

OE GOLF SOCIETY

Just over 80 people are currently members of the Old Eastbournian Golf Society (OEGS) but we would most definitely welcome even more. Membership is open to all members of the Eastbournian Society – OEs and also parents of former and current College pupils and members of staff of the College.

Report by Chris Walker

Some of our fixtures are only open to actual OEs, namely the Halford Hewitt, Grafton Morrish, Cyril Gray (for the over 50s), Sussex Schools and the Public Schools Putting Competition. However we also organise a whole host of friendly matches against other schools, a Spring Meeting and an Autumn Meeting, all of which are open to any member of the OEGS. And these are open to golfers of all abilities.

Membership of the OEGS costs £25 (or £5 if you are under 25 years old). You then pay only for the fixtures that you attend. And again, for anyone under 25, we almost always generously subsidise their golf from OEGS funds.

Our contacts are either President Chris Walker (president@oegolf.uk), Secretary David Burt (secretary@oegolf.uk) or Treasurer Jo Grey (treasurer@oegolf.uk). Our website is www.oegolf.uk, and we have a Facebook page, www.facebook.com/groups/762739557127533/. We play on many magnificent golf courses, at times paying well below the usual green fee rate.

Performance in scratch tournaments

In the 2019 scratch team tournaments we had disappointing results in the Halford Hewitt and Cyril Gray events but our team in the Grafton Morrish at



The Grafton Morrish Qualifying at Knole Park GC; left to right: David Barwell, Chris Hampton, Ben Dawson, Adrian Sharpin, Tim Mote

Brancaster and Hunstanton in early October reached the quarter finals which represented a really excellent performance.

Matches against other schools

We played matches against: Cranleigh (at Royal St George's – no discernible result in 60mph winds), Hurstpierpoint (at Walton Heath – won 3.5/2.5), King's Canterbury (at Rye – won 9.5/4.5), Brighton (also at Rye – won 2/1), Tonbridge (at West Sussex – won 8.5/3.5), Lancing (at West Hill – lost 1.5/2.5),

Uppingham (at North Hants - lost), Sussex Schools (at West Sussex – third out of four) and Allhallows and Dover College (at West Surrey – second out of three).

The above record is testament to an excellent year in inter-school matches. Wins against such opponents as Hurstpierpoint, King's Canterbury and Tonbridge do not come along that frequently.

Halford Hewitt

Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 April 2019, Royal Cinque Ports GC



The OE Halford Hewitt team at Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club; left to right: Ian Sands, Tim Mote, Chris Walker, Ben Dawson, Adrian Sharpin, David Barwell, Grant Leonard, Geoff Campbell, Will Hylton, (Charles Oakley not present)

Result: Lost 3 & 2 in main draw against Framlingham. Lost 2 & 1 in the Princes Plate against Clifton.

We had a most enjoyable time despite the results on the golf courses falling below what we would have hoped for and indeed expected. A few of us practised at Royal Cinque Ports, Deal, on the Tuesday and then the majority of the team did the same on the Wednesday. In the first round of the Hewitt on Thursday 11 April, for the second year running, we faced Framlingham. We beat them in 2018 but they had strengthened their team with the addition of two young players and this proved to be the vital difference. Adrian Sharpin and Geoff Campbell won as did David Barwell and Will Hylton, the latter against Framlingham's top pair of John Wybar and Lottie Whyman. The last match to finish (to seal a 3-2 win for Framlingham) was the one involving Grant Leonard and Charlie Oakley with Charlie playing in his first Hewitt and with a good number of his family watching the action. In the Plate, on Friday 12 April, we lost by two matches to one in the first round to Clifton with Tim Mote and Charlie Oakley being our victorious pair. Malvern emerged as winners of the Hewitt and the Prince's Plate was won by Lancing.

The team comprised: Ben Dawson, Grant Leonard, Adrian Sharpin, Geoff Campbell, David Barwell, Charlie Oakley, Will Hylton, Tim Mote, Ian Sands and Chris Walker. Paul Wickman was our non-travelling reserve. And we were extremely grateful for support from David Stewart, Nigel Wheeler and the Oakley family.

Roll on the next Halford Hewitt which takes place between 2 and 5 April 2020.

Spring Meeting

Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 April 2019, Royal West Norfolk GC

You don't have to be hardy to play spring golf at Royal West Norfolk, Brancaster in April – but it helps. On the one hand, we found that if you lean backwards into a 50mph wind, it will support your weight and be comfortably relaxing until the gust drops and you recoil backwards.

On the other hand, a driver may not be enough club to reach four of the par threes. Yet, with barely 62



The Spring Meeting at Royal West Norfolk Golf Club; left to right: Ian Henley, Colin Farrant, George Eve, David Stewart, Andrew Sherwood, Peter Henley, David Burt, Chris Walker

a drop of rain, the sun shining occasionally, and the magnificent terrain encouraging you to play a greater variety of golf shots than most of us have in our bag, Royal West Norfolk is a course that should be on every golfer's bucket list.

We were hosted as always with great charm by George and Belinda Eve who also generously invited everyone to their house for champagne after the Saturday warm-up round(s) and before the evening meal. There, before the champagne had a chance to kick in, we drew the pairings for the next day's foursomes: one high handicap player partnering a low handicapper.



George Eve (centre) presenting the Robinson Salver to the victorious pairing of Chris Walker (left) and David Dunn (right) at the Spring Meeting

On Sunday, we played for the Peter Robinson silver salver: David Stewart with David Burt, Andrew Sherwood with Colin Farrant, Peter Henley with his brother Ian, and Chris Walker with David Dunn, the latter pair winning the trophy with 29 points.

Grafton Morrish Qualifying

Saturday 11 May 2019, Knole Park GC

The qualifying for the Grafton Morrish Finals, which are played in Norfolk in the autumn, takes the form of three foursome pairs returning Stableford Points, off scratch, with the top seven teams out of approximately 17 on total points going through. The Old Eastbournian team consisted of Chris Hampton and Tim Mote who scored 29, Adrian Sharpin and Ben Dawson with 28 and Chris Walker and David Barwell with 23. Our total of 80 points saw us qualify for the finals in fifth place which was a most gratifying result achieved despite sun, rain and even hail!

AGM Open Meeting

Sunday 12 May 2019, Piltown GC

This year's winner of the Merritt Challenge Cup was OEGS President, Chris Walker with 27 points off scratch. The winner of the handicap competition was Tony Dunn with 34 points, second place was shared between Ben Burrows and Chris Walker



The AGM Meeting at Piltown GC; left to right: David Burt, Ben Burrows, Peter Henley, David Wells, Brian Jay, Jay Lorton, Andrew Langlands, Tony Dunn, David Barwell, Sue Eccles

with 33 points each and Sue Eccles was third with 31 points. David Barwell won the longest drive and Sue Eccles was nearest the pin on the 18th hole.

Match v Eastbourne College

Thursday 16 May 2019, Royal Eastbourne GC

This was a very enjoyable match which finished a 2-all draw. The OEGS were represented by match manager Brian Jay and Adrian Sharpin who both won and Ian Fletcher-Price and Peter Henley who were much more considerate towards their College opponents.

Public Schools Putting Competition

Tuesday 4 June 2019, Royal Wimbledon GC

A great day at Royal Wimbledon GC for the Schools Putting Competition 2019. Our team of four, Ben Burrows, Ben Dawson, Will Thornton and Grant Leonard, performed well and came fourth out of eight schools, just missing a spot in the finals. After a nervy start in all four first matches we hit our straps and got the measure of the vast, undulating green outside the magnificent RWGC clubhouse. Ben Burrow's decision to use an ancient putter certainly paid off, Ben Dawson took momentum from his two over par round earlier in the day into the competition itself, while Will's decision to use a new putter was a stroke of genius. Leonard's two pre-competition Kummels also appeared to help. The decision to play the course beforehand (at the reasonable members guest rate) was enjoyed by all and the course really is an oasis, five miles from the centre of London.

Cyril Gray Tournament

Thursday 27 to Saturday 29 June 2019, Worplesdon GC



The OE Cyril Gray team at Worplesdon GC; left to right: Tony Dunn, Tim Bevan-Thomas, Ben Burrows, Jay Lorton, Chris Walker, Paul Wickman

Our first round opponents were Stowe and we fielded a team with three OEs who were new to the Cyril Gray, namely Tim Bevan-Thomas, Jay Lorton and Tony Dunn. Chris Walker and Tim played top against a very impressive Stowe pair and went down

badly by 8 & 6. Paul Wickman and Jay did only slightly less badly, losing by 5 & 4. Tony and Ben Burrows performed much better and were one up with 4 to play when a half was agreed.

This meant that we were straight into the Plate against St Bees. Chris and Jay had a good match but still went down by 3 & 2. Paul and Tim lost by 4 & 3 but Tony and Ben were very solid and ran out winners by 6 & 5. So losses in both rounds, but the course and the weather were magnificent. Stowe went as far as the semi-finals, then losing to the eventual tournament winners, Liverpool. Canford won the Plate.

Autumn Meeting

Saturday 14 September 2019, Cooden Beach GC



The Autumn Meeting at Cooden Beach; left to right: Ben Dawson, Ziggy Trezbinski, Grant Leonard, winner David Dunn, Chris Walker, match manager Andrew Langlands, Tony Dunn

The 18-hole Stableford competition for the Cawston Cup was played from the white tees with full handicap allowance. The weather was fine and sunny but with a testing 10mph breeze from the east. This easterly wind certainly made the course more testing than would be the more usual westerly one. David Dunn, playing off a handicap of 20, won the trophy with 35 points. Chris Walker scored a spectacular eagle 2 at the 364 yard 9th. The course was in good condition and positive comments on the day were received by match manager Andrew Langlands from all of the OEGS participants.

Sussex Schools Tournament

Sunday 22 September 2019, West Sussex GC

The Sussex Schools Tournament was, once again, played at West Sussex Golf Club. The teams taking part, playing scratch foursomes matchplay (2 points for a win, 1 point for a halved match), were Eastbourne, Brighton, Hurstpierpoint and Lancing.

We failed to win a match in the morning but ended up avoiding the Wooden Spoon via wins in the afternoon by Mark Justice and Chris Hampton (by 2 up) and Tim Mote and Chris Walker (by 4 & 3). Our other pair comprised local man Ben Burrows and David Barwell.

The final points scores were: Hurstpierpoint 9, Lancing 8, Eastbourne 4, Brighton 3.

Notable in the morning was Chris Hampton's rapid trip from Walton Heath to West Sussex, he having misunderstood where we were playing!

Grafton Morrish Finals

Friday 4 to Sunday 6 October 2019, Brancaster and Hunstanton GC

The team comprising Mark Justice, Mark Stewart, Adrian Sharpin, Tim Mote, Will Hylton and Mark Simpson were drawn against Bury in the second round of this year's tournament (Eastbourne having had the good fortune to have a bye in the first round). Playing at Brancaster, in relatively calm conditions, the team performed well and were victorious by 2.5 to 0.5.

The third round saw Eastbourne drawn against Stewart's Melville at Hunstanton. With Mark Justice and Mark Stewart seeing off their top pair and Will Hylton and Mark Simpson succumbing to a strong third pair, it was down to Adrian Sharpin and Tim Mote to go 'extra holes' having halved their match. Fortune favoured Eastbourne and we proceeded to the quarter finals! With only 15 minutes for lunch, we set out to dispatch George Watson's. The two Marks went out first and halved their match. (They then proceeded in playing extra holes – just in case – and came out on top). The second pair of Adrian and Tim sadly lost, as did Will and Mark. So, we had an eventful tournament which saw us reach the quarter finals – the first time for many years.

The team stayed in a lovely cottage owned by the son of George Eve which provided extremely comfortable accommodation. Both courses were in fabulous condition and the OE team is looking forward to going further next year.