



INCLUSION CHAMPION

Ellie Perks

AGE: 19

STARTED PLAYING: 2012 (aged 7)

BASED AT: Hagley Golf Club, Midlands

PAYING IT FORWARD

When not studying, or on the range working on her game, she helps promote Golf for Disabled Children, Little People UK, and Dwarf Sports. She provides lessons to assist newcomers in taking their first few swings. Through the PGA Training Programme, she hopes one day to open her own academy.

“I wanted to be able to get other people with dwarfism involved. I didn't think many would turn up but in the end, I had about 30. It was quite exciting to see that people were coming to give golf a try, and so I've been doing them every month since then.”



ABOUT ELLIE

ROUTE INTO GOLF

Ellie's interest was sparked by going to the golf club with her dad. The head pro, Gareth Snelgrove suggested she approached 'Golf for Disabled Children' charity and within days she was taking advantage of free lessons offered by the charity. She is an accomplished golfer with a handicap of 11, is in her first year of the prestigious PGA Training Programme and plays an active role in encouraging other young people with disabilities to start playing the game.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Ellie is a person of short stature, and although golf has been supportive, the wider community has not always been quite so understanding.

“At school, some tried to put me down because I played a lot of golf and didn't want me to get the recognition that I did. It's easy to feel upset but I just tried to live my normal day, and then go home and play golf, that's how I dealt with it, the golf course became a sanctuary where I was accepted for who I was.”

BIGGEST INFLUENCES

Dad, Martin who was the catalyst that started Ellie's journey into golf, the club pro Gareth Snelgrove who guided her into lessons and Sharon Renhard, a former lady captain of the golf club who provided Ellie with a lot of support.