



Gold Standard Awards 2009 Caddie Master of the Year

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Davy Gilchrist
Caddie Master
Kingsbarns Golf Links

Ever since it opened in 2000, Kingsbarns has been revered for the phenomenal golfing challenge presented by the beautiful east coast links. The enticing undulations and wonderfully framed holes have become a must-play for any golfer making a pilgrimage to the Home of Golf.

Standing on the 6th or 15th tees, it's hard not to lose yourself in its beauty, which is why, more often than not, a caddy will be standing next to you quietly offering his guidance and experience. From club selection to the best line off the tee, the caddies at Kingsbarns guide punters round the course with wit and encouragement. They are part of the experience and without fail have been mentored by acclaimed caddie master Davy Gilchrist.

"I look for enthusiasm in my caddies," he says. "I don't want somebody walking around a golf course thinking this is money in his hand just for carrying a set of clubs. I like my caddies to give a firm handshake, look into the eyes when they meet their guy and have a little bit of banter."

To ensure golfer and caddy hit it off, Davy spends time getting to know the golfer before making the perfect match. "I try to match personalities so I get to know the golfers before I match them up with the caddies," he says. "We like to take all the doubt out of the golfers' mind."

Matchmaking aside, Davy's ultimate role is to ensure the Kingsbarns caddies add to the enjoyment of the golfers' round, which he does to critical acclaim securing the much-sought-after Caddie Master of the Year title at Golf Tourism Scotland's Gold Standard Awards.

"I was absolutely delighted," he says recalling the glittering night. "I really didn't expect anything because we hadn't had a good year in 2009 and I was working a lot behind the scenes rather than out front meeting tour operators and guests. It just shows you that if you do your job properly, these things will happen."

Davy has been doing his job properly since he joined Kingsbarns during its opening season in 2000. The move followed a stint as an amateur golfer which, not surprisingly, helped in the transition from player to bag carrier. "I learned the golf course over a couple of rounds," he says. "I took to it quite easily because of my golf background. I'm used to working with yardages - I've always done that. There are some golfers who play by eye, but I like to know how far I have to hit the ball."

His skill as a player has certainly helped in his caddying career, but one attribute he instils in all his caddies is more to do with attitude than ability. "There are different standards of players and different ways to play each hole, so we try to give the clients the positives. I try to get my caddies not to give out negative advice, such as don't aim down there or avoid that bunker because invariably the golfer will make a bad swing and end up down there. If that happens, we'll look at positive ways out that will get a par or even a wee birdie. It's all about keeping positive."