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'Family affair': N.S. father, son set to compete at prestigious bagpipe competition



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For a Nova Scotia father and son, bagpiping runs in their family tree.

“My mom was a high-end piper,” says Alex Gandy. “She was one of the first professional female pipers in Canada. Both my grandfathers played. I actually play my dad’s dad’s pipes. So it's very much a family affair.”

Alex Grandy’s first teacher was his father, Bruce Gandy, who gave Alex his first lesson on how to hold the pipes at just 10 years old.

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“It wasn't necessarily the thing that made you the coolest kid in high school,” said Alex Gandy.

For Bruce Gandy, bagpiping connects him with his roots.

“I think of the people I'm playing for, or I play some of the classical music and I have memories of my mom or my dad, and I try to channel into that to try to get myself into a sort of emotional state,” says Bruce Gandy.

Alex and Bruce Gandy are heading to Scotland in October for the [Glenfiddich piping championship](#). Only 10 pipers get to compete in the prestigious annual event.

Even though they'll be facing off against each other, there's nothing but support between the two. The Gandys have already set a world record for being the only father son pair to ever be in the competition.

"The competition's been going since 1841, and there's never been a father and son, even the Scottish guys, so it's great being able to say that," said Alex Gandy. "That alone is huge for us."

Bruce Gandy said that regardless of who wins, they'd each be happy for the other.

"I'm pretty sure Alex would be quite happy if I won, and if he could somehow win, I'd be over the moon," he said.

But first, just a bit more practice.

With files from CTV Atlantic's Emily Baron Cadloff

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