

How I came to be playing Kingsbarns Golf Course this Summer

A report for the Henry Morris Memorial Trust by Matthew Russell, Y11, Sawston Village College

On Saturday 14th March I travelled to Queens' College, Cambridge for an interview for the Henry Morris Memorial Trust awards. I applied for funding to play at Kingsbarns golf club on the east coast of Scotland. Kingsbarns is one of the most prestigious golf clubs in the entire world and is a course that is regularly played on by the world's top golfers. The reason I chose this project is because golf is one of my passions and since a very young age I can remember holidays walking along the Fife coastal path through this golf course and dreaming that one day I would get to play it. You can imagine how delighted I was to receive an award and finally get to play this incredible course. A dream come true.



I arrived at Kingsbarns golf club on the afternoon of Sunday 2nd August 2026, I was greeted with warm smiles by the Kingsbarns team who immediately took me on a tour and told me about the practice facilities, the putting green and where the first tee was. I then made my way over to the driving range to warm up with some long drives. The Links turf was incredible and the facilities are out of this world. Not a blade of grass out of place. After I had finished my bucket of balls, I handed it back in and headed over to the chipping green to make sure my technique was secure and ready for the difficult test of Kingsbarns. My 3 p.m. tee time was fast approaching so I ventured to the putting green to hone in my pace and keep my putts smooth and controlled. Then, before I hit my first tee shot I was greeted by my caddie named Finn and was handed a complimentary package including tees and ball markers all of the Kingsbarns brand. Finally, the big moment had come. I stepped up, placed my tee firmly in the ground and rested my ball on top of it. Boom! I middled my drive straight down the centre of the fairway. A huge sigh of relief then followed. I was off!

The round started off with a slight stumble after a 3-putt bogey put me at 1 over par after the first hole. However, pure drives and crisp iron shots then followed, securing me a birdie at the fifth hole and lots of greens hit in regulation. I finished my front nine, two shots over par with three disappointing three putts but still a brilliant 9 holes at this tough championship golf course.



Then after a quick pit stop at the bunker bar, I was ready for the back nine. The back nine started much the same as the front nine, with amazing ball-striking but the putts just not quite rolling in and I found myself on the 12th hole three over par. The 12th hole is a par 5 with the sea's waves crashing into the sand just 15 yards off of the fairway. An incredibly intimidating hole. I had managed to keep my drive in play on the fairway, leaving me with a difficult decision... to take on the impossible shot over the sea and onto the green or layup leaving me with a 7 iron in . Finn, my caddie, convinced me of the second option, so I played it safe, leading to a very good par on an incredibly tough hole into the wind. Maintaining my three over par score. I was delighted. Then to the 13th hole, the par 3.



This hole has the most iconic picturesque views of both the golf course and the sea beyond with three bunkers lining the edge of its green and a cliff running down the left hand side. The only place you can't miss is short. I stepped up, hit my teeshot and caught it slightly out of the toe of the golf club. Luckily, a very fortunate bounce followed and I left with a good par on a hole that can very quickly get away from you. Then I made it to the 16th at 4 over par due to a bogey on the previous hole. The 16th hole is a par 3 on which you have to hit your ball over the rocky coastline onto a slither of green that all runs from left to right. Needless to say, it is an incredibly difficult hole at 160 yards. With the wind howling at my back, I struck a pure 8-iron onto the left-half of the green. Still, I was left with a forty foot putt which broke both left, right, uphill and downhill all during the putt. I got it all wrong, leaving me a twelve foot par putt which narrowly missed the edge of the cup

leading to another bogey. Finally, I made it to the last hole of the day at five over par. One of the most difficult finishing holes I have ever played due to its into-the-wind nature. I played the hole well, with a flushed driver and five iron leading to a 30 foot putt that was unfortunately hit way too hard leaving me with another 12 footer that just came up a ball roll short. My round finished as a 78 which although not my very best was still a brilliant round at a championship golf course in blustery winds. What an experience!!!

I would like to thank everyone at the Henry Morris Trust for making this wonderful day possible and making my dreams come true. I will never forget it!!