

# Ladies' Golf Captain's Blog – 15th January 2026



## Happy New Year 2026!

And the start of a memorable year with a full calendar of celebrations marking the 125th Anniversary of Roehampton Club.

What a wonderful lead-up to the festive period we enjoyed with our Ladies' Christmas competition and lunch, following the mixed charity event and auction the previous weekend. Both occasions were blessed with unseasonably warm, perfect conditions and were filled with good cheer and all the appropriate festive regalia.

I am truly astounded by – and hugely grateful for – the generosity of our Members. Our fundraising efforts over the Christmas period for *The Baked Bean Charity* raised an incredible **£3,661**. The raffle from the Christmas lunch raised **£1,237** alone!!! A massive thank you to everyone who contributed, and I do hope you walked away with some nice prizes! Izzy Ivezic (CEO) and Charlotte Bell (Marketing Manager) from The Baked Bean Charity were absolutely delighted by the warm welcome they received and greatly appreciated the interest and enthusiasm shown by our Members.

I wanted to pass on part of a note from Izzy that said, 'Thank you for having us! We had such a lovely time. It was so nice to meet the women at the event and we really felt welcomed. It's clear how much you all engage with and care about charity and supporting local people and initiatives'.



Izzy and Charlotte were very excited to see their very own 'Baked Bean' flag on the 18th green.

Just a reminder that The Baked Bean Charity will be leading Zumba sessions on **Friday 27th February** and **Friday 27th March, at 3:15pm**, open to all lady golf members. An email with full details will follow shortly, but spaces are limited, so if you'd like to join either class, please reply promptly to

secure your spot.

## Captain and Pro

Another very enjoyable occasion in December was my first Captain and Pro match with our fantastic Head Professional, Ricky, against Andreina Townsend and our immediate past Lady Captain, Claire Martin. It was quite an adjustment for Claire, who had become rather accustomed to *playing with* Ricky rather than *against* him!



Ricky confessed – while making sure all our swings were in good shape – that he hadn't managed to pick up a golf club himself since the beginning of October, so I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. As it turned out ... only four or five effortless birdies, making the game look sickeningly easy at times. Having halved my first two Captain and Pro matches, I was determined to finally get a win under my belt, and at last it came! Ricky and I dovetailed very well, which bodes well for future matches to keep his unbeaten record intact.

Against Andreina and Claire we built up a healthy lead, despite some fantastic shot-making from our opponents, and eventually closed out the match 4&3. The winning moment came courtesy of a deadly chip from Ricky to secure a birdie on the 6th hole – our 15th, as we'd started on the 10th! A big thank you to Andreina, Claire and Ricky for a fantastic match and your very generous donations to The Baked Bean Charity .

### Other Christmas Golf Competitions

A huge well done to Martina Syron and Jinni Featherstone-Witty for winning the Christmas 4BBB competition on 20th December with a very creditable 35 points. Despite the beautiful blue sky, the course was firmly in winter mode — playing at least a club longer, with the wet rough proving particularly punishing. All the more reason to applaud Martina and Jinni for an excellent performance, nudging Kathleen Bacon and myself into second place with 33 points!



A big thank-you to Siobain Rolston for her continued commitment to organising and promoting weekend golf right up to Christmas.

Congratulations are also due to Astrid Drayson, who shook off the festive excesses to team up with her husband, Tim, and win the Christmas Foursomes on 27th December with 37points.

Despite the onset of an Arctic snap, there was still a healthy turnout for the New Year Nine and Mulled Wine on 30th December. It was great to see a number of our past captains out on the course, including Nicky Urquhart and Libby Balch, both in good spirits and braving the wintry weather with enthusiasm!

The format was a 4-Ball bowmaker with two out of four scores counting. Very well done to the winners!

1st Shirely Keane, Caroline Leslie, Polly Lewis and Valerie Patten 39 points (countback)

2nd Caroline Pack, Anna Rowland-Clark, Anna Tingle and Priscilla Harries 39 points

13th January Stableford





Despite getting rather wet, it was great to be back out on the course again for the first Stableford of the year. Luckily, it was a very relaxed affair — a non-qualifying 9 holes on the shortened course, with all temporary greens and bucket holes! A big thank you to Sally Gesua for the company, and well done to all the winners:

1st Caroline Nettel 20 points (countback)

2nd Tessa Ringrose 20 points

3rd Sally Gesua 18 points (countback)



### **Weird and not so wonderful weather**

Our dedicated greenkeeping team have battled a 'perfect storm' of weather extremes throughout 2025. After an exceptionally dry spring and summer that left many plants weakened and under stress, they were then met with mild, damp autumn conditions — ideal for the spread of disease.

These challenges led to several protective measures over Christmas, including six green closures. This was followed by a persistent spell of sub-zero temperatures that froze the course to a significant depth, creating a real risk of root shearing. As a result, even when the top layer thaws, the greens remain in a 'soft-over-frozen' state, which severely restricts drainage and left the torrential rain from last week with nowhere to go.

It was a great shame that our New Year shot gun competition had to be cancelled and a big thank-you to everyone for their understanding and patience. However, under David Howe's expert management, I'm confident the course is being well protected so it can be enjoyed fully when conditions improve. The recent closure was an unfortunate but necessary step—one mirrored by many clubs during this period. Even Rye Golf Club, home of Oxford and Cambridge's famous annual President's Putter, was forced to cancel the event due to the conditions. [Click here for more information and a fuller explanation](#)

### **Deadline extensions for knockout competitions**

The course closure has been particularly disruptive to the knockout competitions, so the ladies' committee has decided to extend all deadlines up to the finals by two weeks; Intelligent Golf will be updated accordingly. The aim is to reduce the number of walkovers or coin tosses and ensure that matches are actually played.

However, please do make every effort to arrange your matches at the earliest possible opportunity. If you have any queries, please contact Therese Swanson, the Ladies' Committee's Knock-Out Competition Organiser.

### **Indoor Golf Centre**

I would like to extend a big thank-you to our Ladies' Golf representatives on the Board — Caroline Nettel (Golf Liaison), Fiona Pollard and Henrietta O'Shea — who have worked tirelessly over a long period to ensure the IGC project has finally been able to move forward.



Although I recognise there are mixed opinions about this venture, the Club survey in December was overwhelmingly positive and has given the club a strong mandate to proceed. With completion scheduled for Spring 2027, we thankfully don't have too much longer to wait! Once it is up and running, I hope we will all find our own particular use for the facility, especially during unpleasant weather. Personally, I believe it will be an excellent practice resource, and I'm delighted that Ricky and his dedicated team will finally have facilities that match the outstanding coaching service they already provide.

## Upcoming Events

If you haven't already done so, please sign up for the Golf and Bridge Day on Tuesday 10th February. Booking for the golf will be open on Intelligent Golf two weeks before the event as usual. However, tables or individual spaces for the bridge can be booked via Reception. Places are limited so don't wait!!

## The 125 anniversary

There are countless 125th anniversary celebrations to look forward to in 2026, and it all kicks off with a truly special milestone – the Centenary of our prestigious Roehampton Gold Cup. Festivities start with a Pro Am on Friday 10 April, leading into the historic Gold Cup itself on Saturday 11th April. A fitting start to a landmark year for the Club.

I'm delighted to share that the professional field is now almost full, with at least 12 past champions already confirmed. There is real excitement among the players about helping the Club celebrate this remarkable milestone and honouring the progression of women's golf over the past century.

The Pro Am is open to all golf members, with teams of three joining forces with a professional. Keep an eye out for further details on how to secure your place – it's shaping up to be a fantastic occasion.

Two recent winners who will be returning to the Roehampton Club fairways for this special event are:



Hayley Davis, winner in 2022



and Ana Dawson, winner in 2023

## Notices

- Just a quick message to say that Sally Gesua has put all the new Surrey Lady Captains Society's handbooks in your pigeonholes.
- For all our newer golfers who would like to feel more confident about the rules, Kathleen Bacon and Jackie Beedle are hosting a rules demonstration and explanation session on the practice area next to the 18th hole on Thursday 26th February at 1-2pm. Please do look out for further details.

Let's hope that weather cheers up soon so we can 'keep golfing'!

**Jo Thesiger, Ladies' Golf Captain**