

LONDON STATIONERS GOLFING SOCIETY

Report for 2000

Another year has flown and it is my pleasant duty now to look back on an interesting season. We had a late start (24th May) and returned to my own club, Aspley Guise & Woburn Sands, for the Spring meeting sponsored for the first time by **Guilbert U.K.** We reversed the normal order by playing the main event in the afternoon with the option of playing 9 or 18 holes in the morning to give us all (except me, of course) a chance to familiarise with the layout and conditions, which were very lush. Class triumphed with the first 4 members playing off 11, 9, 13 and 10 respectively. **Mike Leech** winning the Jack Ryman Cup with 39 pts. The weather was fair until the afternoon when the last in got rather wet. 35 members and guests attended.

On the 14th July, Peter Mines welcomed us to the President's Trophy Meeting played, for the first time, at South Herts. Again, the course was very green and there was a strong wind but at least it stayed dry. **Alan Wood** just pipped Nigel de Koning to win the main event on 37 pts. 36 players supported the event and the general opinion was that the course was excellent, if a trifle long in the conditions. The club's early morning bacon sarnies also received commendations. Thanks, once again, to Peter and **Jet U.K.**

The Captain's outing took place at Etretat, about an hour's drive from Dieppe. We stayed at the Dormy House which occupies a dominating position on the cliff overlooking the small bay of Etretat town with its impressive rock and cliff sculptures. Most people thought the Super Sea-Cat ferry excellent and the two hour journey from Newhaven passed pleasantly. The hotel was comfortable and the food good. The 'home' course on the cliff tops, where we played on days 1 and 3, was interesting, precipitous in places, and exceptionally scenic even if the greens were not up to standard. The weather was excellent for the competitions we played there but the main event was scheduled for Day 2 at Champ du Bataille, and the weather then took a nasty turn for the worse.....

The trip involved a longish coach journey inland made even longer by the appalling weather and several diversions en route in deepest (and darkest) North Normandy. It rained continuously all day. When we did arrive a hasty re-scheduling resulted in just 18 holes being played. On any other occasion most would have called it a day because the place was waterlogged and barely playable, but we ventured out nonetheless with the attitude of 'we've come this far' To say the round was 'enjoyable' would not be true but, all who trudged through the water and incessant downpour were unanimous in the opinion that Champ du Bataille is a magnificent course. Very testing and beautifully laid out in dense forest. There are memorable holes, none more than the short 16th where a tee shot across a valley is followed by what seemed a never-ending journey on a circuitous route to reach the green. I would suggest that more balls were lost here than at any other hole (2 of them mine). I hope one day to return and have the pleasure of donating a few more at such a lovely course.

Again, class told, **Chris Phillips** winning the Captain's Salver with 34 well earned points (off 7 handicap) which he must put down as one of the best victories of his career. Paul Shawcross (4) was runner-up with an excellent 32 pts. And so from the sublime to the ridiculous - **Eric Smith** was the other main winner taking the John Bond Cup at Etretat with 46 pts, seven points ahead of Graham Hurrell. I've said it before and will say again: 'it ought not to be allowed'. A reduction of just 2 points from a bogus 20 handicap seems a pitifully inadequate, nay laughable, penalty to impose on a man with no shame

Thanks to our multiple sponsors there was a large selection of prizes for all competitions including the unique, and probably never to be repeated, awards for the 'Fantasy Pairs Aggregate' on day 2 to use up the ten Foursomes prizes that weren't played for as originally intended. I think it was an excellent idea (not mine) and not only because I won one of them - thanks to being drawn with an excellent player (Nigel Tollit) who contributed at least 75% to our total.

The 3 days appeared to go well although several of us were suffering mystery ailments that prevented them enjoying it more. The non-playing ladies were looked after by Liz Morgan to whom many thanks. A special word of gratitude to our vice-captain, Graham Clark, who stepped into the breach at the presentations caused by the Captain's incapacity (a mystery virus which took a further 4 weeks to clear up).

As usual I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation to David Morgan who arranged all the prizes and ran himself nearly ragged to ensure everybody was happy.

Because there was so much going on in France we decided to hold back the presentation of the aggregate trophies until the first meeting in 2001. This will now take place at Harewood Downs on 5th April and these are the winners:

WATKINS TROPHY - **Peter Heath 123 pts.** GUILDFORD TROPHY – **Nigel de Koning 100 pts.**
CONLON TROPHY – **Graham Hurrell 70 pts.** LIBERTY TROPHY – **Peter Heath 46 pts.**
SPICER TROPHY – **Eric Smith 46 pts.**

Congratulations to them. (For a full list of all the prize winners at last year's meetings please refer to our web site: www.londonstationersgolf.org.uk)

Which brings me to another gentleman who has devoted much of his spare time to designing, launching and updating the London Stationers own web-site: Geoff Fowler.

I think we must all agree he has done a fantastic job and produced something we can all be proud of. Thanks, Geoff !

By the way, Geoff is always 'tweaking' the site and would welcome any suggestions, contributions, including photos, anecdotes, recollections, in fact anything relevant to the Society.

To all who supported us, and particularly our sponsors, I would like to express my thanks for their help. Also for all your encouragement in my duties of Secretary and Captain during the past year.

We now look forward with anticipation to the new season when Graham Clark will take the helm.

We have reverted to a 4 meeting format culminating in his Captain's Outing in late September. Graham is presently finalising the details which will be revealed to us all shortly (knowing Geoff it'll probably appear on the web-site first!).

In the meantime here is the fixture list, so far:

SPRING MEETING – April 5th at **Harewood Downs** (Bucks)
PRESIDENT'S MEETING – May 17th at **Knebworth** (Herts)
SUMMER MEETING – June 28th at **Silvermere** (Surrey)

We desperately need sponsorship and a few more members. Can you help?

I wish you all a very pleasant golfing year.

Richard Johns
14 February 2001