



The week's results at West Berks

THE WEATHER again played a significant part in proceedings at West Berks this week with strong winds being the dominant feature.

Carol wins stableford

Carol Sparvell won the ladies' March stableford on Tuesday March 5 with 35 points, four shots clear of Lyn Pell while Jane Wilmore was third with 29.

John wins in midweek

Another very windy day and threatening weather forecast restricted the entry to the men's midweek medal on Thursday March 7 to four participants.

John Harrod won with his gross 104, net 77 relegating Andrew Grayson, gross 86, net 78, to second place by a single shot. Chopper Harris was third with gross 95, net 81 and congratulations to Ian Haines for being the brave fourth entrant and returning a gross 102, net 82.

Tina keeps her feet

Tina Mulford won the ladies' spring stableford on a very windy Saturday March 9 with 27 points. She won by two points from Sian Soanes while Mary Harwood and Shelagh Lancaster were

tied on 23 points with Mary taking third spot on count-back.

Tina was asked by this publication how windy it was out on the course and she replied that she could hardly keep her feet at times but this was deemed by those who know her as an inconclusive statement.

Win for Nigel and Jimmy

The weather again played a part in the men's spring competition on Sunday although the scoring was relatively high and competitive with just a single point separating the top four.

Nigel Huszarik and Jimmy Green with 42 points won on count-back from Charlie Dixon and Kevin Holland. Tony Coventry and Shaun Ponsford were just one point back on 41 and took third spot, also on count-back, from Ian Lewin and Giles Feltham.

Daily Mail Foursomes

Mary Harwood and Sandy Miller won their first round of the Daily Mail



Tina: staying on her feet

Foursomes against Newbury & Crookham played at home on Thursday. Sandy reports that it was a very close and enjoyable match with the exception of the weather that was extremely challenging with very high winds. But blown away they were not. Being one-up after 17 they prevailed by taking the 18th to win two-up. Well done!

Rules Update

Dear Sirs

I applaud the efforts of TTNB to keep readers up to speed with the rules of golf. There is one rule that may be worth mentioning following recent events at this club.

The rules clearly state that it is the responsibility of the player to record their playing handicap on the card and to enter against each hole the gross score achieved. At the end of the round the card should be signed by player and marker and returned to wherever authorised by the committee.

Two things related to this rule must be stressed. The penalty for failing to sign the card is disqualification and this rule applies to all competitors including members of the monarchy, lords of the realm, members of the ruling classes, those working in the financial services sector and chairman of all golf clubs including West Berks.

Yours sincerely, Peter C. Hocks-away

Entry Dates

This is a reminder that the final entry date for the following men's KO competitions is fast approaching:

- Dowling Cup
- Walsh Shield
- Classic Trophy

All entries have to be made by the 17th March.

Don't miss it – be in it!

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

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Less is more

YOU MAY have noticed that you are seeing a lot more of West Berks golf course lately and this is due to an ambitious programme of culling and pruning by Patrick Whelehan and his greenstaff. It's a case of being able to see the trees and not the wood.

We should perhaps remind ourselves of the arboreal history of WBGC. The story starts back in 1965 when the Liddiard family bought the land that had been requisitioned by the Air Ministry during the Second World War. The original intention was to grow wheat and so 620 oak trees were cleared from the land. There were no thoughts of a golf course then.

As is well documented, in 1973 the Liddiards built the golf course on the land and opened for play and in 1978 Fred Boobyer bought it and formed WBGC as we know it today. Fred was aware that the course needed trees but it wasn't until Les and Tina applied for and received a grant that covered part of the cost from the Forestry Commission that a serious planting programme commenced.

Some thirteen to fourteen thousand trees were planted during 1990 and 1991. In addition to the deciduous trees that included English oak, red oak, sycamore, ash, hawthorn, beech, wild cherry, rowan, hazel, holly and birch about 1,500 of the fast growing cypressus leylandi were planted.

These were used to create a more immediate effect, as opposed to the slower growing deciduous trees, protect the course from wind, for instance on the 13th fairway, and protect players from fellow golfers, for example those playing the 9th tee.

But time moves on and now, nearly 30 years later, those fast growing and invasive evergreens have, for the most part, outlasted their usefulness. As Patrick explains: "The removal of the leylandi began some seven or eight years ago. The plan is to provide the deciduous trees with the space they require to reach maturity and ensure less competition for water.

"In conjunction with this a number of transplantations are taking place. For instance, just last week we hired an excavator to transplant eight self-set oak trees from the right hand side of the 11th hole and transplanted six between holes ten and 17 and two between five and nine."

Patrick then went on to explain that there is another major advantage of ensuring that the course benefits from more sun, wind and airflow saying: "Michrodochium navale, the most damaging and prevalent turf disease that affects golf courses in the UK, thrives on damp, shady conditions. With the most effective fungicides now removed from the market, it is vital that we create as much light and airflow as possible in order to keep this damaging disease under control."



Head Greenkeeper Patrick Whelehan talks trees to TTNB

There has been some criticism about the extent of the culling but your correspondent knows of one person who would have been pleased and that is Laurie Birch, a life-long forester and long-standing member of the club who played a big part in planning the planting of the deciduous trees back in 1990.

Laurie died in April 2014 but here's a quote from an article about the trees in Tee Times from March 2012. "As a footnote it is worth mentioning that the culling of trees taking place at the moment is fully endorsed by Laurie because, as any gardener will know, fresh air and light are essential for the remaining trees to grow and thrive."

The programme is on-going and Patrick and his staff will be busy this week as they will be grinding stumps. And, looking to the future there are still more cypressus leylandi to be removed and more stumps to grind.

Many thanks to Patrick for his help in writing this article.

What's on this week

Tue	12	Men: Midweek Stableford Ladies: Midweek Medal
Sat	16	Men: Stableford Mixed: Chappell Cup
Sun	17	Men: Spring Competition

When East meets West

David Gentleman, was delayed in his efforts to lead from the front in the M4 seniors' home match against Sandford Springs last week and had to go out last as one of his opponents turned up to play at East Berks by mistake. Rumour has it that he realised his mistake when his yardage indicator gave the opening hole as 50,127 yards. Not so much as a driver or three wood as a drive or a bus.