

PRESS RELEASE

**YOUNG GOLFERS FROM SCOTLAND AND USA TO PLAY FOR THE “WATSON CUP” -
A NEW TROPHY NAMED IN HONOUR OF TOM WATSON.
BERNARD GALLACHER TO BE HONORARY PRESIDENT FOR MATCHES IN SCOTLAND.**



Five-time Open Champion and four-time Ryder Cup player Tom Watson says he is delighted that a new trophy bearing his name will be played for bi-annually between young Players in Junior golf organisations in Scotland and in the USA. Bernard Gallacher OBE, an eight-time Ryder Cup player, has agreed to be the Honorary President when the event is played in Scotland in 2020.

The venues for the inaugural Match in October 2018 will be the Ocean Course at the Kiawah Island Resort, South Carolina, designed by Pete and Alice Dye, and the Tom Watson designed Cassique Course, at the Kiawah Island Club.

The first return Match in Scotland will take place in July 2020 and will be hosted jointly by The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers at Muirfield, East Lothian, and by The Royal Burgess Golfing Society at their course in Barnton, Edinburgh. Old Tom Morris is credited as the architect of both courses in their current locations, and later the Royal Burgess course was revised by Willie Park Jnr, and later by James Braid.

David Warren, Secretary of the East Lothian Junior Golf League (ELJGL) said “Together with the Edinburgh Junior Golf League, we are extremely grateful to the Owners, Managers and Members of these four beautiful and historic courses for agreeing to host the first two Watson Cup Matches.”

The Matches will give both the South Carolina and Scottish Juniors the opportunity to play a Match, in the style of the “Walker Cup,” over two days, and to experience the different skills required to play golf on either side of the Atlantic.

Muirfield and Kiawah Island have each hosted a Ryder Cup Match, and there are several more coincidences involving the Watson Cup venues. Tom Watson won the 1980 Open Championship at Muirfield, and was twice victorious at the Heritage tournament in Hilton Head in South Carolina. Bernard Gallacher started his golf career as a Junior in the Lothians, and won the Lothians Boys

Championship in 1965, and then at Muirfield, he won the Mens Scottish Open Strokeplay in 1967 when he was just 18, before commencing an illustrious Professional career incorporating 22 tournament wins. Bernard is an Honorary member at The Royal Burgess.

They have both had outstanding careers in the Ryder Cup and were Captains of winning Teams; Tom at The Belfry in 1993 when Bernard was the opposing Captain, and Bernard was Captain of the victorious European Team in 1995 in the USA. Bernard was also the European Team Captain at the Ryder Cup when it was held at Kiawah Island in 1991. They met “Head to Head” twice as Players in the Ryder Cup of 1983 and Tom won both. Not to be outdone though, Bernard did record wins in Ryder Cup singles against both Lee Trevino and Jack Nicklaus.

The South Carolina Junior Golf Association (SCJGA) Chairman, Ben Zeigler, began developing plans for the competition while attending a Junior tournament in Gullane, Scotland in 2016. “I have always been interested in the golf connection between South Carolina and the Edinburgh/East Lothian area of Scotland, and was surprised that many Scots were completely unaware that South Carolina was the genesis of American golf,” Zeigler said. “At the same time, I was struck by how American Juniors playing in Scotland, could learn much about playing links golf.”

Warren met with Zeigler and other SCJGA Officials at the Heritage Classic in South Carolina in 2017. They have since worked together to make the Matches become a reality. Warren said, “Playing the game in America is an important part of the development of our Juniors. We are thrilled to be invited to take our Juniors to South Carolina in 2018 to play on two such excellent courses. We then have the opportunity to be hosts here in Scotland in 2020, courtesy of two historic Golf Clubs, both of whom play on fantastic courses.”

He added, “The earliest documentary record of golf being played anywhere in the World, proves that it was being played in Edinburgh in 1457, at Leith Links, near Edinburgh. The first record of golf arriving in the USA is a shipping manifest showing that golf clubs and balls were exported from Leith Docks to Charleston S.C. in 1739. This date is very close to the dates of formation of The Honourable Company in 1744 and of The Royal Burgess in 1735. The inception of the Watson Cup is intended therefore to celebrate these historic connections. The archived shipping manifest will hopefully be on display during the Matches.”

Warren said, “The ELJGL and the Edinburgh Junior Golf League (EJGL) will select our Players for these Matches from our recent and current Juniors, but they must have played well for their Clubs in our Leagues and in other events which we organise. We are grateful to our present sponsors (see below) without whom our League would be unable to function. We will gladly welcome any further offers of funding to assist with the costs of our Players, and for any offers from new sponsors for Team clothing etc.” For further information contact Justin Fleming, SCJGA Senior Director on 001 803 732 9311 or David Warren, Secretary of ELJGL on (0044) 07595 301425.

