs the County Card scheme allowing preferential green fee rates for members.

It assists clubs with help and guidance when setting up a junior section, together with recommendations on how to organise and support junior golfers and ways to integrate them into the club. Together with HCLGA and PGA it is part of the Hertfordshire Golf Partnership.

Ladies and girls come under the auspices of the Hertfordshire County Ladies Golf Association - [www.hclga.co.uk/](http://www.hclga.co.uk/) and English Women's Golf Association - [www.englishwomensgolf.org](http://www.englishwomensgolf.org)

## 2. CHAMPIONSHIPS & TOURNAMENTS

The HGU organise several championships and tournaments open to junior golfers. These include: -

**Boys County Championship** – 36-hole stroke play for U-18 year old with a handicap entry of 10 or lower, played in the Easter school holiday. The Boys' Champion is nominated to represent Hertfordshire in the Junior Champion of Champions event played later in the year at Woodhall Spa.

**Colts County Championship** – 36-hole stroke play for U-21 year old with a handicap entry of 8 or lower, usually played in June. The Colts Champion is reimbursed his entry fee for the Prince of Wales Championship played at Woburn later in the year.

**Peggy Imogen de Podesta Junior Foursomes** – 36-hole stroke play with Stableford scoring, played off half-combined handicaps, open to Boys and Girls who are U-18 with a CLUB team consisting of two pairs – an U-18 pair and an U-16 pair. More than one club team may be entered. Played in school summer holiday.

**Junior Champion Club Tournament** – 18-hole stroke play with Stableford scoring off full handicap with a CLUB team of 3 players consisting of either boys and/or girls, with best 2 scores to count. Played in school summer holiday. The winning team represents the county in the EGU National Final played later in the year.

**Boys Intermediate Championship** – 18-hole stroke play for U-16 age group with handicap 5 up to 28. The overall scratch winner receives the E.G. Jones cup, and there are prizes for age group winners at U-16 (Duke Cup), U-15 (James Cup), and U-14 (Harkett Cup). The best nett score in each age group also receive a prize. Competitors with a handicap of 4.4 or lower are not eligible. Played in school autumn half term.

**Hertfordshire Salver** – sponsored by the Society of Hertfordshire Captains, 18-hole championship stroke play for those who enter the County Championship but do not automatically qualify on handicap. The 16 lowest scoring competitors qualify for County Championship.

**Men's County Championship** – played over 3 days in June starting on a Friday with a 36-hole stroke play qualifying event. The top 16 lowest scoring competitors progress into match play knock-out rounds played over the weekend. The Men's Amateur Champion is nominated to represent Hertfordshire in the Champion of Champions event played at Woodhall Spa later in the year.

Junior boys meeting the conditions of entry and with a handicap of 4.0 or lower may enter the Salver/County Championship. Additionally boys may also be eligible to play in other men's county events such as Champion Club, Inter-Club Foursomes, Members' Cup, etc. They may also play in the county scratch league matches.

**Men's Order of Merit (MOOM)**- players who are members of HGU Affiliated clubs receive order of merit points based on their finishing position from over 15 competitions run throughout the county. Some competitions are weighted higher than others for MOOM points.

All championship and tournament conditions of entry qualification, including entry forms, are circulated to clubs. All entries must be authorised and submitted by the player's HOME club.

Qualifying tournament are available on the county website. Competitors must comply with any handicap restriction and all entry conditions. Failure to do could result in disqualification from future events. A MOOM table is published on the county website and updated regularly.

### 3. BOYS ORDER OF MERIT - BOOM

The HGU co-ordinates the diary of county events and fixtures, including Junior Opens held by clubs affiliated to the Union, who by registering their event with the County Union make it eligible as a "Boys Order of Merit" Qualifier. Boys who finish in the top 25 of a 36-hole open, in the top 20 of an 18-hole open, and in the top 40 of the Boys' County Championship, based on their *gross score*, are awarded order of merit points. Over the season these points accumulate in the Order of Merit table, which is published on the HGU web site. Boys may enter as many opens as they wish and the **SCRATCH** Order of Merit Winner is determined by his 6-best combined finishing position points, plus his points in the Boys Championship. He receives the N.E. Foster Cup presented at the annual Junior Delegates meeting, which he retains for a year.

A **HANDICAP** BOOM table based on *nett score* finishing position points in junior opens is also operated. The **HANDICAP** Order of Merit Winner, who receives the C.G. James Cup, is awarded to the boy with the 6-best combined finishing position points in junior opens with no limit to the number of opens he may play in. This trophy is also presented at the annual County Junior Delegates Meeting.

The Order of Merit helps promote junior opens hosted by clubs within the county, giving junior boys the opportunity to broaden their golfing experience playing other than their HOME club. It reveals to the county selectors those players who are keen to progress and expand their golfing education by taking this opportunity, and tracks their performances throughout the season.

## 4. JUNIOR OPENS

Junior Opens are a terrific way for young golfers to broaden their golfing experience on a variety of the counties best courses, and to play under competition rules. The BOOM has increased the interest for junior golfers to play in these events where their performances can be recorded and measured. It has increased the appeal for clubs to organise opens demonstrated by the fact that there are some 25 Hertfordshire clubs who run an annual junior open. Many are 18-hole stroke play events with some 36-hole competitions. A few clubs have a low handicap entry restriction; several clubs include prizes for various age groups and handicap prizes, while others include a girl's competition.

To assist their smooth operation and help prevent any issues arising, the HGU issue guidelines for these competitions, otherwise it has no jurisdiction over their administration but can help if required. Junior opens may register as Daily Telegraph qualifiers with the opportunity for the winner to qualify for the final at appealing destinations which have included Lake Nona - USA, Sun City - South Africa and Dubai Creek - Dubai and more recently Abu Dhabi.

## 5. HERTS SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIP

The HGU supports the Hertfordshire Schools Association. The annual county School Championship for the Rose Bowl trophy is played over 18-holes during school time in March/April. Entry conditions are notified to all county schools. The HGU has no jurisdiction over the championship but offers whatever assistance may be requested. Hertfordshire Schools select players to compete in the S E Schools Championship with a qualifying performance leading to the National Championship where it is possible to gain representative honours with selection for England Schools who play matches against Scotland and Wales Schools.

## 6. JUNIOR CHALLENGE TROPHY

This trophy, presented at the HGU AGM, is awarded to the U-18 boy who has the lowest average gross score taken from his best 8 scores from a possible 16 rounds made up from the following: -

- a) Boys County Championship - 2 rounds
- b) Colts County Championship - 2 rounds
- c) HGU County Championship 36-hole qualifying - 2 rounds
- d) McEvoy Trophy for Boys played at Copt Heath - 2 + 2 rounds
- e) EGU Boys Open for the Carris Trophy - 2 + 2 rounds
- f) EGU Boys S E Group Championship - 2 rounds

## 7. HERTFORDSHIRE SELECTION

To be eligible to play in the Boys Championship plus other county events, and to represent Hertfordshire, boys must be under 18 years at 00 hours on 1 January in that year. In addition they must either, be a member of a golf club that is affiliated to the HGU, or have been born within the county boundaries and be a member of a golf club that is affiliated to the EGU through another county union, but must not have played for that county in that year.

County kit consisting of a gold short-sleeve polo shirt and green round neck sweater is issued to players to be worn for representative matches, which they are allowed to retain for future fixtures. To complement this kit boys are requested to wear light coloured (e.g. stone, taupe, fawn, beige or the like) trousers.

If the county representative team event involves overnight accommodation then the HGU cover the expense.

## 8. BOYS COUNTY TRAINING/COACHING

Towards the end of the summer season the County Boys Manager writes to all junior organisers where known, and/or secretary/managers of affiliated clubs, requesting information on promising players who fit an age/handicap profile. From the information received boys are selected by age group to attend autumn and spring county training days which may be held at Chesfield Downs Golf Club, Graveley near Stevenage, Mill Green Golf Club, Welwyn Garden City, Mid-Herts or Brocket Hall Academy, etc. depending on availability of club facilities.

The county has four distinct age group squads established, U-18, U-16, U-14 and U13/12, and on these training days boys are assessed on a number of key factors including attitude, fitness, technical competence, golf fundamentals analysis and overall potential. They receive individual coaching which involves equipment check, grip, set-up and swing assessment, short game practice and drills, and short game skill tests, course management evaluation, mental attitude, putting skills, all under the expert eye of PGA approved golf professionals organised by the appointed Boys County Coach. The ultimate aim is to improve players overall golfing proficiency with county and regional selection taken from those demonstrating a "professional" attitude and showing the most potential. Boys are given advice on practice drills and planning their golfing itinerary, tournament preparation, and improving their knowledge and understanding of the Rules of Golf.

All boys attending county training receive a written report on their performance with advice to improve their potential. They are advised to discuss their report with their own PGA professional so that he/she is aware of the advice given to reinforce the recommended improvements and assist progress.

Golf, like all sports, is competing for young players and to ensure as many boys as possible are enthused and inspired a new initiative was started in 2005. Now every year around May/June time younger boys aged between 9-13, who have been nominated by their clubs, are invited to an appraisal session with the county professionals to identify talent and excite their interest. The intention is to give them a foretaste of what is needed if they want to progress their golf and advise them how to maximise their ability, especially if they have the ambition to become the next Nick Faldo!

Although attendance at training sessions is not compulsory and will not affect selection, the county management and PGA Professionals believe that there is immense benefit acquired by those attending who are able to profit from the experience.

A County Boys premier squad of 12-16 players is selected for autumn and spring training usually held at Brocket Hall. Here the superb Faldo Academy practice facilities allow players further opportunity, under the watchful eye of the Boys Coach, to practise and perfect short game skills and undertake range work, coupled with sessions on fitness, physiology, psychology and nutrition to improve their emerging talents. Selection for this squad is based on those players who, in the eyes of the selectors and county coaches, offer the most potential for selection for the 6-boy team for the SE Group County Qualifying stroke play championship. This is the pinnacle event in the calendar as the winning county progress to the county final to compete against the winner of the three other EGU regions.

Since 2007 Strength & Conditioning training has been introduced under the guidance of the Herts Sports Village, part of the University of Hertfordshire, at Hatfield. Boys are selected to undergo individual fitness programme based on a flexibility and coordination assessment. They are reassessed regularly to monitor progress, ensure commitment and to update their personal programme.

The concept of **"PRIDE" – PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN DEVELOPING EXCELLENCE** is encouraged particularly if boys want to progress and excel given the opportunities that golf provides them.

## 9. EGU S E REGION (NORTH) AND EGU SQUAD TRAINING

The County Boys Management team nominate boys who demonstrate exceptional talent, together with boys that have attracted the eye of regional and national selectors by their performance in national events, for consideration for selection for regional and national squad training. Following individual assessment those selected are expected to attend training days/weekends at centres such as The Oxfordshire, Burhill and Woodhall Spa. There under the expert eyes of EGU appointed PGA professionals and a comprehensive support team they will experience more intense training. Selection for regional representative and International honours may follow.

## 10. COUNTY FIXTURES

The first Boys event in the calendar year takes place in the school winter half-term at Berkhamsted when the U-18 Boys play a match against the U-16 Boys for the Boys Challenge Shield. The U-18 Boys play friendly matches against Ashridge and Verulam Golf Club, and a match against a county over 18 age team that is likely to include players eligible to represent the County Men's team and County Colts teams during the year. The format is foursomes in the morning and singles in the afternoon - match-play off scratch. They may also play a match against a local county such as BB&O.

The U-16 Boys play an early season friendly against Ashridge Golf Club and since 2009 a Surrey Boys U-16 team. During the Easter holiday a combined U-18/U-16 team play an inter-county match versus Essex (for the Cheshunt Salver) and the U-16 team play Cambridgeshire. An U-17 Boys team play Sussex late in the season with the opportunity to see players eligible for the following season.

An U-16 and U-14 "Home Counties" League started in 2007 features Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Bedfordshire and B B & O. Each county host one home fixture and play two away fixtures. The matches are match-play off scratch and are played in a triangular format in three-ball, with a county playing two other counties simultaneously. The U-14 team consists of 10-aside who play 9-hole morning foursomes followed by 18-hole singles with players drawn in handicap order. The U-16 team consists of 8-aside with 18-hole foursomes and 18-hole singles. A trophy is presented to the winning county of each league to be retained for a year. The U-16 League Trophy was presented in the memory of Mike Amos past County President and former Boys Manager. Middlesex presented a replica for the U-14 League.

A 6-boy Hertfordshire team is selected to contest the EGU SE Region County Boys Qualifying against 10 other counties playing 36-holes stroke play with the best 5 scores from 6 for each 18-holes taken as the team score. This competition is regarded as the most important of the county tournaments, as the winning county qualifies for the EGU Boys' County Finals where they play against the winner of each of the other three EGU regions in match play over 3 days.

A 7-boy team is selected to play in the annual SE Region Inter-county Foursomes match play Tournament against 8 other counties over two days. Relegation for the following year befalls the two counties finishing in 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> position.

An U-15 Boys team play in a 4BBB match-play format over 18-holes against the Society of Hertfordshire Captains, who generously sponsor this annual fixture, usually played at Chesfield Downs the day after the late August Bank Holiday.

Since 2005 an U-14 team play an inter-county fixture against Essex.

Nowadays the first opportunity for many young golfers to represent their county is to be selected to play for a combined U-13/U-12 team against Bedfordshire and B B & O. This fixture started in 2008 as a three cornered match-play played off scratch.

All Inter-county matches alternate yearly home and away.

## 11. JUNIOR DELEGATES MEETING

In early March the HGU arranges and hosts the annual Junior Delegates meeting to which all affiliated clubs are invited to send representatives.

At this meeting the delegates are briefed on the county juniors progress and prospects. A guest speaker may attend to present on a suitable subject relating to junior golf, and there is the opportunity for delegates to raise topics of interest or points for consideration on any aspect affecting junior golf.

This gathering is useful for junior delegates to meet like-minded representatives from other clubs to compare their organisation and discuss ideas to help promote junior golf. Additionally, it is also helpful in establishing contact for junior organisers, especially as clubs have to arrange suitable dates for their league matches.

## 12. CLUB JUNIOR LEAGUES

There are several leagues operating within the county some of which include clubs from outside Hertfordshire. The HGU has no official jurisdiction over these leagues as they have operated successfully for many years, with the help of officials within the clubs involved. However, the HGU take a keen interest in their progress and trust that they will continue to thrive, as they are a terrific opportunity for young golfers to experience match-play conditions, and to hone their game and competitive edge. These leagues include: -

- Ver Shield and Trophy (16 Clubs knock-out - singles match-play two-legs home & away)
- North Herts League (4BBB match-play)
- East Herts League (4BBB match-play)
- South West Herts League (4BBB match-play)

## 13. NATIONAL EVENTS

Junior golfers today have numerous opportunities to play in regional and national tournaments many of which are sponsored. These include: -

- Faldo Series – [www.nickfaldo.com](http://www.nickfaldo.com)
- Weetabix Age Group Tournament [www.golf-foundation.org/event](http://www.golf-foundation.org/event)
- Junior Golf Championship of Great Britain–Wee-wonders tour (5-12 year olds) [www.hsbcweewonders.com](http://www.hsbcweewonders.com)
- Golf Society of Great Britain – Junior Tour (boys & girls under 14's, no handicap required) [www.golfsocietygb.com/jun.html](http://www.golfsocietygb.com/jun.html)
- Young Masters Golf Academy – (6 –16 year olds ) [www.ymg-golf.com](http://www.ymg-golf.com)

In addition there are several championships held annually where national and regional selectors attend and include:-

- EGU SE Region Boys Championship
- EGU Boys Open for the Carris Trophy (U-18)
- EGU Boys Open for the McGregor Trophy (U-16)
- EGU Boys open for the Reid Trophy (U-14)
- Peter McEvoy Trophy for Boys U-18 played at Copt Heath G. C. Solihull
- Douglas Johns Trophy for Boys U-15 played at Harewood Downs G.C. Chalfont St. Giles
- Henry Cooper Young Masters for Boys U-18 played at Nizels G.C. Tunbridge Wells
- North of England Boys & Girls U-16 Open played at Pannell G.C. Harrogate
- South of England Boys Championship held at Yeovil & Sherbourn G.C.'s
- R & A British Boys Championship (U-18)
- Bernard Darwin Trophy for Boys u-21 played early season at Rye G.C.
- East Berks Junior Stag for Boys U-18 played at East Berks G.C. Crowthorne

Entry details can be obtained from EGU/HGU/BBO or other relevant host club websites

Where a conflict of interest may arise then boys are advised to follow the priorities laid out in the HGU Boys Code of Practice which can be found on the HGU Website, which is: -

***Country, then County, then Club and finally Self***

#### **14. JUNIOR SPONSORSHIP**

Promising junior golfers may receive sponsorship from individuals, groups or companies. All monies MUST be passed to the HGU Treasurer who under the Rules of Golf and Amateur Status will administer the fund and reimburse the player against legitimate receipted invoices until the fund is exhausted. This is done in order to protect the players' amateur status. Full details on Amateur Status can be found in the R & A Rules of Golf book.

#### **15. HGU WEB SITE**

Information relating to news, clubs, fixtures, tournaments, events and entry conditions, tee times, results, players county performance match play statistics, etc. can be found on the Hertfordshire Golf Union website – [www.hertsgolfunion.com](http://www.hertsgolfunion.com).

In addition the site provides useful links to other interesting golf related sites including the EGU and R & A.

Further information helpful to junior golf can be obtained from the English Golf Union website [www.englishgolfunion.org](http://www.englishgolfunion.org) , and for Junior Organisers from the comprehensively produced EGU Junior Organiser's Handbook.