

Ladies' Golf Captain's Blog – 20th August 2026



Summer 2026 has certainly been historic: the hottest on record, with brilliant blue skies and glorious sunshine, but temperatures so blistering that the legendary heatwave of 1976, half a century ago, seemed mild by comparison. Then, on 12th August, a spectacular solar eclipse briefly brought an eerie respite from the sweltering heat, cooling the air and draining the course of colour. A mixed 4BBB nine-hole competition, which Justin and I enjoyed with Gill Edmonds and her son, Nick, proved the perfect, sociable way to experience this extraordinary event.

This extreme weather has not made life easy for the greenkeeping staff. It is a huge credit to David Howe and his team that the course and greens remain in very good condition. The extensive programme of work has added further pressure, but I am delighted to report that everything is on track for reopening by Saturday 29th August. The bunker contractors have now finished, and the new turf is beginning to take root. I must say, the bunkers look fantastic and will be well worth the disruption.



A big thank you for your patience and understanding during this period. Despite the significant inconvenience, I have received very few negative comments, for which I am extremely grateful. I am sure you will have seen that the indoor centre is taking shape nicely. Its planned opening in February remains on schedule, which is very exciting!

There really has been some stunning golf since my last blog, with many players making the most of the exceptionally dry conditions. The ball running for miles, reduced holes due to the work on the 14th, and only two temporary greens permitted, have certainly made the course ideal for some spectacular scoring – although the hard ground has also produced more than its fair share of nasty and unpredictable bounces to keep everyone on their toes!

Stableford – Tuesday 21st July

Congratulations to Nikki Walker, who is quite new to playing in competitions, for returning a sizzling 39 points and well done to all the top scorers:

1st Nikki Walker 39 points

2nd Annette Timms 35 points

3rd Patsy Miller 35 points

Joint 4BBB – Tuesday 28th July and Saturday 2nd August

These twinned weekday and weekend 4BBB competitions have been popular for the last few years giving pairings two chances to put their names at the top of the leaderboard – big congratulations to Livi Mayell and Emma Angood on a scorching 49 points very closely followed by Suzanne Collins and Nicola Pearson, who only missed out by one shot!

1st Olivia Mayell and Emma Angood 49 points

2nd Suzanne Collins and Nicola Pearson 48 points

3rd Susan Sandler and Jane Smith 47 points

Stableford – Tuesday 4th August

What an extraordinary start to August it was for Jinni Featherstone-Witty!

First came the wonderful news (that made its way to Cornwall) of her brilliant hole-in-one on the shortened 137-yard 12th hole — and the next day she produced another exceptional performance. Jinni recorded a staggering **48 points in the Stableford**, including gross birdies at both the 11th and 15th holes — each earning her an incredible **five points**!

Warmest congratulations to Jinni on a truly memorable couple of days, and also to the impressive group of players who finished on 41 points, headed by the beautiful ball striker, Livi Mayell, who took the honours on countback.

1st Jinni Featherstone-Witty 48 points

2nd Olivia Mayell 41 points

3rd Henrietta O'Shea 41 points

4th Caroline Leslie 41 points

5th Jill Pepper 41 points

6th Susan Sandler 40 points



Medal – 11th August

Very well done to **Pippa Riddle**, whose long hitting can be a disadvantage in these dry conditions, for navigating the challenging, hard and unpredictable bounces to return a superb net 68 in the August Medal from **Viv Harris** on a countback. It was another excellent performance from Viv, who has enjoyed a wonderfully consistent run of form throughout the summer. Congratulations to them both!



1st Pippa Riddle net 68 (countback)

2nd Viv Harris net 68

3rd Gunilla Huldts net 69 (countback)

4th Anna Tingle net 69

Bronze Handicap Challenge Cup

Continuing her golden summer, Viv Harris added another title to her growing list of successes, winning the final of the **Bronze Handicap Challenge Cup** against **Anna Tingle** in a match that had been postponed from June.

Starting at the 10th, Viv was quickly into her stride and, by all accounts, played well below her handicap, opening par, birdie, par – a formidable start and a tall order for any opponent!

Anna rallied well, winning the 18th and then the 1st with a terrific birdie to put a little pressure on, but in the end Viv held firm and prevailed! Huge congratulations to Viv, and very well played to Anna too, on a super final!

Captain and Pro

I have enjoyed a couple of tough matches in my Captain and Pro series in August, with some superb golf from the challengers. The shortened course and parched, running fairways do make it difficult to hand out the full quota of shots, but it is all in the name of charity!

First up, Ollie and I took on the formidable mother-and-daughter partnership of Caroline and Steffie Williams. Fresh from a golfing tour at Seaford, Caroline was in fantastic form and



certainly didn't need her two shots on the shortened eighth! Steffie, meanwhile, always hits a beautiful ball that belies her handicap.

We held the pair for the first four holes, but then the pars – mostly net birdies – started dropping, which proved a little too much for us. Ollie did manage to sink a couple of fantastic long putts, producing back-to-back birdies on the 12th and 13th, with the latter needed just to halve the hole! We eventually finished on the 14th, which was a little bruising, but very well played to the Williams duo, whose combined score was only four over par!



Wes and I then took on Therese Swanson and Catherine Cooper on the hottest day recorded this year, with temperatures reaching a sweltering 38.1°C at Kew Gardens. However, the heat did nothing to stop the birdies from dropping! Wes got us off to a flying start with a birdie and a par, before I added a par four at the 3rd to put us two up.

We knew it was always going to be tight, but were not expecting back-to-back gross birdies from Therese on the 5th and 6th to bring the match back to all square. We halved the 7th and 8th before Catherine sensibly admitted that the heat was really getting to her, so we agreed to finish on the 9th.

Everything was still to play for, although giving a shot on the shortened 9th was always going to be a challenge. I was delighted with my birdie four after reaching the temporary green in two, only to watch Therese get up and down from about 115 yards, sinking a 15-foot putt to match it, for yet another birdie – with a shot! So, another one bites the dust! But there was some incredible golf played in demanding conditions. A huge thank you to Caroline, Steffie, Therese and Catherine for their generous contributions to [The Baked Bean Charity](#). It is very much appreciated.

Team golf

Hicks Trophy

I am sorry to report that we narrowly missed out on a place in the semi-finals of the Hicks, losing to Hindhead. We were delighted to be leading 4–1 after our home match, but were never complacent, knowing just how significant the home advantage at Hindhead can be.



Sadly, the return leg went their way by the same 4–1 margin, leaving the match tied and the result to be decided on holes won, where Hindhead ultimately finished on top. It was a disappointing end to a very closely fought contest, but a tremendous effort from my fantastic teammates **Issy Simpson, Alice Pharo, Nicki Fillingham and Jane Peel**.

We mustn't forget **Trish Boyington and Lou Wills**, who played their part in earlier rounds to get us this far. Finally, a huge thank you to **Lorna Robey** for captaining this year's campaign superbly, as always. She proved to be quite the wheeler-dealer when it came to juggling dates and availability, doing everything possible to ensure we were able to field our strongest teams throughout the competition!



Academia

Sadly, Roehampton Club's road to Spain for the Academia finals in January came to an end in the fourth round against The Drift. Unfortunately, due to our four temporary greens, we lost the home advantage we had drawn, so had to play the match away.

Kassandra Spalding, Jackie Beedle, Astrid Drayson, Andreina Townsend and Helen Maguire nevertheless put up a sterling performance in a closely fought contest, only just missing out on progressing to the next round.

Very well done to everyone who represented Roehampton Club throughout the competition including: **Alice Pharo, Fiona Pollard, Caroline Nettel, Henrietta O'Shea, Caroline Leslie and Kathleen Bacon**, all of whom made valuable contributions in the earlier rounds.

Finally, a very big thank you to **Andreina**, who took over as Captain this year with an infectious enthusiasm and succeeded in galvanising some brilliant team spirit among her *chicas*! With Andreina's superb organisation and leadership, I really thought we might just make it all the way to Spain! There is always next year!

Scratch Foursomes

But good news in the scratch foursomes as Issy Simpson and Alice Pharo trounced Cranleigh 7/6 for a place in the quarter-finals, they now face Hindhead (again!) on Sunday 23rd August, at home.

Champion of Champions

Issy Simpson is through to the semi-finals of the Surrey Champion of Club Champions knockout after a tightly fought contest against the talented junior, Jessica Stofberg, on Wentworth's magnificent West Course, with the match going all the way to the 19th hole. Issy was clearly determined to make the most of the opportunity to play this fabulous championship course in superb condition as it hosts the BMW PGA Championship in September!

She now faces Surrey Champion, Alice Webb Wilson, of Woking in a rerun of the Surrey final in April, when Alice clinched an unexpected victory on the 19th hole. I think Issy will be out to put the record straight this time!

Pro Golf

Huge congratulations to **Annabell Fuller** on a fantastic AIG Women's Open. Annabell's stunning birdie, birdie finish in final qualifying at Pyle & Kenfig secured her place in the Championship!

She then went on to make the cut on the challenging, parched links of Royal Lytham & St Annes, with its 174 notoriously deep and strategically placed pot bunkers ready to punish the slightest mistake.

That was no mean feat, with several leading players failing to make it through to the weekend, including Lilia Vu, winner of the Women's Open at Walton Heath in 2023. A tremendous achievement by Annabell on one of golf's biggest stages!





Our ambassador, **Trish Johnson**, will be flying the flag for Roehampton Club and England at the U.S. Senior Women's Open, being played at Barton Hills Country Club in Michigan 20th – 23rd August. She lines up alongside some of the greats of the women's game, including Catriona Matthew and Annika Sörenstam. Having already put her name on this prestigious trophy in 2023, Trish knows exactly what it takes to win! We wish her the very best of luck as she sets out to do it again!

Date for your diaries

We have two exciting events in October just after Cathy has taken over as Captain.

Wednesday 14th October: A Q&A with Dame Laura Davies and Trish Johnson MBE

During the evening, the Club will present Laura with a rather wonderful piece of her golfing history – a replica of her first professional cheque, which we recently discovered she earned for finishing second in the Gold Cup in 1985!



Thursday 22nd October: Ladies' Golf Dinner featuring special guest speaker Chris Langford, one of the pioneering founders of the European Tour. The dinner will be followed by music and dancing, courtesy of our Vice-Captain's very own Will Staveley! Details for these events will follow ...

Discarded broken tees

One of our Members has raised an important point about the number of discarded broken tee-pegs littering on our beautifully manicured tees. This picture shows just how many they collected over the course of only two and a half rounds. So just a gentle reminder

to us all to pick up our broken tees. It's a very small thing, but it helps keep our course looking as immaculate as we all like it.



Committee Nominations

I hope you are already aware that committee elections are taking place in September. Anyone wishing to find out more about what is involved is warmly invited to contact our Vice-Captain, Cathy Staveley, who takes over the reins as Captain on 6th October.

And finally ... I was delighted to receive this very touching card from members of **The Baked Bean Theatre Company**, following their performance in the garden. It was lovely to hear what a memorable occasion it had been for them, and a big thank you to everyone who came along and helped make their visit to Roehampton Club so special.



Jo Thesiger, Ladies' Golf Captain