

The 2024 Irish International Pitch and Putt Open will be played at the Ryston club in Newbridge Co. Kildare from 19th/21st July.

162 top players will compete. The bulk of the field is drawn from clubs across Ireland but the event will also feature a liberal sprinkling of overseas visitors representing associations in Netherlands, Britain, Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country.

Holder **Evan Carry** of the Castletown club in Co. Meath defends his title and he will be joined by his European Team championship and World Cup winning clubmate **Eamon Gibney**. Gibney won the Irish Open at Glenville (Dublin) in 2014 and is the reigning Leinster Matchplay champion.

Frank Dineen (St. Anne's, Cork) was Irish Open champion in 2010 and in 2016. Also competing is reigning Irish Matchplay titleholder **Ray Murphy** (St. Anne's) and his Strokeplay counterpart **Stephen Shoer** (Riverdale, Nenagh). Murphy was runner-up at Seapoint, Co. Louth in 2018.

Local Kildare hopes are likely to rest with **Sean Harkins** (Ryston), **Frank Ryan** (St. Bridget's), **Darren Keogh** (Ryston) and 2024 Catalan Open winner **Ian Dillon** (St. Bridget's).

Keogh has done admirable work as event organizer. Harkins is a two-time European Team championship winner with Ireland. Ryan won the 2018 Irish Senior (Over-55) category.

Other top-class over-55 performers on view are **Anthony Galvin** (Tullamore) who is the reigning Irish Senior open champion and Britain's **Steve Deeble**, who was victorious in the 2016 British Senior Open at Dagenham.

Pat Malone (Custume, Athlone) will hope to regain the Irish Open title he claimed at Lough Owel four years ago

Ladies Open holder **Eleanor Walsh** (Fermoy), winner at Tullamore in 2022, is joined by World Ladies over-55 Champion **Breda White** (Tipperary Hills), two-time Irish Open winner **Chrissie Sheedy** (Ryston) and 2014 winner **Marian Courtney** (Ryston).

Also competing are 2020 victor **Sarah O'Neill** (Collins, Cork), former British Ladies Open champion **Mary Murray** (Rocklodge) and **Esther de Schiffart** (Netherlands) who was second in 2011, twice third and the best non-Irish player in six Irish Ladies Opens.

2024 Basque Ladies Open winner **Marie Escudero Docampo** (Galicia) is also making the trip and is sure to contend. Multiple Irish champion **Liz Quinn** (Collinstown, Co. Westmeath) has been victorious in international opens as far afield as France, Netherlands, San Marino and Australia and was runner-up at Lough Owel four years ago.

2016 British Open champion **John Deeble** (Britain) was best non-Irish player at the 2010 and 2014 Irish Opens.

European Strokeplay champions **Ian Farrelly** (Bellewstown), who won in 2011 and Fermoy's **John Cahill**, victorious in 2019, are two standout entrants.

2013 World Strokeplay kingpin **John Walsh** (Collins) is in the field as his 2017 equivalent **Liam O'Donovan** (Bruff). O'Donovan also claimed the 2015 European crown.

Bruff pair **Kieran Earls** and **Tommy Hanley** have enjoyed considerable success at home and abroad. 2015 Munster Matchplay champion Hanley was the 2018 Catalan Open winner while 2020 Irish Matchplay winner Earls has achieved four international open podium finishes in Andorra, Catalonia and Ireland (third at Tullamore in 2022).

Two strong contenders will be former French, San Marino and Australian Open victor **Alan Hanlon** and his Collinstown clubmate **Rene Jan Bloem**, winner of the recent Gelders Open in the Netherlands.

Others with strong CVs are 2023 Catalan Open runner-up **Daithi Sexton** (Fermoy) and **William Buckley Junior** (Erry, Clara, Co. Offaly), a former European Team championship winner with Ireland and 2004 Catalan Open champion.

Fourth in 2009, **Eoin Walsh** (Collins) has been in exceptional early season Scratch Cup form.

Stephen Murray (Old County, Crumlin, Dublin) was beaten in the 2010 Irish Open play-off at R.G.S.C.

The Irish Pitch and Putt Open is contested every two years. The 2024 renewal is expected to be one of the best yet.