

# 2025 U19



July 8-10  
Water Valley Golf Club



# Sarah Armstrong

2024 Alberta U19 Girls  
Champion



**Q: When you reflect on your victory at the Alberta Girls U-19 Championship at Olds Golf Club, what memories are most vivid?**

**Armstrong:** “The final round is definitely what comes to mind. I was four back starting the day and my first six holes were quite poor, but then I changed my shot shape — I’d hooked a couple, so I started playing a fade or at least a fade feeling to hit a straighter shot — and turned it around. So kind of that up-and-down experience, that is what most comes back. And then the playoff obviously stands out.”

**Q: Despite not being thrilled with your start, what allowed you to stick with it and eventually turn the momentum?**

**Armstrong:** “I made a birdie on No. 8, which was really important. And then when we were walking off the 10th tee, one of the girls that I was playing with, we were both like, ‘OK, let’s make five birdies on the back nine.’ And I did make four. So that conversation and a bit of a focused goal, it helped to turn things around.”

**Q: How did that playoff unfold?**

**Armstrong:** “I was quite excited. I thought it was a lot of fun. I was like, ‘Wow, this is great.’ I hadn’t played in a playoff since I was 12, but I did have a good experience in that playoff, so kind of some fond memories from that. I hit a good drive and then I had a really great number on the wedge shot. It was 77 yards, which was an ideal number for my lob wedge for the shot I was playing that day. So I was quite happy when I shot that, and then I hit it about nine feet from the hole. I didn’t make the putt, but it left just a little tap-in. Tessa, she had a very difficult putt for par and she lipped out, so then it was over.”

**Q: After prevailing in the playoff, what did it mean to leave there as a provincial champion?**

**Armstrong:** “I was really happy and grateful. Provincial championships are great. Your name is on that trophy forever, right? It’s a really neat close to my junior career. It was my last shot at it, so I was relieved and very happy. I also really enjoyed Olds Golf Club. They treated us so well.”

*Armstrong, a junior member at Desert Blume Golf Course in Medicine Hat, climbed the leaderboard during the final round and completed her comeback in a playoff, coming up clutch with her lob wedge to defeat Tessa Ion on the first extra assignment. Armstrong lowered her score each day en route to a 4-over 220.*

## Alberta U19 Girls Past Champions

2024 – Sarah Armstrong

2023 – Eileen Park

2022 – Eileen Park

2021 – Grace Bell

2020 – Annabelle Ackroyd

## Alberta U19 Girls Interprovincial Team

2024 – Finished (3rd)

Sarah Armstrong

Tessa Ion

Sydney Bisgrove

# Ryan Gillis

2024 Alberta U19 Boys  
Champion



**Q: When you reflect on your victory at the Alberta Boys U-19 Championship at Olds Golf Club, what memories are most vivid?**

**Gillis:** "I remember I was putting really well that week and on the final day, I kind of made everything. I had 10 birdies that day, so that was probably the most memorable part. It felt like everything was going right with my game. I put it all together and was able to shoot 64 on that last day."

**Q: Would that have been your lowest round in tournament action?**

**Gillis:** "It would have, at that point. And whenever you shoot your personal best in a tournament, you get a lot of confidence and you learn a lot about your game and how you score well. So, for sure, it was a confidence booster."

**Q: If we knew the magic ingredients, we'd all sink every putt every day. But is there any way to explain what was working with the flat-stick during that final round?**

**Gillis:** "It was just different that day. I just saw how the ball was rolling, saw the line better. It just felt like every putt I walked up to, I could just see how it was going to enter the hole. That's always nice."

**Q: There can be those moments in a round of golf when suddenly the momentum slips away from you ... Was there a moment or a shot that allowed you to stay in that groove?**

**Gillis:** "I double-bogeyed the third hole, so that kind of ruined the flow of it. But I just told myself, 'Stick with it. You're still in the lead or tied for the lead, so don't give up.' Two holes later, I had my second shot on a Par-5 and put it to about 10 feet and just missed an eagle putt. That was probably the shot that brought me up again."

**Q: What did it mean to win a provincial title?**

**Gillis:** "It was the best feeling."

*Gillis, a member at Pinebrook Golf & Country Club in Calgary, fired to the top of the leaderboard with a final-round rip of 8-under 64. Although he narrowly missed a course record on that closing day, he finished five strokes clear of the field at 10-under 206.*

## Alberta U19 Boys Past Champions

2024 – Ryan Gillis

2023 – Jaiden Koonar

2022 – Logan Graf

2021 – Paxton Maxwell

2020 – Hunter Thompson

## Alberta U19 Boys Interprovincial Team

2024 – Finished (3rd)

Ryan Gillis

Brett Jones

Jon Vinge



# Water Valley

## Set to Welcome Alberta's Top Juniors

By Kevin Smith

*In 1987 Brian and Cindy Setter started Water Valley Golf Club as a 9-hole course in the foothills wilderness northwest of Calgary with great elevation changes. The 18-hole course we know today took shape in 1994 and in 2021 ownership of the course was handed over to Jeremy Dueck and Timothy Patrick Thomas as they set out to market the course to the province and showcase their enjoyable property.*

*"Everyone outside of businesses calls me Pat," Thomas said. "And at Water Valley I'm known as Uncle Pat because I'm Jeremy's uncle."*





Jeremy and Uncle Pat have been getting the word out about Water Valley, hosting Alberta Golf championships has helped in that regard. Not only is the 2025 Alberta U19 Championship being held at the club but they had a successful debut hosting the 2023 Alberta Women's Amateur Championship.

"We would like to express our excitement about hosting the Alberta U19 Championship at Water Valley Golf Club," Dueck beamed. "This prestigious event will provide an opportunity for young golfers to showcase their skills at one of Alberta's premier golf courses. The Water Valley community is deeply committed to supporting the development of young athletes, and we are honored to host this event as we were in 2023 with the Women's Am."

Jeremy is the club Professional, President, and one of the Owners, that's a rare combination. It's also a family business with Jeremy's wife Tracy and son Austin in the office keeping everything running smoothly.

Pat Thomas "Uncle Pat" lives in Las Vegas full time with his wife of 55 years, running numerous McDonald's restaurants as well as other business ventures but always looks forward to his visits to Water Valley 3 or 4 times a year to reconnect with the area he's fallen in love with.

"Water Valley is my happy place! I love interacting with members and guests and playing the golf course with them. Lots of laughs and fun," Thomas said. "We are beyond proud to host Alberta Golf championships! The course speaks for itself, it's beautiful and challenging. It exceeds our expectations, and we're very proud of our staff. Our superintendent Ross Parsons is outstanding and always has the course in great shape all season."

Ross Parsons has been the Water Valley Golf Club Superintendent for 30 years. He says hosting the 2023 Women's Amateur taught him a lot about getting the course ready for championship golf.

"It was a really great experience actually, our first big event here," Parsons admitted. "It was a little stressful getting the course ready for a provincial event but it turned out really well, the course was in really great shape, the players really enjoyed so we were happy how it turned out. It was exciting for our crew to showcase the course."

That experience 2 years ago certainly has helped them get ready for the U19 Championship.

"It does make it even easier this time around," Parsons said. "You know what sort of planning you need since we've already gone through the process in 2023."

As for what type of player will do well July 8-10 at the Alberta U19 Championship, Parsons says hit it straight and have a good short game.

***"It's actually fun once you're done the job in the morning to head out on the course with our team to watch some of the action," Parsons said. "It's been three years now since the new owners took over and hosting these high level events has gotten the word out about how good this course really is. I can't wait for July to roll around"***

"You have to hit it straight, we have tree lined fairways and it's easy to get in trouble," Parsons explained. "You have to have a good short game if you're going to do well, the greens aren't too tricky but we do have a few smaller ones that are harder to stick on the approach."

If you're out at Water Valley in July watching the best juniors in the province, make sure to say hi to Ross, Jeremy, and Uncle Pat, they'll likely be walking the course, taking in the action and will certainly be

very proud of the top end golf taking place on their track.

"It's actually fun once you're done the job in the morning to head out on the course with our team to watch some of the action," Parsons said. "It's been three years now since the new owners took over and hosting these high level events has gotten the word out about how good this course really is. I can't wait for July to roll around." ■