

McCleery Golf Academy

Junior Golf @ McCleery Golf Course

From Daisies to Awards....with Fiona Reuter

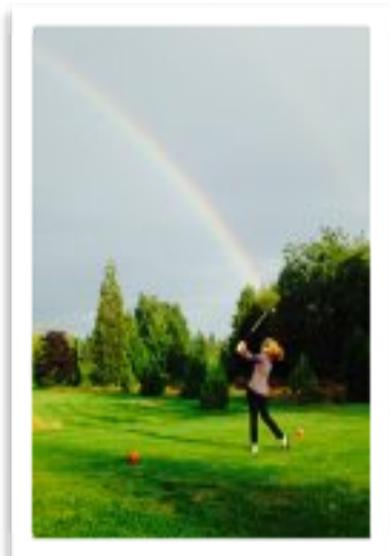
Fiona's parents signed her up for her first Little Eagles summer golf camp between first and second grades, just to give her something to do outside in the fresh air. They say while she participated in all the skills and games, she was really more interested in the daisies on the golf course. She continued with golf lessons because her father, Georg played, although sailing and synchronized swimming held more sway at that time. Two years ago, the golf-bug bit. She turned to her mom, Nikki, and with all the earnestness a 10-year old could muster, said, "I need to take this more seriously."

Georg & Nikki insisted that school must always come first, but Fiona was a good student so there was no problem with her going to the Driving Range every chance she got.

During one of those self-motivated practice sessions, PGA of Canada Professional Leila Harman (nee Chartrand) - who was an accomplished junior golfer herself - approached them and asked if Fiona would be interested registering in a Girls Junior Development Program. This was exactly what Fiona was looking for; a way to get "more serious" about this game. In the JD Program, Leila challenged Fiona in such a way that rapid improvement was the

happy result. Leila had taught some of Fiona's classes, over the years and says that Fiona has an amazing work ethic. That, paired with her natural talent was the perfect combination for success in golf. Leila says Fiona is a natural leader in group lessons and they have great conversations about golf during the private sessions.

Although Leila suggested that Fiona enter some competitions, initially Fiona was not interested. She was, and still is, involved in Karate and the school band so Nikki and Georg let her continue to just have fun with golf.



Last year, however, Fiona decided she would like to compete and so she enrolled in the CJGA Junior Linkster Tour. She entered a few tournaments, had fun, won a couple - one of which she had the best score overall, even beating the boys. But the biggest win, for both Fiona and her parents, was winning the season's "Most Sportsmanlike Golfer" for her age group!

This year she is playing in the Junior Linkster Tour again and she's played in two Maple Leaf Junior Tour events. She's had one win and the season has only just begun.

Last year, Georg and Fiona started playing together on Sundays; fabulous father/daughter time! At first, Georg would give her an occasional mulligan and they progressed from playing 9-holes up to 18-holes and now it is a totally different story. They play matches for chocolate and while Georg wins an occasional hole, Fiona usually takes the match. Nikki has recently signed up for lessons herself so they can make it a family affair.

Fiona is often at the course playing or just practicing, with her friends or on her own and in all kinds of weather. The Golf Shop staff says that she was sometimes the only one out on the course on cold, rainy winter days! Fiona says she likes to challenge herself on the course and she learns a lot about her own game that way.

Nikki loves the exposure to "life's lessons" that golf provides. Honesty and integrity are key aspects of the game, as they are in life. Golf has helped Fiona with school; by learning not to be so hard on herself. If she messes up on one hole or one assignment, she has the chance on the next hole/assignment. Georg is inspired seeing Fiona's love of the game grow. She enjoys all aspects of the game.

While 12 years of age is awfully young to decide on a career, Fiona thinks something in golf would be a dream-job. She loves the Golf Channel; maybe broadcasting is in her future? Fiona had a major role in her school's Musical, Beauty & the Beast so she not afraid of an audience. Maybe we can all say "Hey - I knew that girl when..."

