



Golf beats off the winter but it's a close call

Winter lies in wait

With winter flexing its muscles this week the course was closed on Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24. There was not much snow but it was frozen solid making the course unplayable.

Two on the trot for Jane

The weather played its part earlier than that though. Saturday 19 was a filthy day and of the few who braved the start in Round 9 of the ladies' winter league only two saw it through to its damp and wintry end. Those worthies were Jane Brackenbury, who extended her lead at the top of the league table with 36 points, and Tina Mulford who scored 26.

Jane also won on the following Saturday, January 26, when she scored 33 points to win by five shots from a three-way tie

for second place between Sian Soanes, Tina Mulford and Gale McAuley.

Nigel, Jim and Carl waltz it

Nigel Huszarik, Jimmy Green and Carl McCartney won the Sunday fun comp on January 20. It was a waltz (1,2,3: 1,2,3) format and the winning score of 86 points was three ahead of Shaun Ponsford, Tony Coventry and Tony Athawes who took second place. Keith (Guz) Wilkins, John (JC) Carroll and Gary (Murph) Abraham were a further point back and beat Jane Brackenbury, Jason Kendal and Gary (Podge) Robinson to take third place.

Andy and Darren win R4

In a result as yet unratified, Andrew Greaves and Darren Boulton won R4 of the men's winter league with 45 points



while Nigel Day and Mark Kendal with 42 points were second on count-back from Keith Wilkins and Fred Stephens.

Mind coach Fink returns

Dear Fink,

A few weeks ago, playing off my SAGGS handicap of 21, I managed just 24 points, but without a single blob? Do you think this might be a club record? Should it be recognised as such with a simple plaque in the clubhouse?

Do you feel I should keep aiming for the minimum of 18? What advice would you offer should my golf, inexplicably, start to improve? I hope you can help - I feel I need direction.

Yours, Anxious of Newbury

Dear Anxious

The placement of commemorative plaques is beyond my remit although I guess you may claim a place alongside the unluckiest putter, most blobs and other unsolicited titles.

Regarding your golfing prowess I agree you require direction and after studying your scores I think you may also need a bit of distance. On the positive side you seem to be bringing a high degree of consistency to your obvious mediocrity.

It is a pity that you do not state your age as this would surely affect the recommended

solution. If you are young and your scores are a manifestation of youthful exuberance and waywardness there is real hope going forward. I am confident that a highly focused programme developing golfing technique in harness with mindfulness will undoubtedly bring tangible rewards.

However, if you are at the other end of the age spectrum and your scores are the result of a jaded mind beaten into submission by long years of failure and frustration then the situation is more complex. Seeking the comfort and support of golfers of a similar age group by involving yourself in senior and vets teams may provide some level of personal comfort but is unlikely to yield any lasting improvement.

I have not addressed the issue of advice should your golf improve. Experience suggests there is little chance of this happening, explicably or otherwise.

I could refer you to my maternal grandmother who advised that if you stay happy and bright everything will be alright, However, I should add: she never did play golf.

Yours in hope, Fink Wright.

Know the Winter Rule

In this issue we have mentioned rules and the weather. Time then for a reminder of the rule that kicks in every year in the late autumn that we refer to as 'winter rules', 'pick and place' or 'preferred lies'.

This is a local rule and this is a reminder of the wording. It reads:

"If a player's ball lies on a closely-mown area through the green the player may mark, lift and clean his ball without penalty. The player must then place the ball on a spot within six inches of and not nearer the hole than where it originally lay, that is not in a hazard or on a putting green."

Note: Mark the ball first, clean it, then replace within six inches. The ball is now in play and cannot be replaced.

Toby not Terry

In the past two issues TTNB claimed that Terry Richards had been among the honours in the mixed winter fun comp and in R3 of the men's winter league on. On both occasions it was Toby and not Terry Richards. Sincere apologies to Toby. Lets hope we have the opportunity to get it right soon.

Many thanks to the Hopwood Ash Financial Planning Consultancy for printing this bulletin

Please send items that you would like to be considered for the bulletin to Dave Ware at: dgw.ware@gmail.com

To request a copy email: maryharwood695@btinternet.com

The more things change ...

In our last issue we discussed the newly introduced rules that have set the golf world talking. As stated then, it is our intention to produce a number of separate appendices each covering a rule. We hope the first will be available very soon.

It's interesting to look back to see how rules have changed over the years. The first rules were drafted in 1744, and consisted of just 13 rules. It's just a guess but that process probably did not involve international committees but just a couple of worthies scribbling notes on the back of a snuffbox.

Judging by past experience, it may take some time for everyone to adjust to the 2019 rules. It was only a few years ago I saw a player take a drop from over his shoulder thus employing a

rule that was superseded in 1984. So give the 2019 rules 30 years or so.

To see how the rules are continually aiding the player, compare this. As I have reported in these pages before, my wife's great-uncle was a plus-one handicapper and a Walker Cup player.

In a card from the Royal Wimbledon Golf Club, returned in 1923 now held by her family Local Rule 2 states:

*If a ball is lodged in a rabbit hole or rabbit scrape the player, **subject to the loss of a stroke**, may take it out and drop it keeping the spot where the ball lay between himself and the hole. Should the hole or scrape be in a hazard the ball must be dropped in the hazard.*

Those were the days!

Enter now!

The entry sheets are on the men's notice board for the three main men's matchplay competitions.

These are:

The Dowling: singles

The Walsh: foursomes

The Classic: four ball better ball.

The competitions are open to all men full members.

Deadline:

Sunday March 3.

Don't miss out!

Dave Page

12.01.38 to 08.01.19

WBGC was well represented at West Berks Crematorium on Friday January 25 when we said goodbye to Dave Page, a long-standing, highly regarded and much loved stalwart of our club who died on January 8, just a few days before his eighty-first birthday.

Dave joined West Berks in 1980 and was a popular member over many years. Having taken up the trade upon leaving school he was a highly skilled and creative carpenter and he left a legacy at WBGC that none can rival in that he designed and built the trophy cabinets, the honours' boards and fitted out the locker rooms in the clubhouse. Members have enjoyed these facilities for many years and, hopefully, will do so for years to come.

At the service we heard that, in addition to golf, Dave was a man of many talents excelling as a top class TT racing motor cyclist - racing was his first love - he also once flew a light aircraft and a hot air balloon while, less dangerously, he played snooker and squash.

Dave married Jo in 1959 and lived at first in Thatcham before moving into a house on the River Lambourn in Newbury that Dave built himself. Truly a talented and remarkable man and we were very fortunate to have him as a member and a friend for so many years.

Jo died 12 months ago and our condolences go to Dave's daughter Karen, who has been so helpful with this tribute, son-in-law Jon and grandchildren, Alena and Aaron. Thanks also to Ray Pithers for his help in compiling this. **Dave Ware**



Dave Page - a good friend of WBGC

Midge Coutts-Laing

In our last issue we reported on the unfortunate and untimely death of Midge, a highly respected past member, who had a heart attack while playing golf at Calcot Park and died later in hospital. The funeral will take place on Wednesday January 30 2019 at 12.00pm at the South Oxfordshire Crematorium, Garford.

No flowers but donations can be made to the Air Ambulance and the Royal Berkshire Hospital Intensive Care Unit and people who attend are asked to dress comfortably, with some colour rather than black.