



# PIPING CHAMPIONSHIP

## *The Pipers*

## *Piobaireachd*

## *March, Strathspey & Reel*

### FINLAY JOHNSTON

Finlay was the 2018 and 2019 Glenfiddich Piping Champion.

He began piping at the age of 8 and was originally taught by his grandfather, Alasdair Sinclair from Tiree and his mother, Anne Johnston (Sinclair). Finlay began receiving lessons from Ronnie McShannon and has continued to do so until the present. This teacher/pupil relationship has lasted for over 25 years.

### CALLUM BEAUMONT

Callum resides in Dollar, Clackmannanshire with his fiancée Marita. He presently instructs at Dollar Academy and also has his own private teaching business. He currently receives instruction from Willie McCallum and has done so since he was 15 years old.

Callum has won many of the top prizes including The Clasp (4 times) both Gold Medals and the MSR section at the Glenfiddich Piping Championship in 2018.

In his spare time, Callum enjoys playing golf and has recently reduced his handicap into single figures.

### BRUCE GANDY

As this year of great uncertainty around the world continues, Bruce feels very honoured for the chance to actually compete at a “live” event this year. Playing at the Glenfiddich, is easily the crowning achievement for any piper. But this year, it takes on a whole new picture. With the global pandemic front and centre for everyone, the excitement to play and have socially distanced talk with close friends/competitors, is most rewarding.

The people viewing the event from the Live Stream are fantastic, supportive, and respectful, and the competitors all understand what is at stake to be a performer at the Glenfiddich.

New for Bruce, this past month saw release of his non-fiction book - “Performance, Delivering Your Own Awesome.” This work was 4 years in the making, writing down many thoughts in the early mornings to bring the book to completion.

In demand year round for workshops, master classes, or working with his online list of students, Bruce has pioneered a series of Piobaireachd workshops with a class “in house” and students all over the world attending the live streaming to work through Piobaireachd. This new innovation now brings the workshop “to the people” versus the people travelling great lengths to a venue.

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### JACK LEE

Jack has been regarded as one of the world's leading pipers for 40 years, won every major prize in the piping world on at least one occasion and is the only North American to win the Glenfiddich Championship. Jack has competed at the Glenfiddich many times since his first appearance in 1982 and has won the Championship twice and the Piobaireachd section five times.

Jack lives in Surrey, British Columbia and is a full-time piper. He is competing on a bagpipe made by his company, Lee and Sons Bagpipes Ltd. He embarked on a project 30 years ago to record the majority of the world's bagpipe tunes and has, so far, recorded 9,000, including the entire Piobaireachd Society collection. These are published on his website, Bagpipemusic.com. Jack is a co-founder and has been pipe sergeant of the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band for 40 years. The band has won the World Pipe Band Championship on six occasions.

Much in demand as a teacher and recitalist, Jack travels extensively during most years. He has been self-quarantining in Scotland for the last two weeks in order to compete today.

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### STUART LIDDELL

Stuart, from Inveraray, started piping at the age of nine and was originally taught by his grandfather, the late Pipe Major Ronald McCallum M.B.E. and later, Arthur Gillies. He has also had tuition from Jim Henderson and Hugh MacCallum.

One of the most gifted players in the world, he has won three Clasps at Inverness, the Senior Piobaireachd at Oban five times, both Gold Medals and is a two-times Glenfiddich Piping Champion.

Stuart is founder and Pipe Major of the Inveraray & District Pipe Band, winners of the World Pipe Band Championship in 2017 and 2019 in Grade 1. Previously he was a member of the Scottish Power Pipe Band for seven years, thereafter joining the Simon Fraser University Pipe Band from Vancouver, Canada with whom he played for eleven years.

A piano tuner to trade, he is also piping instructor at Mid Argyll Primary and Lochgilphead High Schools.

Stuart Liddell  
wins 2020  
Glenfiddich  
Piping  
Championship

### WILLIAM McCALLUM

Willie is a native of Campbeltown, where he learned piping primarily from his uncles Ronald and Hugh and also had lessons from P/M Ronald McCallum, Inveraray. His late father, Willie Senior, was a previous recipient of the Balvenie Medal and a huge influence on his career.

Willie's appearances now number over 30 and in that time, he has won the championship eight times.

Some other notable career wins are the Gold Medals at Inverness and Oban, Senior Piobaireachd Oban (3), Bratach Gorm (4), Silver Chanter (3), Former Winners MSR Oban (5), Former Winners MSR Inverness (4), P/M Donald MacLeod Memorial (9), Springbank Invitational (9), Dan Reid Memorial (7), Donald MacDonald Quaich (3), Former Winners MSR London (5).

Willie works with the National Piping Centre as lead tutor on the B. Mus Degree Programme and also runs his own piping business, Willie McCallum Piping, which involves teaching, as well as selling bagpipes, being consultant to McCallum Bagpipes Ltd and similarly involved at Bannatyne Ltd, pipe bag makers.

Willie lives in Bearsden with his wife Christine and has two children, Hailey and Scott.

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## ANGUS MacCOLL

Originally taught by his father Dugie MacColl, Angus later had Piobaireachd lessons from PM Ronald Lawrie and Ronald Morrison. He won the 'Young Piper of the Year' at Blair Castle in 1984 and is a four-times Glenfiddich Piping Champion. His senior prizes include the Gold Medal at Inverness in 1992 and Gold Medal in Oban in 1996. He has won the Clasp 4 times, the Senior Piobaireachd 4 times, the Former Winners MSR at the Argyllshire Gathering 4 times, the Former Winners MSR at the Northern Meeting 3 times, the Hornpipe and Jig at Inverness 10 times, the Silver Chanter, the Lord Todd/ Alasdair Gillies recital competition 7 times, the Donald MacLeod Memorial 4 times, and the Springbank Invitational in Campbeltown, 3 times.

Angus teaches piping in Oban schools and formed the Oban High School pipe band in 2006.

## RODERICK MacLEOD

Roddy MacLeod MBE has been a regular competitor at the Glenfiddich Championship since 1986 and has won every major piping prize including the Gold Medals, Clasp, Senior Piobaireachd and Former Winners March, Strathspey and Reel at Oban and Inverness.

He has won the Glenfiddich Championship on 5 occasions and runner up on 3 with 10 wins in the Piobaireachd event and 3 wins in the MSR. Other major piping prizes include winning the Silver Chanter on 7 occasions, the Bratach Gorm 8 times and the Gillies Cup 9 times.

Roddy lives in Glasgow with his wife Margaret. Since retiring as Principal of The National Piping Centre in May 2020 he has been engaged in online teaching and the development of his new website and range of RJM bagpipe models.

## CONNOR SINCLAIR

On his first appearance at the "Glenfiddich" in 2019, Connor won the March, Strathspey and Reel section and was placed 2nd Overall in the prize list.

He hails from Crieff in Perthshire and is a full time musician having graduated from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland with a degree in Scottish Traditional Music. He started playing pipes at the age of 5, firstly receiving tuition from Jim Barnes and Ronnie Clark, before enrolling in the City of Edinburgh Music School where he continued his tuition with Andrew Wright. At the age of 8, he began tuition with Margaret Dunn and she continues to be a major influence in his musical style. More recently, Roddy MacLeod has provided Piobaireachd tuition, helping him to win the Silver Medal in 2016 and the Gold Medal in 2019.

Other notable prizes include the A Grade Marches at the Argyllshire Gathering and the MSR at the Masters Solo Piping Competition, part of 2019 Piping Live!

## IAIN SPEIRS

Iain was taught to play by Jack D. Crichton, his father Tom Speirs, a Gold Medallist and Clasp winner and by his grandfather Jock Speirs, Pipe Major of the London Scottish and Johnnie Walker Pipe Bands. He previously received tuition from Donald MacPherson and Murray Henderson.

He has played in a number of Pipe Bands including the Clan MacFarlane Pipe Band from St. Catherine's, Ontario, the Lothian and Borders Police Pipe Band, the College of Piping Band from Prince Edward Island, Canada and the Glenfiddich Spirit of Scotland Pipe Band.

Iain has been Glenfiddich Champion twice and amongst other significant achievements, he won the Argyllshire Gathering Gold Medal (2002) The Northern Meeting Gold Medal (2007) and Clasp (2014, 2017) the Bratach Gorm (2008, 2012) and the Silver Chanter on six occasions.

Iain lives in Edinburgh with his wife Susanne and their children, Annie and John. He is Head of Marketing for Hampden & Co, a private bank.