



## **RECORD INTERNATIONAL FIELD OF BOY AND GIRL GOLFERS TO COMPETE IN THE JUNIOR OPEN AT KILMARNOCK (BARASSIE)**

7 July 2016, St Andrews, Scotland:

A field of 148 emerging boy and girl golfers from a record 80 countries will arrive in Scotland to compete in the Junior Open on the eve of The 145<sup>th</sup> Open at Royal Troon next week.

2015 Champion Golfer of the Year Zach Johnson and Darren Clarke, who won The Open in 2011, are set to welcome the junior golfers to the event at the opening ceremony on 10 July.

Kilmarnock (Barassie) is the first venue to host the biennial event for a second time when it is played across the Ayrshire links from 11-13 July.

Founded in 1994, the Junior Open is traditionally played on a nearby course shortly before The Open and this year's event is taking place less than three miles from Royal Troon.

Duncan Weir, Executive Director – Working for Golf, The R&A, said, “The Junior Open is a wonderful opportunity for talented young boy and girl golfers from around the world to compete in a prestigious international event.

“We are seeing an increasingly high standard of play at each championship and many past competitors have gone on to enjoy successful careers at the professional level. We can look forward to seeing some exciting emerging talents in both the men's and women's games.”

One of Scotland's most renowned links, Kilmarnock (Barassie) first staged the Junior Open in 2004 when Jordan Cox of the United States secured the title with a one-under-par total of 215.

It hosted the Boys Amateur Championship in 2010, when Adrian Otaegui defeated Max Rottluff 4&3 in the final, and the 2012 Scottish Open Amateur Stroke Play Championship, when France's Paul Barjon was victorious. The course has often been used as a Final Qualifying venue for The Open.

The R&A's 152 affiliates are invited to enter their leading boy and girl golfers aged 16 and under into the Junior Open. Competitors play two rounds of stroke play, after which the leading 80 players and ties progress to the third and final round.

Previous Junior Open champions include 2006 winner Patrick Reed, who triumphed at the 2014 WGC-Cadillac Championship at Doral, 2013 LPGA Rookie of the Year Moriya Jutanugarn, who became the first female champion in 2008, and Kenta Konishi, who featured in the last four of the US Amateur Championship in 2015.

Some of the world's best golfers have featured in the Junior Open over the years, including 2014 Champion Golfer of the Year Rory McIlroy, 2015 US Open and Masters Champion Jordan Spieth, seven-time European Ryder Cup player Sergio Garcia, 2010 US Women's Open Champion Paula Creamer and 2012 Ladies Scottish Open winner Carly Booth.

Spectators are welcome at Kilmarnock (Barassie) for the event and scoring will be available on [www.RandA.org](http://www.RandA.org)