

Men's Golf Captain's Blog – 21st May 2026



I wrote my April Blog the day after Rory had won the Masters. I eulogised about his ability to entertain and play golf as well as commenting on how good it was to see a number of Europeans in the top 10 at Augusta. Well, it's a month later, another blog, another UK winner of a Major (what a week and final round by Aaron Rai) and six Europeans in the top 10 at the **US PGA Championships**. I am getting a sense of déjà vu! Bring on the next Major! I have just checked the publication dates for the Recorder for the next two months and unfortunately, they are the first day of both the US Open and The Open. I have asked if we can delay each of them by a week to see if we can continue the run of UK or European winners! If my appeal doesn't work, then you know whose fault it will be if a non-European player wins the US Open at Shinnecock Hills or The Open at Birkdale in the next couple of months!

And just as happened last month we also had the excitement of a big tournament being played at the Club last weekend with 130 golfers playing in the **Spring Meeting** over the two days. Many thanks to David and the Greenkeeping Team for presenting the course in such excellent condition. With the tees off the back posts, the greens running at 10'10" on the stimp and the weather behaving, albeit with some gusty westerlies making club selection a little tricky at times, conditions could not have been better.

Consequently, with no external excuses available, the scoring was good and unsurprisingly it was some of our better golfers that came out on top. And just as a British golfer won in the US, an American golfer won at Roehampton Club. Congratulations to Henry Dubiel on two excellent rounds of 73 and 68 (1 under gross) winning the 36 Holes scratch prize and the Miller Cup by 1 shot from Luke Gorman, who won the 36 Holes handicap prize and the Roehampton Challenge Cup. There was some superb scoring and on Sunday I had the pleasure of playing with Richard Spalding (who shot a 1 under par gross 70/nett 67 which combined with his nett 74 of the day before gave him second prize in the 36 holes handicap and fifth place in the overall gross competition) and the evergreen Roy Martin (whose combined 141 nett score won him both fourth prize for best nett and the best veteran over the weekend). It was a privilege to play with them both and on last weekend's performance it is not surprising that they are such a formidable pair in fourball and foursomes competition.

Congratulations to all the prize winners at the **Spring Meeting**. I was particularly pleased to see five members of the Men's Golf Committee (Luke, Roy, David Stuff, Alex Milward, and my Vice Captain, Johnny Perkins) in the prizes. It just goes to show the more you put in, the more you get out!

Competition results

As I mentioned in my April blog I was away for a few competitions over the last month, but I understand that everyone had a good time at the **Pros' Day** on Friday 17th April. Thanks to Ricky and all of the Pros for staging such a good and fun event. The **Money Ball Bogey Competition** was staged the following day, and the medal winners were:

1st – Alan Robinson – +2

2nd – Dave Birn – +1

3rd – George Palmer – Level (on c/b)

There were also a couple of **Mixed Individuals Stablefords** played over the last four weeks, and the podiums comprised the following players:

Sunday 26th April

1st – Niels Verbeek – 45 points (which was 3 under gross – well played Niels)

2nd – James Bushell – 39 points

3rd – Justin Thesiger – 35 points (on c/b)

Sunday 10th May

1st – Nicolas De Wasseige – 36 points

2nd – Dan Bird – 35 points

3rd – Peter McGovern – 34 points

It's good to see some Past Captains and Chairmen performing well. There is hope for me yet when I am in retirement!

The **Scratch section** held their first medal of the season on Saturday 2nd May with Tom Benbow (70) taking the gross prize by two shots from Niels and George Palmer and Oli Hunt (who remembered to set his alarm for this competition!) winning the nett competition with a 67 pipping Richard Spalding and Niels by a couple of shots.

Ladies vs Men

The annual Ladies vs Men match was held on the Bank Holiday Monday. The men never recovered from losing their skipper to a mystery 48-hour illness first thing in the morning of the match and so, as usual, lost convincingly 11 – 7 in the 18 4BBB matches. It was a tremendous effort to get two teams of 36 players out. Congratulations to Jo and the ladies and many thanks to Johnny for stepping in as captain of the team and also to Ben Thesiger for being my last-minute substitute. I think we are going to have to look at changing the rules for next year!



Junior section

Firstly, many thanks to Shaun Feldon for stepping up and taking charge of the Junior Section competitions this year. On Sunday 10th May we held the first tournament of the year, the **Junior Masters**. All the boys played well in some fairly windy conditions and on a firm golf course.

The top four were:

1st – Wilbur Wilson – 40 points

2nd – Max Harrison – 36 points

3rd – Jonah Goode – 35 points (on c/b)

4th – Seb Gradwell – 35 points

Casper Cooper took the prize for closest to the pin in 2 at the fifth, Jonah was nearest the pin at 13 and Wilbur hit the longest drive up 16. Well played all and thanks again Shaun for taking the lead with the Juniors.

The next event for them is the **Junior Spring Meeting** on 24th May.

And more good news for the Junior section. 15-year-old **Zaal Owen** qualified for England Golf's Area Final in the '**Race to Woodhall Spa**' competition which was played at Royal Ascot Golf Club last Sunday. Zaal carded a level-par 70 and scored 41 points to win the Area Final. He will now play in the National Final at Woodhall Spa on 11th August. That is very impressive Zaal. Well played and all the very best for the final.

Winter Foursomes

Whilst we might be in May and most of us are thinking about summer, the final of the Winter Foursomes was finally played last Thursday. Congratulations to both pairs for reaching the final of a competition which started last October. It was apparently a good match with Shaun Feldon and George Palmer prevailing 3/1 over Nic Fox and Stephen Jones. Many congratulations to Shaun and George who will collect their silverware at the Men's Annual Dinner on Friday 27th November, by which time this year's Winter Foursomes will be well underway!

Upcoming Competitions

There is so much golf coming up over the next four weeks as the 125 Festival of Golf events get underway and so hopefully the long-range weather forecast is correct, and we will be basking in summer temperatures playing in shorts and polos! Some of the highlights for your diaries are:

Saturday 23rd May – **Captains' Charity Golf Day** – whilst the start sheet is full you can still participate in the auction, details of which have been circulated, and help raise money for Jo's and my charities – HomeStart, Wandsworth and the Baked Bean Charity.

Saturday 30th May – **Mixed Invitation Day**

Saturday 6th June – **Captain's Prize Day**

Sunday 7th June – **Festival of Golf Finale**

Friday 12th June – **Hickory Golf Competition**

Saturday 13th June – **Club Championships** (Men and Ladies)

Friday 19th June – **Longest Day Challenge** – I will be trying to play 100 holes that day so please do join me for some or all of the day and if you can't please do sponsor those of us that will be putting our bodies on the line to support our two wonderful charities.

Saturday 20th June – **Founders Cup**

And that's just a taster! Next month's blog could be a long one!

Captain and Pro Matches

We have managed to play two more Captain and Pro matches, and I pleased and proud to report that we won both. The first was with Ricky against (the apparently undefeated!) former captains, Derek Mason and Paul Taylor, who were put to sword 4/3 by another wonderful round of golf from Ricky (with a couple of cameos from yours truly). And then Terry Dillon and Peter Bateman stepped up to the plate last Thursday with Ally and I prevailing 5/3. Many thanks for the challenges fellas and also for the generous donations to my charity, HomeStart, Wandsworth.





Whilst the list of future Captain and Pro matches is currently full, Ricky and I are working on some more dates which I will circulate shortly.

Club matches

We have our annual match against the Senior Golf Society on Thursday and will be 'unveiling' the clock that the Society kindly donated to us to commemorate the Club's 125th anniversary. I am sure that you have all noticed it and the plaque in the men's changing room!

We were kindly invited (thanks Derek!) to play in Royal Wimbledon's Seniors Invitation Day on Friday 1st May and I asked Stephen Jones and Nigel Brown to join the Roehampton Club team.

Whilst I have lived in SW London for over 40 years it was my first outing at Royal Wimbledon. What a magnificent course! We had a really good day which was made even more enjoyable by us taking second place, continuing the tradition set by Justin and his team last year. No pressure JP!

And finally ...

We all wish Neil Anderson well and a speedy recovery when he has his knee replacement operation next Tuesday. Neil is the only person whose name has appeared in every blog I have written to date. It could be tricky to give him a shout out in future blogs but I will try! All the best Neil. Hopefully the new knee will enable an even better and smoother swing!

Bob Mitchell, Men's Golf Captain

