

Report 2005

The new season opened with the Spring Meeting, sponsored by Total Paper Management held at Aspley Guise & Woburn Sands where the Jack Ryman Cup was won by Roy Osborne with 37 points. At the A.G.M. after play David Littlechild handed over his Captain's Badge to Alistair Beverley and there followed another successful and enjoyable year of golf.

The Early Summer meeting was held on 17th June at one of the most beautiful, remote and difficult courses within (distant) sight of London, The Addington. This was sponsored by Oyez Straker and the low attendance was perhaps down to the late re-arrangement of the fixture where our booking with Camberley had been overlooked. No matter, the weather was extremely warm and the views from the 16th tee memorable. Judith and Eric Smith tied with 29 points with the Mrs. of the partnership prevailing with a better back nine to win the John Bond Cup.

We then returned, after a lengthy absence, to one of our favourite places, Gerrards Cross, sponsored as usual by Peter Mines and Jet UK. Again it was hot and sunny with Geoffrey Betts taking the President's Trophy (at his home club) with 38 points. The course was as we remembered it - uniformly excellent with the greenkeeper teasing us by only just managing to cut the holes actually on the putting surface .. 42 people enjoyed being tantalised thus.

And so it came to pass that 30 members, guests and partners assembled in a distant foreign land to celebrate the Captain's Grand Outing in late September.

The main course at Dalmahoy (the East) is extremely long, over 6800 yards off the tees we played from, and easily the longest we have ever played. It is undulating, very attractive and we had the pleasure of tackling it twice in two days. On the second day it was quite magical at one of the higher parts of the course (where you could just make out the Forth Bridge, the Airport and the western end of Edinburgh) to hear the sound of bagpipes wafting up from the hotel. Dalmahoy is a popular wedding venue and there was a big one on this Saturday. All the more obvious at the 18th green where the assembled congregation milled around in their finery and kilts, blissfully unaware of the excellent approach shots and putting displayed by members of our society for their benefit.

An enjoyable and stern test produced a worthy winner of the Captain's Salver, Paul Shawcross, who had a remarkable 38 points off a 4 handicap. On the third day the usual Scramble was played on the West Course, which at only 5050 yards seemed like a pitch and putt after the 'monster' of the previous days. Short it may have been but, as is often the case, mighty tricky and pretty to boot.

Alistair went to great lengths to do his research into the venue and arrange a programme of off-course activities. The Burns Celebratory Supper was one of several highlights. The piping in of the haggis, the Recitation (at the best of times the Captain is pretty nearly incomprehensible to us Sassenachs but this night he reverted to the vernacular and we could only marvel at his passion as most of what he said was lost on me), and the haunting traditional ballads sung by a beautiful Scots Lass - not to mention all the culinary trimmings - was a delight and unforgettable. He wore the kilt with understandable pride and chaired the proceedings with great aplomb and good humour. His reward was pretty reasonable weather given that the local forecast for the 3 days was grim. A few blustery showers on the first day was as bad as it got. I know he was very grateful for the support of those who attended and particularly to the sizeable group of individuals who helped sponsor the prizes.

As usual I conclude by thanking those who gave help and assistance over the year. In particular, Geoff Fowler for his work on maintaining the web site and keeping the Scores Database updated, and to David Morgan our Treasurer, the one who does all the hard work

in getting sometimes recalcitrant members to pay their subs and who, with Liz, sources most of the prizes.

The winners of the aggregate trophies are as follows: Liberty Trophy - David Littlechild. Reg Conlon Trophy - David Stride. Watkins Trophy - David Littlechild. Guildford Trophy - Alistair Beverley.

Brian Tolley Trophy - Geoffrey Betts. Spicer Trophy - Geoffrey Betts. These will be presented at Sand Martins in April. Will the current trophy holders please arrange for their return, thank you.

It just remains for me to hope you all have a happy golfing year and to wish the incoming Captain, Alan Wood, every success and ask that you come along to some, or all, of these fixtures:

20th April at Sand Martins (Berks)

9th June at Knole Park (Kent)

13th July at Gerrards Cross (Bucks)

20/21/22nd September - Captains Outing at St. Augustines, Princes and Broome Park (Kent)

Richard Johns, 6th March 2006.