Hon. Secretary's & Hon. Match Secretary's Report 2015

Our report this year starts with the Annual Delegates Meeting of 2014, which recorded the events of the past year and illustrates the planned strategy for the 2015 season. Many thanks to Shandon Park for hosting this event and we will look forward to the 2015 ADM also at Shandon Park. At the elections, there was no change to the Provincial Council with the four Branch Officers and four members of the Council returning to their previous positions. However, the Match & Handicapping Committee saw some changes with the vacancies being filled by Robert Aiken (Royal Portrush) and Patsy McCaffrey (Enniskillen), the latter returning after standing down a couple of years ago.

The competition venues in Ulster are planned by the Provincial Venues & Fixtures Committee approximately two years in advance, and participation is sought from the Clubs in this respect. The GUI fixtures are set by the national V&F committee, the Ulster representatives being Damian Montague (Fintona) & Kevin Stevens (GUI Ulster Branch: General Secretary), normally four or five years in advance, depending on the significance of the competition.

Confederation of Golf in Ireland
Rory Leonard from the Confederation of Golf in Ireland (CGI) gave a presentation explaining their roles with GUI and Ulster Branch, and outlined how they can assist Clubs in promoting themselves. This association was set up by GUI, ILGU and PGA (Irish Region), and the Branch intends to give its support in every way possible.

CGI has launched a number of seminars for the Autumn 2015 which will focus on Income Generation, Membership Retention and Marketing to name just a few – see below.

**Dates:**
- 7pm, 28 October – Shandon Park Golf Club
- 7pm, 10 November – Ballybofey/Stranorlar Golf Club
- 7pm, 11 November – Rossmore Golf Club
- 7pm, 2 December - Ballymena Golf Club

Strategy & Governance
The GUI Strategy & Governance programme which has been given our full support is well underway but further discussions will take place at the next ADM. To date, the first CEO has been selected, and is well-known in many circles, he is Mr Pat Finn, the former General Secretary of the GUI. We would like to take this opportunity to wish him every success in this new post. It is expected that at the next AGM of the GUI in February, the new Board of Directors will be announced and both CEO and Directors will be ratified. This board will not affect the current structure of the Ulster Branch but will assist its operations in every way possible.

Talent ID
The coaching system run under the Junior Committee and administered by Stephen Hood, (*Talent ID Officer and PGA Professional*) have changed their tactics and are now concentrating on a panel of boys between the ages of 9 to 14 years. The existing panels at the seven coaching centres will be reduced depending on performance in a pyramid style. For further information about this and the Provincial Coaching programme please see the separate Junior Golf & Coaching Report.

Max Hadden Trophy
As usual the Max Hadden Trophy played for by the Club Captains within their year of office, was held at Max’s home club of Royal Belfast. A July fixture which saw perfect playing conditions and the fastest greens in Ireland!! It certainly was a stern test of golf and was won by Michael Carr, Warrenpoint Golf Club. An enjoyable evening followed the golf with the traditional scrumptious steak & kidney pie. 2016 Captains should ensure that this event is put in their diaries for the last Friday in July.

North of Ireland
Our Championship was played during the usual holiday week in July and endured very changeable weather conditions. A fabulous score in qualifying over the two courses was achieved by Geoff Lenehan (Portmarnock), shooting a brace of 66s for a 132 shot total. The final saw some very challenging conditions, with fast greens and high winds making things very difficult for both competitors.
Golf balls moving on the greens tested players and officials alike and little did we know that exactly the same problems would befall the Open Championship at St. Andrews less than twenty four hours later. Both finalists deserve great credit and after a nail biting finish, which went to the 20th hole, John Ross Galbraith (Whitehead) overcame Gary Collins (Rossllare).

**Home Internationals**
The Dunluce Links at Royal Portrush was again in the frame when the Home Internationals were played in August and it was a joy to see Ireland capture the trophy with a great win against Scotland on the last day (well done Tony Goode, John White and their team). Construction has already started at Royal Portrush on the changes required for the Open Championship to once again grace these shores in 2019.

**Inter Provincial Championships**
Reports from the 2015 Interprovincial Championship at Rosapenna ‘Sandy Hills’ course Co.Donegal as well as the Boys, U16 Boys and the inaugural U14 Boys' Interprovincial Championships at Athlone, follow this report.

**Interaction with Clubs**
The Branch always welcomes questions on the Rules of Golf, however it has been decided to cancel the Rules nights for this Autumn and Winter as a new R&A Rules Book will be launched in November 2015. We feel that it would be more appropriate to delay these nights until after the launch as they may be able to deal with queries from the revised rules.

We would like to make a further appeal to captains of inter-club teams to make full use of the Cups & Shields handicap report. It can be used for any team, including Ulster Cup and Ulster Fourball. On Golfnet, simply enter the GUI eight digit membership number for each panel member and it will produce a report listing the lowest handicap in the previous calendar year and the number of qualifying competitions for each player. The report will be of great assistance in ensuring that ineligible players are not selected and hence, running the risk of disqualification. It will also greatly simplify the process of exchanging handicap evidence during the match play rounds of various competitions.

The Clubs visited this year are to be congratulated and thanked for the use of their facilities and the superb standard of preparation for the Ulster Branch competitions. While it was a challenging year weather wise, the standard of Greenkeeping in Ulster remained exceptionally high and long may this continue. CAFRE at Greenmount are the specialists in Greenkeeping in the Province and are delivering outstanding tuition in all their courses, which have been well supported to date.

**Mobile Phones**
Please be careful with information released to the public via social media. Mobile phone usage in many clubs (clubhouse and on the course) has been banned due to inconsiderate, annoying and discourteous behaviour. Members should be thoughtful in their mobile usage.

**Role of Honour**

**GUI Trustee:** Robert (Bobby) Bell (Greencastle), GUI Trustee, Ulster Branch Honorary Delegate. Unfortunately Bobby passed away on 15th January at the great age of 100. 

**Ulster Branch Officers 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Club</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>Peter Sinclair</td>
<td>(Knock)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Secretary</td>
<td>Eamonn O'Connor</td>
<td>(Donegal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Treasurer</td>
<td>John White</td>
<td>(Co. Armagh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Match Secretary</td>
<td>Norman Bennett</td>
<td>(Holywood)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Ulster Branch Provincial Council 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Club</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roy Archibald (Shandon Park)</td>
<td>John Boyd (Ballycastle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alasdair Gibson (Knock)</td>
<td>Jackie Graham (Castlerock)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Heaney (Scrabo)</td>
<td>Brian Hutchinson (Donaghadee)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dougie Irwin (Rathmore)  
Terry Magee (Clandeboye)  
Sam McBurney (Massereene)  
Tom Jones (Belvoir Park)  
Damian Montague (Fintona)  
David McNeill (Cairndhu)

**Immediate Past President GUI from Ulster:** Ivor McCandless (Lisburn)

**Delegates to GUI Council:**  
Roy Archibald (Shandon Park)  
Damian Montague (Fintona)

**Honorary Delegates - Ulster Branch**  
*Ilan Bamford (Royal Portrush)  
Pj Collins (Co. Armagh)  
Lindsay Shanks (Royal Portrush)*

**Trustees – Ulster Branch**  
Pj O’Hara (Massereene)  
B Edwards (Shandon Park)

**Honorary Delegate to GUI:**  
Tom Jones (Belvoir Park)

**GUI Trustee:**  
Billy Black (Malone) from Feb 2015

**General Secretary:**  
Kevin Stevens (Rockmount)

**Coaching Director:**  
Brendan Edwards (Shandon Park)

**Talent ID Officer / Coaches Rep:**  
Stephen Hood, PGA Professional

**Office Administrator:**  
Ms Nicola Gorman

The Ulster Branch Council carried out its duties during eight meetings with an average attendance of 77%.

**Members of the Ulster Branch serving on 2015 GUI Committees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter Sinclair (Knock)</td>
<td>Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eamonn O’Connor (Donegal)</td>
<td>Executive, Greenkeeper Training &amp; Ecology, Governance &amp; Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John White (Co Armagh)</td>
<td>High Performance (Convenor)Irish Senior/Youths Selector &amp; Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Bennett (Holywood)</td>
<td>SSS &amp; Handicapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Boyd (Ballycastle)</td>
<td>Championship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendan Edwards (Shandon Park)</td>
<td>High Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alasdair Gibson (Knock)</td>
<td>Junior &amp; Junior Selector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Heaney (Scrabo)</td>
<td>Championship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Hutchinson (Donaghadee)</td>
<td>Championship &amp; Irish Seniors Selector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dougie Irwin (Rathmore)</td>
<td>Rules of Golf &amp; Amateur Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Jones (Belvoir)</td>
<td>Constitution, Course Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivor McCandless (Lisburn)</td>
<td>Constitution (Convenor), Governance &amp; Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John McKinstry (Cairndhu)</td>
<td>Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David McNeill (Cairndhu)</td>
<td>SSS &amp; Handicapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damian Montague (Fintona)</td>
<td>Venues &amp; Fixtures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Stevens (Rockmount)</td>
<td>Venues &amp; Fixtures, Governance &amp; Strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Match & Handicapping Committee 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Convenor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barton Shield</td>
<td>David McNeill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast &amp; District Cup</td>
<td>Mervyn Marshall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierce Purell Shield</td>
<td>Billy McCaul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Senior Cup</td>
<td>Nick Agate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy Bruen Shield</td>
<td>Damian Montague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Daly Trophy</td>
<td>Tony Cassidy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Match and Handicapping Committee had two meetings throughout the year, with a 61% attendance.*

**Competition Convenors 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition</th>
<th>Convenor</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Barton Shield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fred Daly Trophy</td>
<td>Tony Cassidy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Major disruption occurred during the qualifying competitions as a result of inclement weather with many of the fixtures having to be rescheduled. As in previous years, the convenors of each competition and K Stevens in the Branch Office, deserve huge credit for keeping things on track in getting the Cups and Shields competitions finished for the All Ireland Finals. Ulster Branch competitions were also concluded successfully.

**Ulster Interprovincial Teams**

Individual reports on each of the Interprovincial Championships are attached. The branch would like to thank the following for their effort and hard work throughout the year.

**Ulster Teams**

- Senior Captain Colm Murphy
- Manager Shane Magee
- Boys Captain John McKinstry
- Manager Tony Cassidy
- Boys U16 Captain Nick Agate
- Manager Peter Waddell
- Boys U14 Captain Peter Waddell
- Manager Diarmuid Logue

**Championship / Competition Winners**

See attached winners listing for all Championship & Inter-Club Competitions

**Sponsors**

Many thanks to our sponsors who continue to sustain the game of golf in a generous way and we anticipate your continued support in the future.

- North of Ireland, Seniors & Veterans
- Ulster Boys & U16 Boys
- Ulster U14 Boys
- Ulster Cup
- Ulster Fourball
- Coaching & Greenkeeping Bursary
- Cups & Shields
- Fred Daly Trophy (Ulster)
- Boys / Order of Merit
- Cathedral Eye Clinic
- Brewin Dolphin
- Ian Bamford in memory of Charles Hazlett
- Donations in memory of the late Bobbie Bell
- Miscampbell & Co
- Fore Golf Insurance
- GUI
- AIG
- PGA (Northern Region)
- Andrew Morris Golf

**Office Administration**

During the course of the year, our Office Administrator, Isobel Maxwell stood down after 12 year’s dedicated service with the Branch. This occasion was marked by a lunch where the Council and the Match & Handicapping Committee were in attendance and made a presentation to Isobel to recognise her work over this period of time.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Branch staff, Kevin Stevens (General Secretary), Jessica Boal (temporary summer placement) and Nicola Gorman our new Office Administrator. The Branch thanks you all for your hard work and dedication on matters relating to Ulster Golf.

_Eamonn O’Connor_  
Honorary Secretary

_Norman Bennett_  
Honorary Match Secretary
Championship / School / Inter-Club Winners 2015

Ulster Championship Winners
North of Ireland Amateur Open  John-Ross Gilbraith (Whitehead)
Ulster Youths Amateur Open  Neil McKinstry (Cairndhu)
Ulster Boys Amateur Open  Peter Kerr (Royal Portrush)
Ulster U16 Boys Amateur Open  Mark Power (Kilkenny)
Ulster U16 Boys Amateur Close  Jordan Logue (Hilton)
Ulster U14 Boys Amateur Open  Peter Taylor (Tandragee)
Ulster Mid-Amateur Open  Eddie McCormack (Galway)
Ulster Scratch Foursomes Amateur Open  Peter McHugh & Des Shearer (Malone)
Ulster Seniors Amateur Open  Garth McGimpsey (Royal Portrush)
Ulster Veterans Amateur Open  Mervyn Eager (Lucan)

Cups & Shields
AIG Barton Shield  Bronze  North West
AIG Senior Cup  Silver  Knock
AIG Junior Cup  Gold  Greenisland
AIG Pierce Purcell Shield  Bronze  Nuremore
AIG Jimmy Bruen Shield  Bronze  Fortwilliam

Other All-Ireland Inter-Club Competitions
Irish Mixed Foursomes  Bronze  Ballyclare
Fred Daly Trophy  Silver  Tandragee
Irish Junior Foursomes  Gold  Lisburn

Other Inter-Club Competition Winners
Belfast & District  Dunmurry
Fred Daly Plate  Holywood
Ulster Cup  Cloverhill
Ulster Fourball  Lisburn
Max Haden Trophy  Michael Carr (Warrenpoint)

Schools Championship/Competition Winners
Irish Schools Junior Championship  Ballyclare High School
Irish Schools Senior Championship  RBAI
Ulster Schools Junior Championship  Bangor Academy
Ulster Schools Scratch Championship  St Killians

Other Championship Winners from Ulster
West of Ireland Championship  Dermot McElroy (Ballymena)
Irish Close Championship  Tiernan McLarnon (Massereene)
Irish Mid-Amateur Open Championship  Tony McClement (Holywood)
Leinster U14 Boys Open Championship  Odhran Maguire (Slieve Russell)
Connacht Boys Open Championship  Marc McKinstry (Cairndhu)
Munster Boys Open Championship  William Small (Tandragee)
Senior Interprovincial Championship 2015

Venue/Date: Rosapenna on Mon 6 to Wed 8 July inc
Rosapenna was a fantastic venue to hold this year’s Interprovincial Championship. Special mention must go to Frank and John Casey for all their efforts.

Day 1: Ulster 4 - Leinster 7
The 18th hole proved really costly in the morning foursomes as what looked like a potential lead turned into a 2.5 - 1.5 deficit. It was a difficult task in the afternoon and Ulster came up just short.

Day 2: Ulster 4.5 - Munster 6.5
Again the 18th hole was Ulster’s downfall in the morning foursomes. Losing the hole twice within fifteen minutes in the two middle encounters again resulted in Ulster losing the foursomes 2.5 - 1.5. Ulster fought very hard in the singles to keep their championship hopes alive and it looked good for a long time until a couple of very close matches went Munster’s way.

Day 3: Ulster 8.5 - Connacht 2.5
A good morning’s foursomes of 3.5 - 0.5 set Ulster on their way to a convincing win. The singles were all good tight matches but Ulster held firm to gain our first win.

Total Points Gained by Each Player
John Ross Galbraith (Whitehead) 11
Gareth Lappin (Belvoir Park) 7
Tiaron McLarnon (Massereene) 7
Colm Campbell (Warrenpoint) 6
William Hanna (Warrenpoint) 5
Jordan Hood (Galgorm Castle) 5
Stuart Blakely (Shandon Park) 4
Colin Fairweather (Knock) 2

Summary
It was really disappointing not to be contending hard on the last day for the Championship. As Team Captain I felt that we had a great chance with the calibre of the Ulster players especially on the Sandy Hills Links which was a very difficult challenge indeed. A couple of costly errors especially in the foursomes proved to be our downfall - such are the fine margins between winning and losing.

I would like to congratulate my very good friend Seamus McParland and his young Leinster team on their fantastic win. We are all looking forward to Fota Island for next year’s Championship when hopefully Ulster can bring back the trophy.

Congratulations to all the Ulster players who have made the Home International team and special congratulations to Colin Fairweather on winning his first cap. Last but not least special thanks and praise go to Shane Magee Team Manager, for all his help and efforts.

Colm Murphy
Captain
Junior Golf & Coaching Report

Ulster Branch Junior Committee
Alasdair Gibson (Knock) Junior Convenor + Irish Selector
John McKinstry (Caindhu) Boys Captain + Selector
Nick Agate (Malone) U16 Boys Captain + Selector
Peter Waddell (Knock) U14 Boys Captain + Selector
Tony Cassidy (Dumphrey) Ulster Boys Team Manager, Club Representative
Diarmuid Logue (Portsalon) U14 Team Manager, Club Representative
Roy Archibald (Shandon Park) Junior Selector
John Boyd (Lisburn) Junior Selector
Kenneth McCaw (Royal County Down) Club Representative
Brendan Edwards (Shandon Park) Director of Coaching
Kevin Stevens (Rockmount) General Secretary
Stephen Hood (PGA) Talent ID Officer

Coaching
Stephen Hood our Talent ID Officer was appointed in September 2013. His first major task was to prepare a coaching strategy which was completed and approved by Council early in 2014. This led to a complete overhaul of our coaching systems.

Greenmount and 7 Regional Development Centres were fully equipped with state of the art cameras and coaching equipment with the support of Sport NI. Last year there were 47 boys in coaching at the regional centres with a further 40 boys in provincial panels at Greenmount. A new coaching curriculum was introduced and we have now completed a successful first year of coaching under the new system.

A survey was prepared and circulated to coaches, players, parents, officials and service providers. A very high response was received and the outcome is summarised below.

Provincial Coaching – more of the following:
On-course coaching time required, one on one time with coaches, player progression updates, putting, mental skills development and grit testing.

Regional Coaching – more of the following:
On-course coaching time, mental skills education, shorter sessions and putting.

Boys have been assessed during the summer months and a reorganisation has been carried out to take account of the above and the numbers in coaching have been amended. There are currently 32 boys in Provincial panels at Greenmount and 100 boys in the panels at the Regional Development Centres. We are confident that the new coaching set up will produce improved results in the future. All boys in the coaching by 2020 will have come through the new system and it is at this stage that we expect to see these changes being translated into improved results.

My thanks to Steven Hood for his commitment and expertise and the Ulster Branch Provincial Council for their sound advice and financial support for this project.

Underage Interprovincial Championships.
This year we had three Interprovincial Championships, U18, U16 and U14 (inaugural) all held at Athlone Golf Club during the same week. This format was a resounding success with all three teams staying in the same hotel. Ulster came second in each of the Championships which was a disappointment because we had high hopes of at least one victory. Individual reports from the team captains follow this report.

Ulster Branch Championships & Orders of Merit
Boys
The Ulster Boys Open Championship kindly sponsored by Brewin Dolphin, was played over four rounds at Castlerock Golf Club. The field was reduced to 54 players after two rounds and the remaining rounds completed by a shotgun start. Peter Kerr (Royal Portrush) was a worthy winner on 293 in testing conditions, two shots better than John Murphy (Kinsale). Owen Crooks (Bushfoot) and William Small (Tandragee) were tied a further two shots back.

Boys Order of Merit
Ulster Boys Order of Merit was won by Peter Kerr (Royal Portrush) on an excellent score of 132 points, 59 points in front of Marc McKinstry (Cairndhu) last year’s winner.
U16 Boys
The Ulster U16 Open Championship also sponsored by Brewin Dolphin was played at Dungannon Golf Club. Mark Power (Kilkenny) and Patrick Sommers (Grange) tied on 142. Mark won a very exciting play off at the first extra hole. Charlie Denvir (Powerscourt) was third on 143.

The Ulster U16 Close Championship was played at Portstewart Golf Club in early April. Three boys were tied on 154 strokes after two rounds. J. J. Logue (Hilton) was beaten in a play off last year in the same tournament but managed to prevail on this occasion at the first tie hole. David Cunningham (Tandragee) and Daniel Reilly (Galgorm Castle) were equal second.

U16 Boys Order of Merit
David Cunningham (Tandragee) won the U16 Order of Merit on 49 points, 2 points ahead of last year’s U15 winner Jordan Logue (Hilton Templepatrick) who was a further point ahead of Reece Black (Hilton Templepatrick)

U14 Boys
The two qualifiers for the U14 Open Championship were held at Omagh and Spa. At Omagh Christopher Cosgrove (Elm Park) was first with a score of 73. Ryan McNelis (Fintona) and Keaton Morrison (Holywood) were equal second one shot behind. Max Kennedy (Royal Dublin) led the qualifiers at Spa Golf Club with a score of 77. Lewis Fox (Tandragee) Joshua McCabe (Roganstown) and Daragh Connolly (Castle Dargan) were equal second one stroke behind. Places in the grand final were allocated on a pro rata basis with 28 from Omagh and 38 from Spa.

The Grand Final which was played at Ballymena was very keenly fought with Peter Taylor (Tandragee) becoming the eventual winner at the fourth Play Off hole. He tied with Patrick Callaghan (Castle Dargan) on a score of 69. Conor Byrne (Strabane) and Robert Galligan (Elm Park) were equal third one shot behind.

A particular thanks to Ian Bamford for his generous sponsorship of this Championship in memory of the late Charles Hezlet (Royal Portrush)

U14 Boys Order of Merit
Odhran Maguire (Slieve Russell) won the U14 Order of Merit with a score of 79 points. Scott Miller (Clandeboye) was second on 76 points with Jack Duffy third a further 6 points behind.

Thanks are due to Andrew Morris of Andrew Morris Golf for generously sponsoring all three Order of Merits again this year.

Championship Winners
I am delighted to be able to report 5 Championship winners this season, three at U18 and two at U14 as follows:

Peter Kerr (Royal Portrush) won the Ulster Boys Open Championship, Marc McKinstry (Cairndhu) won the Connacht Boys Open Championship and William Small (Tandragee) won the Munster Boys Open Championship, Odhran Maguire (Slieve Russell) won the Leinster U14 Open Championship and Peter Taylor (Tandragee) won the Ulster U14 Open Championship. Congratulations to these five boys for their success this season and I would like to wish all the boys continued success in the future.

Summary
Junior Golf is flourishing in both Ulster and Ireland at the elite level. We have introduced a number of changes within the last few years, with a complete overhaul of our coaching, the introduction of a Talent ID Officer and considerable increase to the number of tournaments available to boys. I have no doubt these changes will bear fruit in the future. The quality of coaching the boys are now exposed to along with the opportunities they are presented with must improve their chances of success.

With the number of Championships now being played in Junior Golf we require more assistance from clubs. I would like to thank all those clubs who gave up their courses for this year’s tournaments and all those officials and members who assisted us during play.

I have now come to the end of my tenure within the Branch as Junior Convenor. It has been a fulfilling and rewarding experience. I wish my successor every success for the future and assure him of my continued support.

Thank you to the Team Captains, Team Managers, Junior Selectors, Director of Coaching, Club Representatives and Coaches who make up the Junior Committee for all their hard work and support.

Thanks also to Kevin Stevens, Isobel Maxwell and her successor in the Branch Office Nicola Gorman for their enduring support.

Alasdair Gibson
Junior Convenor
**Boys’ Interprovincial Championship 2015**

**Venue/Date: Athlone Golf Club on Tues 21 to Thurs 23 July inc**

Athlone Golf Club/Hodson Bay Hotel was a very good venue in which to hold this year’s underage Interprovincial Championship. Everything was very well organised, and yet again, we finished in 2nd place behind Leinster.

**Day 1: Ulster 6 Leinster 4**

We won all three foursomes matches in the morning giving us a good start to the match. In the afternoon five of the singles went down the last with Rory Williamson, Matthew Fitzsimmons and Marc Norton winning.

**Day 2: Ulster 7 Munster 3**

For the second day running, we won all three foursomes matches giving us a good platform for the afternoon singles. Owen Crooks, Matthew Fitzsimmons, Marc McKinstry & Marc Norton, and all won their matches in the afternoon.

**Day 3: Ulster 4 Leinster 6**

Unfortunately we lost all the foursomes matches which proved to be the difference between winning and losing the championship. Marc McKinstry/Marc Norton were very unlucky to lose down the last with Kevin Le Blanc hitting his drive way left, only for it to hit a tree and rebound towards the fairway. We won 4-3 in the singles in the afternoon, but it was the foursomes that cost us the match and as a result the Championship.

**Total points gained by each player**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marc Norton (Belvoir Park)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marc McKinstry (Cairndhu)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Kerr (Royal Portrush)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rory Williamson (Holywood)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Fitzsimmons (Ardglass)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Small (Tandragee)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen Crooks (Bushfoot)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

If I am being totally honest, I was very disappointed to lose to Leinster once again, as I felt we had the best team on paper. Overall it was a very enjoyable championship, with the Under 14’s event being an added bonus. One consolation from this, is that we have managed to get four players from Ulster onto the Boys Home Internationals team, which is very pleasing.

Finally, I would like to thank Tony Cassidy Team Manager, for all his help over the four days, I have no doubts that he would make an excellent Boys Captain in the future.

John McKinstry
Ulster Boys Captain
**U16 Boys’ Interprovincial Championship 2015**

**Venue/Date:** Athlone Golf Club on 22 to 23 August inc

With the change in age group this year from U15 to U16 all members of last year’s winning team were eligible for re-selection. The selection process was not quite as straightforward as it might have been, however, with some members of the squad showing disappointing form this season. In the end four of the 2014 team were selected: Jordan Logue (winner of this year’s Ulster U16 Close), Reece Black, Conor McDonald and Jack Madden (who had made a timely return to form after a season plagued with injury and illness). The two newcomers were David Cunningham (Tandragee) who finished joint second in the Ulster U16 Close and who impressed throughout the season with his confidence and positive approach, and Ronan McCambridge (Cushendall) who put in a steady performance in the Ulster Boys.

**Day 1 – Ulster 3 Connacht 2**

Jordan Logue and Reece Black fought back to earn a half point in the foursomes, Reece Black lost to an in form Harry Gillivan who carded 6 or 7 birdies in his round, Ronan McCambridge was unlucky to be held to a halved match when Paddy Culhane holed a bunker shot on the 18th, and Conor McDonald and David Cunningham had good wins.

**Day 2 AM – Ulster 1.5 – Leinster 3.5**

Thanks to a surprise 3-2 victory for Munster over Leinster on day 1, our opponents on the morning of the second day were Leinster. Ronan McCambridge and David Cunningham lost their foursomes on the 18th after a match involving a prolonged rules debate by the championship referees, Reece Black had a good win against AJ McCabe, Jack Madden showed his fighting spirit by holing a chip shot on the 18th to earn a half with Cameron Raymond, and JJ Logue and Conor McDonald lost their matches.

**Day 2 PM – Ulster 3 Munster 2**

With Connacht beating Munster 3.5-1.5, the afternoon matches left all four provinces with a chance of overall victory with a single point separating them. Leinster beat Connacht 3-2 which meant Ulster needed to win four matches against Munster to retain the title.

In the event we could only manage a 3-2 win, with Reece Black and Conor McDonald winning their foursomes and David Cunningham and Jack Madden producing good wins in their singles matches. This left Leinster as winners, with Ulster second, a point behind.

It was frustrating to come so close to victory but Leinster produced the better golf when required. All the Ulster team deserve credit for their efforts and for the way they conducted themselves throughout: it was a pleasure to work with them.

**Total points gained by each player:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reece Black (Hilton Templepatrick)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Cunningham (Tandragee)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Madden (Dungannon)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conor McDonald (Lurgan)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan Logue (Hilton Templepatrick)</td>
<td>½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronan McCambridge (Cushendall)</td>
<td>½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thanks go to Peter Waddell, Team Manager for his untiring efforts in ensuring that the boys were well looked after. None of the boys will be eligible for the U16 team next year, so they will no doubt be working hard to gain consideration for the U18 squad.

Nick Agate
U16 Boys Captain
**U14 Boys’ Interprovincial Championship 2015**

**Venue/Date: Athlone Golf Club on Tues 21 & Wed 22 July inc**

Overall we finished second behind Connacht after beating Leinster and Munster on the first day. This was the inaugural Under 14 Interprovincial Championship and I feel it was an unqualified success with the quality of golf of a remarkably high standard - matches being won with scores at or close to par. A concern I had before the start was; would 13/14 year olds be able to complete 36 holes of highly competitive golf on the first day - my concerns were unfounded.

Athlone Golf Club was most accommodating with a fully supportive and hands-on Captain who made everyone feel welcome. The course was in excellent order and a true test for all the golfers. The Hodson Bay Hotel was an excellent family hotel with great facilities with the added benefit of being within walking distance of the golf club.

**Day 1 AM: Ulster 3 Leinster 2**

As always Leinster produced a strong team but we got off to a winning start in the foursomes and then won the first two singles fairly comfortably to wrap up the match.

**Day 1 PM: Ulster 4 Munster 1**

We anticipated Munster being slightly weaker than the other Provinces and set up our team accordingly. The only set back was Scott Miller injuring his back and having to concede his singles.

**Day 2: Ulster 11 1/2 Connacht 3 1/2**

A set-back at the start of the day was that Scott’s injury had not improved and he was unable to play. As set out in the General Rules his game was declared a half. A match of the highest quality between two very good teams with all games being won with scores close to par. Some wonderful putting from the Connacht boys with gutsy ripostes from us but this was an excellent Connacht team who deserved their victory on the day.

**Total points gained by each player**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Marshall (Lisburn)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odhran Maguire (Slieve Russell)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Duffy (Buncrana)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Miller (Clandeboye)</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan McNelis (Fintona)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom McKibbin (Holywood)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary:**

Many many thanks to Diarmuid Logue Team Manager and Stephen Hood for all their help and advice at Athlone – absolutely essential when managing a team of boys, some of whom had never been away from home before. Also thanks are due to these two men and others for all the unseen work done with the players throughout the winter, spring and summer.

Obviously disappointed not to win the championship but a pleasure to captain a team of 6 talented and totally committed young golfers who were a credit to Ulster, their clubs and their parents. We did not win but the future of Ulster golf is safe with these guys and a good number of other quality under 14s who did not make the team. The Branch coaching is I feel really beginning to show within this age group with all the players I see looking and behaving like accomplished golfers. I feel our depth of quality, reserves and others in the pipeline will in future prove that we will have the strongest team year on year at this level.

Peter Waddell
U14 Boys Captain