



Blind Golf Scotland

The driving force behind blind golf in Scotland since 1982

Meet Ally Reid

Ally – BGS Handicap Secretary and former International Blind Golf Association (IBGA) Board Member



*“Blind golf brings you the sense of everything coming back to you”.
If others can do it, I can do it”.*

Ally

Ally was about 50 years old when he first lost his sight, diagnosed with Optic neuritis, likely caused by a virus. At the time, he was still working offshore and overseas as an engineer.

He found he could no longer see things at his feet but just thought he needed glasses. Following a routine trip to the optician, Ally was registered blind. Having lost his driving licence, independence and career, Ally also lost his self-belief and confidence. No longer able to hop in the car and go where he wanted, when he wanted, Ally had to learn bus routes and timetables.

Ally hit a low point, full of self-pity and he didn't socialise for months, until a social worker dragged him along to a blind bowling league. He soon realised that if others could bowl, so could he. As a former golfer, he was intrigued to learn about Blind Golf Scotland and found out that all he needed was a guide.

Calling up his old golf buddies to ask for a hand seeing the ball, Ally was back to his old self. Most players would watch others' balls anyway so there was no big change for his guides.

The best thing about BGS for Ally is the social interaction. Up until recently, he played every week with his friends and also with his nephew.

Since joining BGS, Ally has played all over the country, as well as in Japan three times, Canada, Italy, Ireland and England. He was also on the 'Rest of the World' team versus North America. For ten years, Ally served on the IBGA Board of Directors as Financial Director and says that *“you can do anything you want to do, with limitations”*. *I would never have travelled to Japan to play golf before, nor would I have had the chance to play on immaculate courses for free. I've done a fair bit of travelling thanks to Blind Golf Scotland”*.

Aged 64, years after losing his sight and job, he was asked to join another company where his expertise was highly valued. Ally was tasked with writing procedures for chemical testing and advising his colleagues when required. Following this contract, Ally was invited to interview for another employer, where he remained for a further three years.

Ally urges others with sight loss to fight for their careers, opportunities and ambitions, saying *“use your skills – don’t sell yourself short! The technology is there now so blind people can do more jobs. As long as there are willing employers, you can transfer your skills”*.