

## Headfort VIP

### Damien Mc Grane



Damien was born in Kells, County Meath, Ireland. He has been a member of Headfort since 1984 and was assistant pro at the club. He turned professional in 1991. McGrane has had full status on the European Tour since 2003, and has earned over €2.4m in prize-money. He clinched his first European Tour Title on 20 April 2008 at the Volvo China Open, winning by nine strokes, and ended the 2008 season ranked in the top thirty of the Order of Merit for the first time.

### Jack Nicklaus

Jack visited Headfort in 2006 and is an honorary life member. He was hugely impressed by both courses in Headfort.

Jack Nicklaus won 73 PGA Tour events in his career. Only one golfer won more. But in the majors, how do other golfers stack up against Nicklaus? They don't. Nicklaus won 18 professional majors - twice as many as all but one other golfer. He finished second 19 times, and third nine times. In all, Nicklaus posted 48 Top 3 finishes, 56 Top 5 finishes and 73 Top 10 finishes. Perhaps Tiger Woods will someday challenge that record. But for now, Nicklaus remains - by far - the most accomplished player in the history of major championship golf. And he did it all exhibiting great class and sportsmanship.



### Des Smyth



**Des is an Honorary Life Member and continues to hold the course record for Headfort Old when he won the Dunlop Open in 1980.**

Smyth was born in Drogheda, County Louth. He turned professional in 1974 and was a member of the European Tour for over a quarter of a century. His best finish on the European Tour Order of Merit was seventh in 1988. He won eight tournaments on the tour across four different decades, breaking Neil Coles' record as the oldest man to win a European Tour event when he claimed the 2001 Madeira Island Open at the age of 48 years and 34 days.

Smyth represented Europe in the Ryder Cup in 1979 and 1981, losing on both occasions to the United States. Smyth also represented his country in the World Cup and the Alfred Dunhill Cup many times and was a member of the Irish team (alongside Eamonn Darcy and Ronan Rafferty) that won the latter in 1988. At the 2006 Ryder Cup, he was one of Ian Woosnam's vice-captains. Since turning fifty in 2003, Smyth has had a successful career in senior golf, winning tournaments on both the Champions Tour and the European Seniors Tour.

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### Christy O'Connor Jnr.

Christy designed the Headfort new course and is one of Ireland's most celebrated golfers.

O'Connor was born in Galway. He turned professional in 1967. The European Tour officially began in 1972, and O'Connor made the top hundred on the Order of Merit in each of its first twenty-one seasons, with a best ranking of seventh in 1975. He won four European Tour events. As a senior he has competed on both the European Seniors Tour and the U.S. based Champions Tour, and has won two Senior British Open titles (before it became one of the senior majors) and two Champions Tour events.

O'Connor played in the Ryder Cup twice. In 1975 he was a member of a losing Great Britain & Ireland team and in 1989 he was part of a European team which tied the match to retain the trophy. His personal record was one win, three losses and no ties. His win over Fred Couples was best remembered for a stunning 2 iron shot on the last hole at The Belfry, which he left just 4 feet from the hole.



### Johnny Murtagh



**Johnny Murtagh is an honorary life member of Headfort Golf Club.**

Johnny Murtagh (born May 14, 1970) is an award-winning Irish flat racing jockey. He comes from Bohermeen, outside Navan, County Meath.

He was a promising schoolboy footballer and boxer when he was younger. At a fight evening held at a hotel in his native County Meath a spectator advised his mother that young Johnny would make a jockey explaining that he's small, light, got good balance, a good sense of rhythm and plenty of courage. Sheila Murtagh was interested by someone thinking Johnny could be a jockey because Michael, her husband, had wanted to be a jockey but he was told you couldn't be a jockey if you weren't brought

up with horses. She wrote to the school for apprentice jockeys in County Kildare, got a two-week trial for her son and sent him on his way. The teenager thought it would be a bit of fun but as soon as he stepped into the world of horses, he knew it was for him. From the trial, he got on the 10-month course and within a year, he was apprenticed to John Oxx, one of Ireland's leading trainers. He was 17 when he rode his first winner, 19 when he became champion apprentice and 22 when he became first jockey to Oxx.

He is today one of the world's top jockeys and was appointed as the Coolmore operation's number one jockey in 2008. He excels on the big occasion having won many of the big races around the world. His haul includes in Ireland: Three 2000 Guineas, one 1000 Guineas, three Irish Derbys, five Irish Oaks, two Tattersalls Gold Cups and an Irish Champion Stakes. In England: Two 2000 Guineas, three Epsom Derbys, the Eclipse Stakes, three King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes, three Sussex Stakes, three Yorkshire Oaks, the International Stakes, a QEII Stakes and a Champion Stakes, and internationally wins in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, Breeders' Cup Turf, Breeders' Cup Mile, Breeders' Cup Marathon and Hong Kong Vase. He is a jockey to follow particularly at Royal Ascot where he has scored at least once in all of the Group 1 races staged there.