

County Focus

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Female golfers in this South East England county often have reason to celebrate, and with a number of junior golfers progressing through the ranks, success looks set to continue for the foreseeable future

Golf may be a lot more than just winning, but for the ladies at the Buckinghamshire Ladies County Golf Association, the staggering long list of golfing accolades that their players have attained over recent years certainly makes for good reading.

Having won the Midlands South County Match Week five times in the past six years, the sweet sound of success has become somewhat par for the course for the ladies in red. Even more impressive, the county has made quite a habit of producing exciting young talent to bolster their ever-improving squad as of late, with five juniors among the team who would come out on top in the county match play event in June at Kings Norton Golf Club.

With regional success, the squad, led by county champion Alize Kozlowski, from Beaconsfield Golf Club, progressed through to the National Finals at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club in Suffolk, and despite entering the tournament as underdogs, pulled off the shock result of the week, earning a well-earned half against county giants, and eventual champions, Yorkshire.

Individually, the team has also enjoyed phenomenal success this season, with Thalia Kirby and Daisy Kennedy marking themselves out as potential stars of the future.

Fifteen-year-old Daisy has been seemingly unstoppable this year, winning the English Schools U16 Championship, the North of England U16 Girls, and the Midlands South Girls Championships, on her way to earning her first international cap at the England U16 Girls match against Switzerland.

Fellow Stoke Park member Thalia, who also formed part of the successful England team at Pannal Golf Club in August, came agonisingly close to victory at the English Girls U16 Amateur Championship at Blackmoor Golf Club, losing out to a birdie on the first extra play-off hole to



l-r: Bucks junior golfers Thalia Kirby, Daisy Kennedy, Caitlin Whitehead and Charlotte Heath

2017 county champion Alice Kozlowski

Surrey's Annabell Dimmock. Megan Dennis, the Woburn Golf Club ladies' champion, would finish 3rd in the U18 event at Littlestone Golf Club, a career high for the eighteen-year-old.

Special note must also be given to Rosie Kim, a member at Burnham Beeches and a junior scholar at the prestigious Buckinghamshire Golf Club, who at just ten, has already reduced her handicap to single figures. The youngster, who took up the sport when she was five, has already scored two hole-in-ones in her short career, and recently took home the honours at the US Kids Golf Venice Girls Open (U10) with a 36-hole score of six-under-par.

Buckinghamshire is one of fifteen counties throughout the country to participate in the England Golf backed Girls Golf Rocks scheme, a coaching programme first introduced to Essex,

which aims to get more girls into the sport.

The campaign to inspire new young players returned to the county this April, following its successful introduction in 2016, where almost 70 girls attended taster sessions, of which 50 then went on to take up some form of club membership.

Following introductory sessions at four participating clubs throughout the county this spring, the scheme has again proved a big success, with the beginners offered five weeks of group coaching, before attending a fun day with eight young ambassadors from the county squad.

ROUND-UP

There are 38 affiliated golf clubs in Buckinghamshire with 2,636 active female members. For further information, visit www.bclga.org.uk