

Lady Golf Captain's Blog – 16th April 2026

Centenary of the Roehampton Club Ladies' Gold Challenge Cup

What a truly special couple of days celebrating the historic 100-year milestone of the Roehampton Club Ladies' Gold Challenge Cup. A special Pro Am was organised to mark the occasion the day before the actual centenary of this annual 36-hole event open to top amateurs and professionals. We were delighted to welcome back Annabell Fuller during a brief break in her European Tour schedule to participate in both.



We were equally pleased to welcome a strong line up of professionals, including European Tour players past and present, former Curtis Cup and Solheim Cup competitors, and some exceptional coaches. Among them was Sarah Bennett - PGA Captain in 2022 and only the second woman to hold the role since 2001 - whom I had known since my junior days. For many of the professionals, it seemed to be a wonderfully nostalgic return to Roehampton Club, and they were genuinely excited to be back. We had a lovely message from a couple of famous past competitors who couldn't be there, [click here](#) or scan the QR to take a peek ...



The professionals drew their Member teams at random, making it a complete lottery, and my team - with Lorna and Cathy - were delighted to be paired with Charlotte Laffar, who has played on the European Tour since 2013. We enjoyed a display of phenomenal ball-striking and effortless touch, highlighted by Charlotte's three consecutive birdies on the 13th, 14th and 15th. It was a relaxed, fun-filled round with great teamwork to finish in 2nd place. All in all, a perfect day of golf.

Many congratulations to Jackie Beedle, Andriena Townsend and Lydia Roper, who teamed up with European Tour professional Ellie Givens to claim the top spot — and, by all accounts, had an equally enjoyable round. Alison Post, Heather Webber, Martha Brass (Chair of England Golf) and Gabriella Cowley finished in third place.

The individual professional competition was won by Gabriella Cowley with an impressive 4-under-par performance before she jetted off to South Africa for the next LET event. Our team's Charlotte Laffar finished in second place on a countback from Ana Dawson, returning a level-par score despite a double bogey on the 16th hole.

1st Gabrielle Cowley 68

2nd Charlotte Laffar 72 (countback)

3rd Ana Dawson 72

[Scan the QR code or click here for the Pro Am scores](#)



A big thank you to all the Members for giving the pros such a warm welcome and for their help marshalling during the Gold Cup. And to my Vice Captain, Cathy Staveley and the Men's Captain, Bob Mitchell, for all his support, bringing a touch of his customary humour to the day's proceedings!

[Click here for some Pro Am photos or scan the QR code](#)



The Pro-Am proved a brilliant preamble to the Centenary Gold Cup the next day, with Members feeling more invested after getting to know the professionals. Dan Kershaw even stepped in to kindly caddy for Ellie Givens over the 36 holes.

Unfortunately, the temperature plummeted, and a strong, squally wind made conditions far more difficult — something clearly reflected in the scoring. Even so, competitors were universally complimentary about the course. Many of the pros felt it was prepared to tour standard, though that didn't make it any easier, with the greens posing a particular challenge.

Katie Laud from Hindhead made the most of the downwind on the 14th, her perfect 6-iron tracking the flag before dropping in for a superb hole-in-one - 51 years after her mother, Wendy Pithers, won the Gold Cup in 1975.

We were extremely proud of our home Roehampton Club competitors. Annabell Fuller delivered an outstanding performance; however, a few putts slipped away at key moments, leaving her as the second-placed professional with rounds of 74 and 75, just two shots shy of the title. Our leading amateur, Issy Simpson, was equally impressive, producing a consistent pair of 75s, to finish only one stroke behind Annabell and narrowly miss out on the amateur first prize. That honour ultimately went to Sunningdale's Chloe Ryan, whose aggregate score of 149 secured the top amateur spot.





After the twists the turns our Roehampton course presented in the very windy conditions, it was rookie European Tour Professional, Luca Thompson from Wales, who finally lifted the enormous Gold Challenge cup with an impressive aggregate score of 147 before she headed off to Heathrow to catch a plane to South Africa for the next event on the European Tour – hopefully we might see her name in lights!

[Click here for the Gold Cup scores](#)
[or scan the QR code](#)



[Click here for more photos from the day](#)
[or scan the QR code](#)



While the players were battling the elements, I hosted a past players' lunch with Caroline Scallon, who has organised the Gold Cup for the past forty years. Former Curtis Cup players, Diane Bailey and Jill Thornhill, founding members of the European Tour, and the President of England Golf, Debbie Richards, were among those attending.



The lunch was dedicated to the legendary Scottish golfer, Belle Robertson, who returned to Roehampton Club to celebrate the Gold Cup Centenary on her actual 90th birthday. Belle had claimed the title in 1978, 79, 81 and 82 and she presented the Club with a much-loved pewter claret jug she had been awarded for one of those victories, which is now sitting proudly next to the Gold Cup in the Trophy cabinet at Roehampton Club.

Club Day

Club Day really represents the start of spring and the official beginning of the golfing season, but a disappointing arctic chill meant everyone was sporting their bobble hats, snoods and gloves. Nevertheless, enthusiasm was still running high with a fantastic turn out for the Greensomes. The bitter wind did not seem bother the winners, Emma Angood and Fiona Pollard, who played free flowing golf with some exceptional chipping and putting. The only thing to put a downer on their round was an extremely unhelpful charity mulligan which was used by Emma on the final hole. While trying to improve on a shot

that didn't quite make the green, they ended in a bunker from which they never came out!! They had to settle for their incredible 39 points over the other 17 holes which was still good enough to narrowly put them on the top of the podium, on countback from Charlotta Lyckeus and Helen Maguire.

1st Emma Angood and Fiona Pollard 39 points (countback)

2nd Charlotta Lyckeus and Helen Maguire 39 points

3rd Liz Dodds and Cathy Staveley 38 points

4th Catherine Cooper and Judy Gowing 37 points



Trophies from the Winter Knockouts were also presented:

Bronze scratch Championship – Tessa Ringrose

Weekend fourball – Sandra Drum and Charlotta Lyckeus

Sutcliffe Salver – Charlotta Lyckeus

Danziger Foursomes – Val Patten and Caroline Leslie



Other Competitions

Titleist Ladies 4BBB

1st Emma Angood and Lucinda Cormack 46 points

2nd Kathleen Bacon and Pippa Riddle 44 points

3rd Jane Peel and Cathy Staveley 43 points

Well done to all the winners and fingers crossed Emma and Lucinda will qualify for the finals!

Syd Scott Mixed Foursomes

There were some great scores in the Syd Scott mixed foursomes on Easter Monday - a medal foursomes' competition, probably the most challenging format in golf. The winners did a great job holding their fantastic scores together avoiding any blow-outs, which seemed to be common theme among many other competitors

1st Astrid and Tim Drayson 71 Countback

2nd Nigel Brown and Caroline Leslie 71

3rd Peter McGovern and Annette Timms 72



7th April - Stableford

- 1st Liz Collins 37 points
- 2nd Jules Sanderson 35 points
- 3rd Therese Swanson 34 points (countback)
- 4th Lucinda Cormack 34 points

Captain and Pro

Ricky and I took to the course for the third time with an unbeaten record, but we knew Catherine Cooper and Lucinda Cormack would be tough opponents – which they proved to be, sending nine net birdies our direction.

Ricky holed some superb putts to secure six birdies, and my par at the 3rd helped us take an early lead. A few missed putts on the back nine let them back in, and the match was all square after 15.

The 16th and 17th holes were simply outstanding from our opponents: Lucinda hit three perfect shots to ten feet on the 16th while receiving two shots, and Catherine followed with a driver to five feet on the 17th for net zero. The match was sealed for Catherine and Lucinda 2/1 but we could only applaud two very worthy winners.



Team Round Up

The Derry Cup team, who were the holders, put up an extremely spirited defence of this Surrey title by reaching yet another final — our ninth since 2015, with four victories already secured. The competition comprises teams of three, with only one category one player permitted (handicap 5 and under), a format that seems to suit Roehampton well. It is a long campaign, beginning with group stages in early October before moving into the quarterfinal knockout rounds after Christmas.

The team was brilliantly led in the number one spot by Issy Simpson, who won all her matches on the way to the final against Hindhead on Sunday 12th April at Worplesdon.

Sadly, it wasn't to be this year, with a narrow 2/1 defeat to our close rivals, but nevertheless another incredible team effort from the squad of Jane Peel, Issy Simpson, Nicky Fillingham, Alice Pharo and myself.



Heartfelt thanks to Jane Peel, who has captained the team superbly since 2015, securing some outstanding victories on the course herself along the way - even stepping in as reserve and using Nicki's clubs to win 7/6. Reaching so many finals is an astonishing record!

Well done to the **Pearson team** for very solid 4-1 victory over The Drift at home. Kathleen, Pearson Captain, paid tribute to Ricky's fantastic short-game clinics which made a real difference when it came to a more tense matchplay situation. They will play the Away match on Monday 20th April, so we wish them lots of luck for that!

The Centenary Bowl team (for handicaps 9 and above), last year's runners-up, and the Wallis team (for handicaps 20.1 to 36 inclusive) both progressed comfortably through their preliminary rounds against Fullwell and Sunningdale Heath respectively. Remarkably, they did so with identical scorelines: an emphatic 5–0 win at home followed by a narrow 3–2 loss away, which was still more than enough to see both teams safely through.

Final Fundraising Total for Fish!

Huge congratulations to last year's captains, Claire and Justin, on a whopping final fundraising total of **£28,656.00**. What an amazing achievement that will make such a difference!



The Baked Bean

We enjoyed another fun filled Zumba class with The Baked Bean with some great moves from members of the Ladies' Golf Section.



We were also delighted to hear that the ITV programme *The Assembly*—in which members of The Baked Bean Company join a wider group of adults with learning difficulties to interview celebrities including David Tennant, Gary Lineker and Stephen Fry—has been nominated for a BAFTA. Nicola and Daniel from our Zumba sessions feature in the series – how exciting!

I'm also pleased to share that The Baked Bean Company will be performing a show for us in our garden on **Thursday 28th May**. The cost is **£16**, which includes canapés and a drink served at **6.15pm**, followed by the performance from **7.00–8.00pm**.

The actors enjoy challenging stereotypes and tackling difficult subjects head-on. They've titled their series of sketches *Hell to Play* – which, admittedly, sounds a bit like a disastrous round of golf—but audiences should be prepared for a sharp, satirical tour through Lucifer's house, complete with Shakespearean monologues, comedy, singing and dancing.

An e-mail will follow shortly to reserve your place. Spaces are limited so if you want to come - don't hang around!

Jo Thesiger
Ladies' Golf Captain