

Old Sennockians Golf Society

The first event of the year was the Grafton Morrish Qualifier at Knole Park, where the OSGS was represented by Simon Barker and James Howie, David and Colin Gellatly, Paul Kempton and Rob Whiddett. We duly squeezed home on the final green in a close finish and booked our passage to the finals in September. Congratulations to Paul and his team.

The Society's Spring Meeting was held at Littlestone in May. Jan-Peter Baert and his guest Bruno, a Belgian amateur international (golfer), commuted from Hasselt, west of Brussels to play and were having breakfast in the 19th hole by 7.30am while the rest of us were about to leave home! Conditions were bright and sunny with a vigorous 25mph wind, making the back nine particularly tough. Bruno excelled on his first visit to the course with a level par round of 72 for 37 Stableford points off a handicap of 1 – strong stuff!

However, Hugh Llewellyn-Jones showed his class and admirable stamina for a winning 36-hole score, with Rob Whiddett, one of our young lions, sharing the spoils for the Lark Tankards, one of which emerged from the depths of a cupboard after an absence of several years, thanks to James Howie's mum! We also welcomed Hugh's brother, Peter, for the first time and he dutifully partnered his elder brother to an afternoon foursomes win.

Next up was a match against Royal Cinque Ports, Deal, which was a rather sad occasion due to the recent loss of Dick Sunnucks, a past captain of the Club and long-standing member of OSGS. Dick was a great friend and mentor to many in the Society and we shall miss him dearly. The match was played over 18 holes and lunch and, as usual, we were defeated on both counts! We arranged a number of individual matches for after lunch, so everyone felt they'd had a good day.

The Autumn Meeting took place on the links at Rye, although with a woefully small group of participants. We changed the date to a Monday, which was also the Club Secretary's day off, so perhaps he won't notice and we'll be allowed back next year! We now play the Championship Course in the morning and the Jubilee Course after lunch, which is shorter but no less of a challenge (especially after lunch)!

The final event of the year was the Grafton Morrish Tournament, for which we had qualified by the skin of our teeth in May. Several of our leading players were unavailable, so we set off more in hope than expectation for a second-round clash with old rivals Epsom College. Our senior researcher, Colin Gellatly, had observed that Epsom's recent results were "variable" and that we could upset the formbook if luck were on our side. James Howie and Jon Barker came up against a formidable pair but Colin Gellatly and Jeremy Smith bored the opposition into submission with a display of par golf, setting up a grandstand finish at Hunstanton's legendary 18th hole for David Gellatly and Hamish Jackson, who battled to a win when Epsom's top pair had a lobotomy on the final green.

This brought us up against George Heriot's from Edinburgh, old adversaries from an epic encounter at Brancaster in the 1980s. Heriot's have a formidable record in the competition and always start amongst the favourites, but buoyed by our win in the previous round, we felt that anything could happen... We got a good start when Heriot's top pair went out of bounds with their opening tee shot, and it became evident that the result wasn't a foregone conclusion when we were up in two matches and one down in the third after nine holes. Hunstanton has one of the best finishes in the country and Heriot's showed their mettle when their top pair finished very strongly to force a half with James Howie and Jon Barker, leaving Colin Gellatly and Jeremy Smith needing a win to halve the match. We had a putt for the

match at the 17th (best forgotten) and the knockout blow was duly administered when Heriot's holed a 40-foot putt up the final green for a halved match and an overall win! The match was played in tremendous spirit throughout and Heriot's went on to win the tournament, presumably having got some of their worst shots out of the system. Our team performed well above expectations and congratulations are due to them all.

We are suffering reduced numbers at our Society days, relying on a core of loyal support and I would ask all recipients of the Newsletter to support us with a subscription and aim to attend at least one of the events during the year. Please also forward this e-mail to any Old Sennockian friends or colleagues in the hope that they may consider joining us. A small donation, even if you are unlikely to play, helps subsidise our younger players and get them involved in the Society's activities.

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