

Men's Golf Captain's Blog – 15th October 2026



So, this is it! My final blog. I can't believe how quickly the last 12 months have flown by, and I am now already 'Yesterday's Man' (thank you Neil Anderson)! However, it's been a really busy final few weeks of my tenure as Captain so here goes with my final resume of what has been happening on the golf course.

Competition results

I had an enjoyable couple of rounds with Dave Birn and Niels Verbeek in the **Autumn Meeting** on the weekend of 19th–20th September. Whilst none of us challenged for the prizes there were times when we all played some decent golf but without the necessary consistency for two consecutive medal rounds. I was not helped by 4 putting from c8 feet on the 10th (our first hole) on Sunday! The putter narrowly missed out on being thrown in the pond as sense prevailed when I realised that I may need the club for the remaining 17 holes. The greens were electric and possibly the quickest they have been all year, but they were true and rolled incredibly well. The weather and course were outstanding and so there could be no excuses for putting together a good couple of rounds other than personal ability and concentration! There was some excellent golf played with a total of 122 golfers taking part over the weekend and 76 of us completing both rounds. A great turnout!

The main prize winners were:

18 Holes Scratch First Prize First Day – Matthew Greenwood – 72

18 Holes scratch First Prize Second Day – Connor Hamilton – 73

18 Holes Handicap First Prize First Day – Oliver Aikens – 71 (on c/b)

18 Holes Handicap First Prize Second Day – Nick St John – 69

36 Holes Scratch (and Autumn Challenge Cup) – Henry Dubiel – 74 + 69 = 143

36 Holes Handicap (and Whitney Challenge Cup) – Rob Cutler – 72 + 69 = 141

Many congratulations to Rob (one of the most consistent golfers in the Club) and to Henry (probably consistently the best golfer in the Club over the last couple of years – sorry Connor!) on two great rounds.

Also, many congratulations to Henry and Richard Spalding for winning the aggregate competitions over the Spring and Autumn Meetings, the details of which were as follows:

Aggregate Handicap over Spring and Autumn Meeting (Polo Cup) – Richard Spalding – 141 + 145 = 286

Aggregate Scratch over Spring and Autumn Meeting (Eastman Cup) – Henry Dubiel – 141 + 143 = 284

And also many congratulations to James Goode who holed his 7-iron tee shot on the 14th on the Saturday of the Autumn Meeting, which is amazingly the third hole in one of my tenure and all within the space of four weeks.

We will celebrate all of the Spring and Autumn Meeting winners' achievements together with the winners of all of the other major competitions and knockouts at the Men's Dinner on Friday 27th November, further details to follow but I can announce that one of this country's leading amateur golfers of all time, Gary Wolstenholme, will be our speaker.

Two weeks later we had the **Men's September Stableford** when again conditions were excellent and the course was in supreme condition. As it was my swansong of playing a competitive round with a card in my hand as captain, I was determined to go out in style. I duly invited my predecessor, Justin, soon to be successor, Johnny, and a definite future captain, Dave Birn, to join me for one last hurrah. Everything was set up nicely with the

perfect tee time of 9am and then I started 'playing' golf. I'm not going to go into any detail but suffice to say my woeful 27 points consigned me to perhaps my lowest ever finish than I can ever remember. Hardly the way to bow out. I'm blaming fatigue and the thought of moving into my seventh decade the following day!

However, there was some excellent scoring by a number of those playing, including one of my playing partners, which saw the following golfers in the top three positions:

1st – Alun Hughes – 39 points (on countback)

2nd – Dave Birn – 39 points (on countback)

3rd – Harry Rowlinson – 39 points

I can't believe my final congratulations as captain are to the 'Welsh Windbag' but well played Alun, and great golf Dave. You had been threatening to post such a score throughout September.

Scratch section

The scratch team's match against Pyecombe GC (apparently a very quirky course!) on Sunday 27th September in the last 16 of the EAGG (Elite Amateur Golf Group) knock-out unfortunately ended in defeat.

The final of the Club scratch knockout has not yet been played due to an injury sustained by Connor (hopefully not whilst fist pumping!). It will hopefully be rearranged shortly.

Junior section

The Junior Section held its own **Junior Autumn Meeting** on Sunday 4th October, the result of which was as follows:

1st – Jake Erasmus – nett 71

2nd – Wilbur Whidborne – nett 74 (on countback)

3rd – Dara Mackey – nett 74

Congratulations Jake! And apologies to **Zaal Owen**.

In my September blog I mistakenly did not credit and congratulate Zaal for winning the **Junior Club Championships** with his formidable gross 72 on 6th September. Well played Zaal.

External matches

Huge congratulations to Issy Simpson and Alex Tonge who represented the Club in the **Hankley Common Scratch Mixed Foursomes** (Elizabeth Price Mixed Open) on Saturday 26th September and successfully defended their title with rounds of 76 and 74 and won by 4 clear shots.

Great golf guys in the hardest format of them all! The competition has never been won three times in a row, so they are already entered and practising for next year's event in their bid to make history.

Internal matches

There are now two finals to be played, hopefully in the next week or so, in the internal knockout competitions. Craig De Silva will play David Stuff in the final of the **Lockwood Foster** and in the final of the **Four Ball Better Ball Knockout** Andrew Baynes and James Bushell will play Jo Cochrane and Nick St John. Good luck guys and remember to play your matches using the old stroke indexes.



Captain and Pro matches

Incredibly we managed to play four more Captain and Pro matches together with the Captain and Pro v Challengers Finale between 18th September and 4th October.

The first match was with Max against the wily and experienced pair of John Randel and Keith Atkins. After my previous outing with Max, I was confident that it would only be a matter of time until we started winning holes. Whilst we won a few in the first 9, Keith and John both played some excellent golf, dove-tailing exceptionally well and as Keith tired, John played the final 8 holes one-over par gross. It would have meant Max and I



having to play those holes 7 under gross and so we considered taking the match to the 18th to be a good result, albeit we lost the hole to lose 2 down!



I then played with Sam against another wily, and apparently seldom beaten, pair of Russell Gooding and John Fooks. We were 4 up at the turn but got pegged back by some excellent golf, particularly from Russell. We managed to win on the 18th when Russell left his par putt 1cm short. It was a great match and a great relief to hang on to win 1up.

This was then followed by a match with Ali, against the newly formed and formidable pair of Will Glassey and Giles O'Flynn. Ali had picked up an injury and so got permission to use Danny Gesua's chariot. It was mildly amusing to see a 6'4" Ali speeding around the course in his 3-wheeler. Having said that it certainly appeared to aid his golf as Ali played magnificently and with a little help from yours truly, we managed to prevail, winning on the 14th but already mistakenly having shaken hands on the 13th. The golfers behind us were very confused!



The chariot was then recharged and made its second appearance in two days when Wes and I took on its true owner, Danny Gesua and his very steady partner, John Tyrwhitt. And whilst we were always up throughout the match, Wes and I could not get away from them, with Danny putting beautifully and John playing some very good golf. Standing on the 18th tee we were 1up and then John parred the final hole for a nett birdie to halve the match. It was another excellent afternoon of golf.



And then finally last Sunday 4th October, I partnered with Ricky for 'The Last Dance' in the Captain and Pro v Challengers Finale for which we played a bogey competition, where each pair plays matchplay against the course. It's a great format. The morning did not begin well with thick fog preventing an early start but when we did get away Ricky was on fire and with a little assistance from





the outgoing captain, we managed to beat the course 7 up and not only win the competition but gain revenge in beating the formidable pair of Stuart Logie and Greg Waunford-Brown in a private match! David Stuff and Terry Dillon were a very close second being 6 up, and Clive Nicholson and Robert Stone were just a further shot back. It was a great day to play my final round as captain, with a tremendous lunch and a few beers in the bar afterwards!

Many thanks to all the challengers and also for the extremely generous donations to my charity, [Home-Start Wandsworth](#), throughout the year. I am delighted to report that in the Captain and Pro matches alone we have raised £2,500. I am also thrilled to announce that this year we have so far raised **£22,000** for my charity, Home-Start Wandsworth. I have simply been blown away by the generosity of all the Members. Thank you for the support you have given me in raising this amount.

Playing alongside Ricky and the other pros has been an absolute pleasure and one of my highlights of the year. Thanks to all of them for their time and enthusiasm. My record was played 24, lost 5, halved 3 and won 16 and played with 8 pros in total. And huge thanks to Ricky for facilitating and organising all of these matches. And thank you also to Ricky for the support he has provided to me throughout the year. He has built a wonderful team of pros and we are extremely lucky to have them at the Club.

And finally ...

As I said earlier this is my final blog. By the time you read this I will have returned to the ranks of just a mere weekend golfer. Many thanks to everyone who has supported me throughout the year. There are too many people to mention and apologies if I miss anyone but thanks to Simon and the now departed Matt and Oli for all their support (and good luck to Gary and Ethan in their new roles); to David and his amazing team of greenkeepers for maintaining the course in such a wonderful condition (particularly with the extremes of weather we have had this year); to all the starters and marshals who do such a good job and always with a smile on their faces; to the food and beverage teams for looking after us so well; to the Golf Committee (and particularly to Martin who is stepping down as Chair this year); to the Men's Golf Committee and of course to Jo, who has done such a great job as Ladies' Golf Captain.

And thanks to all the Members who have played, supported competitions and events, represented the Club, donated to my charity, celebrated after rounds and made this such an enjoyable year. When I started out as Captain, I hoped to contribute something to the Club, support the golf section and enjoy the experience. I have received far more in return than I could ever have expected. It has been busy, occasionally tiring, sometimes very wet and sometimes too hot, but it has also been enormous fun, and I have loved (almost) every minute of it.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as your Men's Golf Captain but now it's time for me to be put out to grass (hopefully on one of the fairways!) and to wish my successor, Johnny Perkins, and the new Ladies' Golf Captain, Cathy Staveley, all the very best for the year ahead. I have absolutely no doubt that they will be excellent captains and make a great partnership.

And finally, as Kenneth Wolstenholme said in his iconic commentary in 1966, 'Some people are on the pitch (aka the course!), they think it's all over ... it is now!'

Bob Mitchell, Men's Former Golf Captain