

Carnoustie battles to retain its Open status

Carnoustie has been warned it could lose its right to host the Open Championship unless it improves its facilities.

The sport's governing body, The R&A has labelled current provision at Carnoustie as "inadequate".

It has said that without improvement the famous links is unlikely to be considered as a future venue for the sport's showcase event.

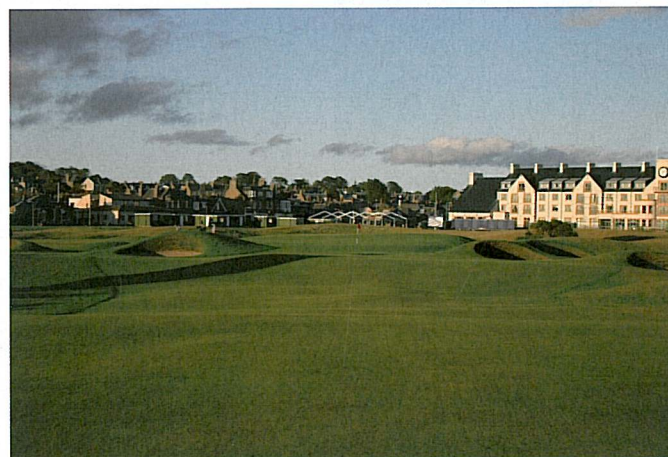
Now, in a bid to come up to scratch, plans have been submitted to Angus Council for a new golf pro-centre at Carnoustie Links which could play a vital role in securing future championships.

Agents working on behalf of the Carnoustie Golf Links

Management Committee in order to bring the new facility to the links, stated that the 2007 Open contributed £14m to the local economy, £26m to the Scottish economy, and delivered the equivalent of £34m in advertising value.

Consultancy firm Drivers Jonas LLP has submitted plans for the construction of a 1,000-square metre golf pro-centre and changing rooms on a 1.5 hectare site with direct access to the first tee and putting green on the championship course.

The proposal would see the current starter's box removed and relocated within the new building along with improved chang-



ing facilities, a repair workshop and a Carnoustie Links heritage display.

Graeme Duncan, general manager at Carnoustie Links, said that the importance of improving facilities at Carnoustie could not be underestimated.

He said: "As well as delivering the best possible facilities on a day-to-day basis, a championship course such as Carnoustie must meet the needs of the top professional golfers when they come to play in tournaments.

"In the near future, we have the Seniors Open Championship in 2010 and the Ladies Open Championship in 2011 and, of course, we remain hopeful of the Open Championship returning to Carnoustie at some point.

"It is critical, both for Carnoustie and for the Angus area in general, that we strive to improve our facilities wherever possible and seek to make Carnoustie the very best venue it can be."

Golf club memberships in Ireland have plummeted by 25 per cent – and waiting lists at once exclusive clubs are now non-existent.

Crisis-hit clubs are desperate for new members and are dramatically reducing membership and green fees.

Kevin Mulcahy, from Golf Management and Marketing Services, said: "Membership numbers are down by about 25 per cent. It ranges from 20 to 30 per cent, depending on the golf club. Green fees are also down by the same amount.

"A busy golf club might have earned around €1m a year, but now they're down by €250,000, which is a huge cut in their income."

Mulcahy insists the industry needs to change in order to adapt to the recession.

He added: "The golf clubs that will be able to survive the recession are those that are reducing their fees and advertising attractive packages."

Lynn playing it cool at Lough Erne

One of the best-known professional golfers in Ireland has been appointed direc-

tor of golf and head professional at the Lough Erne Golf Resort in Northern Ireland.



Lynn McCool, a former competitor on the European, Asian and South African Tours brings a wide range of skills and experience to her new role following the departure of Andy Campbell.

The 37 year old Irishwoman had a highly successful amateur playing career and subsequently won a Golf Scholarship at the University of Hawaii before embarking on a four year training programme at The Belfry.

Commenting on her new role, McCool said: "Lough Erne is the most talked about golf venue in the industry and I am delighted to be joining the team."

Jones hails PGA Alliance a success

PGA chief executive Sandy Jones has hailed the raft of initiatives that resulted from the first World PGA Alliance's formal meeting.

The meeting, held in Orlando following the PGA Merchandise Show, comprised ten of the most established Professional Golfers' Associations – Canada, America, Australia, Germany, Great Britain and Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden and Europe.

"PGA professionals have been a leading influence in the growth and development of the game of golf for decades," commented Jones.

"The formation of the PGA World Alliance means it will now be possible to bring together the best practices in the areas of education, game development and commercialisation of the PGA brand, which is perhaps the most recognisable brand in golf.

"The unity provided by the Alliance will mean that PGA members in every corner of the globe will benefit by this huge resource of knowledge available to them all.

"With golf now becoming part of the Olympics this will be vital, not least because every golfer who participates in Rio de Janeiro will have been influenced and mentored by PGA professionals at some time or, perhaps totally, in their career."