

Eagles golfers helping children get active



George Heagney | [ManawatuStandard](#)

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From left: Stuart Atkins, Thomas Clayson, Richard Gibbs and Danny Mickleson at the Manawatū Golf Club on Tuesday for the Eagles Golfing Society of New Zealand convention this week.

Hundreds of golfers are teeing off in the name of a good cause in Manawatū this week.

The Eagles Golfing Society of New Zealand is a charity that raises money to help children with disabilities play sport and to support junior golf.

Its annual convention is in Manawatū this week, the first time in 14 years, with more than 250 golfers attending from across the country.

Outgoing national president Richard Gibbs said the society believed in Sir Murray Halberg's message that disabled children should be able to play sport and be active.

“We took that responsibility on back in 1969 and since then with our charity golf tournaments we've raised \$6.3 million for those young kids.

“We've helped 11,000 kids to get active and be able to participate with their friends, and they won't be isolated for their disabilities.”



Eagles golfer of the year Thomas Clayson, 16, tees off at the Manawatū Golf Club on Tuesday.

He said the event was a great way for members to get together and catch up.

Incoming national president Danny Mickleson, from the Taihape Golf Club, said he was excited to continue the Eagles' work.

Mickleson met some young disabled people involved with the Halberg Trust at the Halberg Awards last week and said he found it "humbling to see the difference the fund has made to these kids' lives".

"They're wonderful people. They're highly motivated. They're true champions.

"It was a real joy to listen to them. If that's the difference we're making, long may it continue."

The Eagles also announce a young golfer of the year. Last year's winner, Thomas Clayson of Aorangi, was playing in the tournament this week.

This week the men were playing at Manawatū and Levin, while the women were playing at Feilding and Palmerston North.

The Levin Golf Club had stepped in at late notice to host the men after the original host club, Marton, [closed following last week's storm damage](#).

Eagles golfers are chosen for their contribution to the game and there are more than 1100 members across New Zealand.



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