

Derbyshire golf club named **GolfMark Club of the Year**



Chapel-en-le-Frith Golf Club in Derbyshire has been awarded the prestigious GolfMark Club of the Year Award, which is supported this year by Cobra Golf.

The club impressed judges with programmes to encourage both juniors and adults into golf, while creating the kind of welcoming environment that serves as an excellent advertisement for the game.

Representatives of Chapel-en-le-Frith received their GolfMark Club of the Year accolade during the England Golf Partnership's County Development Conference on Tuesday, 23rd February. Jacques Retief, representing Cobra Golf, presented the award along with prizes of Cobra Golf equipment.

Picture shows from left to right: Steve Woolley, Club Captain Chapel-en-le-Frith Golf Club; Dave Ripley, Chapel-en-le-Frith Golf Club; Jacques Retief, Cobra Golf.

The English Golf Union (EGU) and English Women's Golf Association (EWGA) introduced this award to recognise those facilities that have shown an outstanding and innovative contribution to junior and beginner golf.

During the last year Chapel-en-le-Frith Golf Club has reached out consistently to schools and the community and fostered a friendly, family atmosphere at the club. Juniors compete regularly with adults and adults enjoy a mentoring 'buddy' scheme. Junior coaching sessions and competitions are regular events, while growing links with local schools provide a pathway to encourage new youngsters to develop their golf at the club under expert supervision.

The golf club's award nomination is packed with examples of how accommodating a club can be to new players, from Texas scrambles and quiz nights to encouraging parents to join in with junior activity. Chapel-en-le-Frith has also shown innovation in recruitment, including tailored easy payment schemes, 'beat-the-recession' special prices, temporary memberships (attracting 70 players in 2009), new categories of membership and use of intelligent marketing (including radio advertising, visits to school assemblies and open days and taster sessions).

GolfMark is a national scheme that identifies and recognises junior and beginner friendly golf facilities. Any golf club awarded GolfMark is recognised by Sport England as a Clubmark facility, which is a national standard identifying quality sports clubs across the country.

Cobra Golf is supporting GolfMark by providing prizes to award winners (winner and two runners-up) and prizes for the quarterly and annual prize draws made available to all accredited clubs.

Jacques Retief, representing Cobra Golf, commented, "Cobra Golf is delighted to be able to reward everyone at Chapel-en-le-Frith Golf Club for all their hard work and effort. They really deserve the accolade of GolfMark Club of the Year and we wish them continued success with all their initiatives."



Chapel-en-le-Frith edged out runners-up for the award Paultons Golf Centre in Hampshire and Stoke by Nayland Golf Club in Essex. This final three won through a tough judging procedure which saw them initially compete against nominations from County Golf Partnerships to then reach a shortlist of eight clubs that were assessed by a panel from the EGU, EWGA, PGA and the Golf Foundation.

EGU and EWGA Golf Development Manager, Richard Flint said, "We have been extremely impressed with the quality of clubs nominated for this year's award. It is clear that everyone who was nominated has shown both dedication and creativity in the work they do in welcoming both juniors and beginners to the game and they are all great ambassadors for golf."

2009 Runners Up

PAULTONS GOLF CENTRE, HAMPSHIRE

Paultons Golf Centre became a GolfMark accredited facility in July 2009.

The facility offers a high number of junior coaching and competitive activities during the year for a wide range of ages and abilities.

Recruitment activities are offered to both juniors and adults, including school, college and university sessions, ladies specific and family days, coinciding with various social activities such as junior golfing birthday parties and theme days. The facility also links with local youth, voluntary, business and disability groups.



There are a number of structured programmes and activities available to support players progressing from beginner to regular participant and membership categories to suit a variety of different lifestyles, with introduction and integration opportunities to support the retention of players.

To support future progression, the club have a 3 year plan for the development of their junior section and produce an annual report demonstrating future plans for development and continuous improvement. Since July, they have actively promoted their award through their membership and through promotional literature.

STOKE BY NAYLAND GOLF CLUB, ESSEX

Stoke by Nayland Golf Club achieved the High Achiever award in September 2009.

The club annually offers a high number of competitive opportunities for juniors of all abilities and structured coaching activities including 'Stoke has Talent', which is a series of driving range and on the course lessons.

With support from the Golf Foundation, the clubs links with 8 primary and 3 secondary schools with an introductory membership scheme available on the 9 hole shortened course. To recruit adult players and members, the club has links with local community groups, estate agents, villagers and businesses and offers a number of open weekends, beginners' classes and a 'Learn Golf in a Day' start up programme. To support the retention and development of these players' opportunities are also available for new or high handicapped players.



To support the future progression of the junior section, there are strong links with other main sections of the club to ensure a balanced, clear and purposeful direction.

To promote the club's award, parents, juniors, potential and current members are all made aware of GolfMark through a variety of articles, information and promotional literature.