



# ADVENTURES IN GOLF

*The Ultimate Golfing Experience*

Autumn/Winter 2011

## Old Course, St. Andrews – Guaranteed Tee Times

We have received our 2012 Tee Time Allocation for the Old Course in St. Andrews. Because we confirm our tee times on a first deposit-received basis, we urge you to contact us today. Guaranteed tee times are available from April through October for four or eight golfers, and additional golfers can be accommodated upon request. It is worth noting – **only a relatively few companies in the world** receive an allocation of Old Course tee times.

**Please do not confuse a guaranteed tee time with the Ballot.** We have clients regularly mention the Ballot in lieu of an actual guaranteed tee time, but they are not interchangeable. The Ballot is a **lottery system**, in which St Andrews Links Trust draws names from a list on a daily basis, so there are some winners...and some losers. Although we've had a very good success rate when balloting our clients over the years there is certainly no way to guarantee success. And, when trying to access the Old Course in the summer months any Ballot application can be competing with dozens of others on the same day. So, be sure to inquire as to our current tee time availability as this is the only way to **guarantee** you'll peg it up on the Old Course.



Photo courtesy of Iain Lowe

## The Year in Review

**Charl Schwartzel** stunned the golfing world with a stellar back-nine performance on Sunday to earn the Green Jacket at **The Masters Tournament**. Schwartzel was able to manage four birdies on the last four holes to hold off game efforts by **Jason Day** and **Adam Scott**. There was even a Tiger sighting during the final round, but we will have to wait until 2012 to find out if Tiger's game is in tune for a return to glory. After the first three days it was **Rory McIlroy's** tournament to win or lose, but the final day's pressure proved too much for the young star to handle. Although it was painful to witness his epic breakdown, we all applaud his efforts and the true class he exhibited in post-round interviews and beyond.

All the disappointment McIlroy surely felt after his Masters meltdown must have certainly disappeared when he hoisted the **US**



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**Open** trophy at **Congressional Country Club**. Reminiscent of Tiger's performance at Pebble in 2000, Rory lapped the field in impressive fashion, leaving no doubt of his true golfing genius, while proving he has the nerve to finish the job at the majors!!

**The Open Championship** returned to England's "Gem in the Southeast", **Royal St George's**. As if out of a fairytale, crowd favorite and "over the hill" contender **Darren Clarke** captured the hearts of all with his emotional triumph at RSG en route to earning his long-awaited and well-deserved first major championship. We look forward to Darren's title defense at **Royal Lytham and St. Anne's in 2012**.

In the Seniors Division, **Olin Browne** held off a fierce charge from both **Mark O'Meara** and **Mark Calcavecchia** to win the **U.S Seniors Open** at Inverness Club. **Walton Heath**, as always, proved to be a most gracious host to a major golfing event. At the **British Senior Open**, **Mark Calcavecchia** came up short yet again, finishing second behind **Russ Cochran**. Our favorite links golfer **Tom Watson** stormed back into contention on Sunday with an early eagle, but in the end he had to settle for a share of third place alongside **Corey Pavin**. We all look forward to Tom getting another shot for glory at **Turnberry**, as the **Ailsa Course** will once again play host to the Senior Open in 2012.

In the year's final major at the famed **Atlanta Athletic Club**, New England native **Keegan Bradley** took advantage of **Jason Dufner's** collapse down the final stretch, managing to force a three-hole playoff with the shaken Dufner. Bradley drew first blood in the playoff with a sensational birdie on the par four 16th, and never allowed his opponent the opportunity to seize the prized **Wanamaker Trophy** from his firm grasp.



**The Links Cup** returned to **Sea Island** for the third time in its illustrious eighteen year history. The weather was brisk by Southern standards during the opening two days, but the temperatures rose along with the drama during the final round. Once again, **Rod Day's** veteran squad from **Merion** had to settle for second place, this time falling short by only one stroke to the fiercely competitive foursome from **RedStick**, proudly captained by **John McCord**. **Kirk Sweet** and his formidable team from **Old Elm** earned the "**Bobby Jones**" Award, by out-shooting the field on the final day with help from **Jim DeYoung's** fine play. **RedStick** featured yet again in the **ladies team competition** by holding off a strong charge from **Piping Rock**. Kudos to all and especially **RedStick** for completing the clean sweep!!!

## Northern Ireland – "Home of Champions"

**Northern Ireland** has always been regarded as having a rich golfing history, being a proud home to several of the world's greatest links courses including **Royal County Down** and **Royal Portrush**. That pride is even more in evidence due to the fact that three of the past eight Major Championship winners call the province home. This recent upsurge in success was ignited by **Graeme McDowell's** epic triumph at the **2010 U.S. Open**. Following his last round collapse at the U.S. Masters, **Rory McIlroy** silenced any doubters by winning this year's **U.S. Open** in a most dominant fashion. **Darren Clarke's** dramatic and emotional victory in the (British) **Open Championship** at **Royal St George's** then cemented





Northern Ireland's place at the top of the golfing world, making it the new "**Home of Champions**" – a remarkable achievement for a country of less than 2 million people and just over 5,000 square miles.

Golf in the region dates back to the late 1800s, inspired in part by **Old Tom Morris'** tour to the Emerald Isle in 1889. The championship links at **Royal County Down (RCD)** is a direct result of his visit, while later course improvements were implemented by the great **Harry Colt** in the 1920s. Colt also offered his services and skills to **Royal Portrush**, and so his influence can be seen in both layouts. RCD has hosted several important tournaments throughout the years, including the 2007 **Walker Cup** and the 2000, 2001

& 2002 **Senior British Opens**. It has hosted many of the game's greatest players, and continues to challenge professional golfers and amateurs alike. The recently-refurbished **Slieve Donard Hotel & Spa** offers visitors the perfect place to call home while testing their games on the course. The one hundred and fifteen year old former railway hotel overlooks the sea to the front and has the course at its back.

**Royal Portrush**, another of Northern Ireland's crown jewels, is situated just a two-hour drive north of RCD. Host of several **Senior British Opens** and the **Amateur Championship** Portrush has a magnificent history too, with perhaps the 1951 Open Championship being its pinnacle. That event, won by the flamboyant **Max Faulkner**, was the first

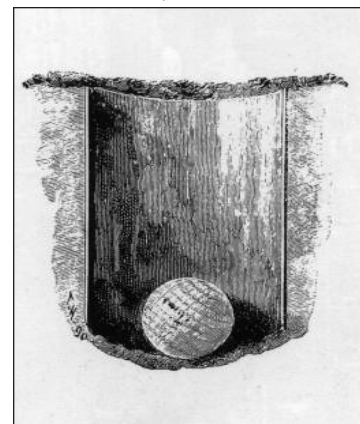
and only time to-date that the Open has been played outside mainland United Kingdom. Adding to the lure of Royal Portrush is the fact that Darren Clarke and Graeme McDowell have played much of their golf over the course as local members, and still frequently tune-up their games on the historic links. Perhaps a visit will magically correct your swing? At the very least you will be playing in the footsteps of Champions when you tee it up! Located just five miles southeast of Portrush, the **Bushmills Inn** is the top choice for accommodations in the area. Close to the world-famous distillery, the original coach house and stables at the inn date back to the early 1600s. True Irish charm and hospitality awaits!

Exceptional golf is not limited to just RCD and Portrush. Other great layouts include **Portstewart, Royal Belfast, Castlerock, Ardglass, and Malone**. The new **Lough Erne Resort** (voted as the Golf Resort of The Year in 2010 by the Irish Golf Tour Operators Association) offers golfers the only official five-star luxury hotel & spa option in Northern Ireland. Located just north of **Enniskillen** the resort boasts a scenic championship lakeside course designed by **Nick Faldo** and endorsed by Rory McIlroy – attested by the logos on Rory's golf attire and equipment!

We've taken some time to mention the best-known professional golfers from Northern Ireland – Darren, Rory and Graeme. However, there is another



Lough Erne Resort



golfer from this region who you may want to keep tabs on. **Gareth Maybin**, born in 1980, was recently ranked in the World's Top 100 list and has a few wins under his belt. We might be going out on a limb, but Gareth could be one to watch out for in the 2012 season.

Contact **Adventures In Golf** today to start planning your golfing tour to **Northern Ireland** so you too can tee it up in the "Home of Champions".

## Machrihanish – Great Golf, Great Value

**Machrihanish Golf Club** has long been feted by golf aficionados as a classic links course. Situated near the foot of the **Kintyre Peninsula** on Scotland's west coast, it's been said many times that had the course not been in such an isolated location it would have hosted many championships. Undoubtedly true, but nowadays a **45-minute flight** from Glasgow Airport can drop golfers literally on the doorstep. For those visitors with a little more time to play with, the drive up **Loch Lomond**, across the "Rest and be Thankful" pass then hugging **Loch Fyne** is simply one of the most scenic routes in the country. Short ferry journeys from the Troon/Prestwick area to Kintyre via the isle of Arran can cut travel time too.

In March 1876, a meeting was held at the Argyll Arms in nearby Campbeltown to establish **The Kintyre Golf Club**. Golf had been played at Machrihanish over 10 holes as far back as 1871, but after the club's official

formation the course was enlarged from 10 holes to 12 by **Charles Hunter**, the head greenkeeper (or Keeper of the Green) at Prestwick. In 1879, **Old Tom Morris** extended the course to 18 holes when new land was secured and moved the first hole to its current position, where it's **recognized as providing one of the most memorable opening tee**



### shots in the world.

Like any good publicist, Tom Morris was not slow to promote the virtues of the new course. "Providence assuredly saw this part of the country as a special earthly Paradise designed by the Almighty for playing golf," he said, and he may well have had a point. The course (especially holes 3 to 10) follows

the natural contours of the dunes that run parallel to **Machrihanish Bay** and the **Atlantic Ocean**. Arguably, the last 3 holes lack distinctive character, but the quality of the preceding holes is ample compensation.

These days there's another very good reason to visit the area. The new

**Machrihanish Dunes** course opened in 2009 on 259 acres of pristine links land adjacent to the original course, and is **the first championship links built in Scotland on a Site of Special Scientific interest (SSSi)** in over 100 years. The term 'built' is actually a little misleading, as just 7 acres of the property were touched by the hand of man in its construction due to the environmental restrictions. Instead, course architect **David McLay Kidd** (of Bandon Dunes fame) identified 23 natural holes then chose the best 18. Tees and greens were built, sandy areas became bunkers, and the course was laid out accordingly – more or less as Old Tom Morris would have been forced to do next door.

Habitat has been preserved as much as possible and the landscape largely left unchanged. This has meant a number of blind or semi-blind shots come into play, and anyone who has played courses such as **Prestwick, Lahinch** and **Machrie** (Islay) will surely see

similarities. In keeping with nature, Machrihanish Dunes also welcomed a flock of **Hebridean sheep** to the team! Native to the west of Scotland these small black, hardy 'greenkeepers' thrive on the rough grasses found amongst the dunes and have a strong preference for browsing through scrub that would be considered poor quality for other breeds.







**The Village at Machrihanish Dunes**, just across the road from the original course, provides the upscale accommodation element of the resort. The



**Ugadale Cottages** all offer two well-appointed bedrooms (each with its own private bathroom) plus kitchen, dining area and a living room to unwind in after a day on the links. Adjacent to the cottages is the **Old Clubhouse**, which was once the actual Machrihanish GC clubhouse and is now a cosy pub/restaurant that attracts both locals and visitors. Next door, the sea-facing **Ugadale Hotel** is in the last stages of extensive restoration and for the start of the 2012 season will

feature 22 rooms, a malt whisky bar, fine dining restaurant and spa. **Dunaverly Golf Club** makes up the triumvirate of local courses worth playing. Located on the southern tip of the peninsula it provides fine sea views out to **Sanda Island, Ailsa Craig** and even **Northern Ireland**. This is another natural layout with a deceptive par of 66, springy turf, undulating fairways and **square greens** (yes... square). And, not to mention, a herd of inquisitive cattle that wander and graze over part of the course!

Will golfers make the journey to Machrihanish on their first visit to Scotland? In most cases the answer is no, which is quite understandable, as first-timers usually like to work their



way through the British Open courses initially. **However, in our humble opinion repeat visitors should seriously consider it as an option.** Golfers that require manicured conditions at all times and get upset at the unfairness of links golf need not apply – but those who appreciate the origins of the game will undoubtedly find fun, challenging courses combined with great places to stay at cost-effective pricing, and a very warm welcome. **As a little incentive, book a 3-night stay at the Ugadale Hotel for next year through Adventures In Golf before the end of 2011 and you'll only pay for 2 nights!**





## Fly Fishing Update – New Zealand & Montana by Ken Hamill

*Ken Hamill, along with David Patterson, founded Adventures In Golf in the late 1970s. As a member of Royal Dornoch and Prestwick, Ken still retains his interest in golf and links with Britain (where he worked for many years). Like many golfers, his other great passion is fishing, which has also taken him to some extraordinarily beautiful places.*

In discussing fly-fishing experiences with my well-traveled fishing friends who frequent **Patagonia** in Chile and the remote rivers and lakes of Alaska, they universally agreed that **my recent adventure in New Zealand was the most-extraordinary and unique trip** that they had ever heard of.

**Fiordland National Park** lies in the southernmost part of New Zealand's

**South Island.** While it can be reached by hiking and by boat, the remote fishing waters (for a day trip) are only accessible by helicopter. My fishing guide, **Henare**, was discussing the Park with his friend Jonathan who flies the area almost every day - weather permitting. His main occupations are to fly by helicopter to cull the deer, which have overrun parts of the Park, fly hunters during the deer season, and to check on the rare bird population – **the flightless Takahe** (once thought extinct) and the world's only flightless parrot – the **Kakapo**. In fact, Jonathan is said by locals to know more about these birds than the conservationists.

During a conversation late in 2010 Jonathan mentioned to Henare that he had flown hundreds of hunters into the Park and landed them on or near rivers that, **to his knowledge, had never been fly-fished.** This was the seed of a new venture for Henare and offered me

the opportunity to be one of the first people to ever fish these virgin rivers, which for now we will call the “**No Names**”. On our initial venture we went by helicopter and landed on a tiny stony riverbank. For the next 5 hours I fished with Henare and we encountered no one. **The average fish weighed 8 pounds and were the most brilliantly colored specimens I have ever seen.**

On our next trip we flew over mountains and glaciers to the **Pacific** side of the Park and lunched on a mountaintop overlooking the ocean. Then we dropped down to a river, which fed into the ocean, and caught **4-6 pound browns** on dry flies – again seeing **nobody else** for the entire day. While this fishing trip could be described as an “out of body” experience, New Zealand fly-fishing is difficult but rewarding. The rivers run from glacier lakes and are crystal clear with the fish very visible. But this also means the fish have quite a view themselves, and will spook easily unless you are very quiet and accurate with your casting.

For those of you looking for a domestic trip, there is outstanding fly-fishing near **Bozeman, Montana.** Around 1805, **Lewis and Clark** explored the area and its famous rivers the **Madison**, the **Gallatin**, the **Yellowstone**, the **Lewis** and **Big Hole**. Fly-fishing here is phenomenal because the rivers hold an abundance of feed for trout both above and below the water which makes for a **very large fish population per mile.** We are also talking about over a 100 miles of quality water. It is highly recommended to take a guide and float the rivers rather than wade, because in a 7 hour day you will cover 75 times more fishing holes than a wading fisherman. There are also some challenging spring creeks, which offer great dry fly fishing and here wading is effective. **We can recommend the best**



**guides**, and Bozeman being a college town has good quality hotels and restaurants as well as many other outdoor activities.

If New Zealand and Montana fly-fishing have a common thread it is the **scenery**, **wildlife** and the spectacular **birds of prey** that soar over the rivers seeking unwary trout. A line from

**“Rocky Mountain High”** by **John Denver** comes to mind as one casts to the rising trout and looks overhead – “ I know he’d be a poorer man if he never saw an eagle fly”. From that standpoint I am quite wealthy.

“Tight Lines” to all of you that fish.

*Ken*



Since we are on the subject of fishing, it is worth re-mentioning our relationship with Guy and Sarah at **Mission Creek Lodge** in **Alaska**, which is located on **Lake Aleknagik** in the heart of the world famous **Bristol Bay** region of Southwest Alaska. This area offers unsurpassed trophy fishing for all five species of **Pacific salmon**, **rainbow trout**, **Arctic char**, **Arctic grayling** and **Dolly Varden** in a spectacular wilderness setting. The modern facility is ideal for small corporate meetings, business entertaining, or the highlight of any Alaskan fishing vacation. Well-traveled anglers will recognize the extras that make a stay at Mission Creek Lodge a trip of a lifetime. All-inclusive packages include deluxe accommodations, sumptuous dining, unsurpassed trophy fishing, daily fly-outs, professional guides, flexible fishing program, fishing gear, on-site sauna & hot tub, & spa treatments.

Contact **Adventures In Golf** today to start planning your fishing excursion to **New Zealand**, **Montana**, or **Alaska**.



**VIRTUOSO**  
SPECIALISTS IN THE ART OF TRAVEL

In our previous newsletter, we announced our recent partnership with **Virtuoso** as their **preferred golf supplier**. For those of you who are not familiar with Virtuoso, they are the **world’s leading luxury travel network** made up of more than **7,000 travel advisors** associated with over **300 agencies** in **22 countries** within North and South America, the Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand. Since Virtuoso **only accepts 20% of all applicants** into their network, you can imagine how proud we are of this new relationship.

Two of our team attended Virtuoso’s annual **Travel Mart** this past August in **Las Vegas**. Travel Mart is **the world’s largest travel trade expo**, in which travel advisors/agents, hotels, tour operators, etc. all meet for a week of “speed-dating”. Our staff members met over **80 advisors per day for four days**, plus many more at the nightly networking events. We look forward to our continued relationship with Virtuoso and its network of exceptional travel advisors and suppliers, which will only further benefit our clients through discounted offers and additional service.



Since 1977, Adventures In Golf has customized golfing itineraries for thousands of parties, large and small, with each program carefully designed to maximize the enjoyment of your dream trip - to Britain, Ireland, New Zealand or other destinations.

Our offices in the United States and United Kingdom, staffed by a team with many years of combined travel experience, offer peerless service and in-depth knowledge of these historic countries and their golf courses. We work closely with our hotel, transport and golf partners to make certain you receive an exceptional vacationing experience. You state your objectives - we ensure they are met.

As a long-established tour operator we can offer exceptional access to the Old Course at St Andrews (as well as to many other famous courses, such as Ballybunion, Royal County Down, Old Head and Royal Troon). To further enhance your St Andrews experience a member of our Scottish team will meet you at the Old Course with your personal caddy, and our local staff will be ready to assist you throughout your stay.

As your advisor, we will guide you through each stage of your trip. Determining the most appropriate accommodations, formulating the best transportation options and, best of all, securing tee times on the famous courses and hidden gems of your choice! As you might expect, we also assist you in the finer details, such as dinner reservations, sightseeing, fishing, shopping, and any other guidance you may need, making your experience that much more memorable.

This formula has produced an ever-increasing list of satisfied customers, as commendations in **Passport**, **Forbes**, **Sky**, and **Connoisseur** Magazines bear testimony. Additionally, as the only golf destination specialist of **Andrew Harper** and now a **Virtuoso** preferred supplier, we extend our service to a still wider audience.

By the way...when you call our office, you will be answered by one of our staff. For we believe, in this business, there is no substitute for the personal touch.

**Adventures In Golf with offices in: Great Britain & USA For further details write or call:**

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