

Julie Otto among PGA Pros offering free lessons at Open Championship



Fife based Golf coach and former amateur ace Julie Otto is preparing to teach Britain's golfers how to tee off like Tiger Wood at this month's Open Championship at Muirfield.

The trainee PGA Professional will be among a number of PGA coaches giving spectators the chance to learn some of the techniques that helped their heroes reach the top.

Julie will be one of 23 PGA Professionals offering free tuition and expert advice to all ages and abilities at the popular R&A Swing Zone which includes nets and a Huxley Golf all-weather putting green.

The coaches will give in the region of 2,000 lessons between 14-21 July with each coach having been specially selected to ensure they fit in with the PGA's coaching vision of Right Coach, Right Place, Right Time.

They will help to improve the experience for spectators by developing their understanding of the game while the likes of Rory McIlroy and Justin Rose take to the fairways.

Julie, who coaches at Elie Sports Centre, is delighted to have been offered the opportunity to take part.



She said: "I'm really looking forward to it as it will be a completely different experience for me. In the past I've refereed at nine Open Championships and I really enjoyed the atmosphere, so I can't wait to get my teeth into this

opportunity.”

Julie had a successful career in amateur golf before deciding to turn to the sport full-time, and can list the Ladies' British Open Amateur Championship and the Spanish Amateur Championship among her successes.

But she always harboured a dream of turning golf into a full-time career, and this eventually happened when she swapped her job in an insurance company to take up golf administration, before using her experience to move into tuition through becoming PGA qualified.

“I love coaching,” she began, “you meet so many interesting and diverse people who really want to improve their game. I believe it's important to make learning the game enjoyable, so I try to be friendly and approachable – hopefully that way they'll be able to pick up some tips and improve their skills.”

There is also another side to coaching that is particularly appealing to Julie.

“I've got a young family, three boys aged between eight and five, and they really are the most important thing to me in the world,” she said, “I love how my current job gives me the chance to be there for them while also fulfilling my own childhood ambitions.”

And her biggest tip to those who want to emulate the pros on show at Muirfield? “I think it's really important to learn the basics and get them right,” she said, “get your grip, stance and posture correct and the rest will come with practice.”

Heather Gaunt, Coach Education and Development Manager for The PGA in Scotland said: “Our coaches will deliver high quality and professional golf sessions to in excess of 3,000 participants.

“We hope the sessions will inspire them to increase the amount they play and their progression in the sport, as well as showcase the value and expertise of the PGA Professional.”

Other PGA Professionals from Scotland coaching at the Open include; Martin Goldie (Kames Country Club), Andy Marshall (Houston Golf Range), Allan Martin (Buchanan Castle Golf Club), John Murray (Deer Park Golf and Country Club), Scott Robertson (Broadlees Golf), Margot Smith (Glenisla Golf Club) and Andrew Wylie (Ardeer Golf Club).

Anyone interested in giving golf a go can check out the Get into Golf website which is a national initiative and has details of taster sessions run by PGA Professionals at local clubs and facilities.

<http://www.getintogolf.org/Map.aspx?sitesectionid=27&sitesectiontitle=Get+into+golf+>