



Henley Seniors Monthly Newsletter



Figure 1 – A winter scene at Henley at the corner of the first fairway – how many senior balls have been lost in that ‘understated’ pond? Just the start you want in a qualifying competition! (Photo Jane Roby)

Editor

Perhaps a New Year’s resolution for all senior men golfers is to play more qualifying competitions during the season. The active weekend member will play at least twenty such competitions during the year which compares to an average of only seven for the active five day member. I have often been asked if this matters but playing an adequate number of qualifying competitions is at the very core of the sport. Such competitions ensure that a golfers handicap is honest and therefore the competitions are honest. The committee will promote Wednesday qualifiers this summer to try to ensure that senior men golfers have enough qualifying competitions (at least double figures) to keep the computer happy and make the Handicap Secretary redundant.

Have a great golfing year where all your drives hit the fairways, all your approach shots hit the greens and all your putts fall into the hole – one can only dream!

Max Jones

December Results

5th December – Team Stableford

Mixed – 1st – *Jenny Roberts/Ed Hinchcliffe/Phil Townsend 85 pts.*

2nd – *Ena Mack/Fred Holtermann/Bob Spooner 84 pts.*

3rd – *Chris Johnson, Tony Scanlon/Steve Trueman 83 pts.*

Mens – 1st - *Peter Holden/John West/Terry Smith 87 pts.*

2nd – *Les Ness/Derek Healing/Ken Hobbs 84 pts.*

12th December Pairs Stableford

Mixed –

1st = *Mike Seymour/Tessa Richardson 40 pts*

Bob Yarwood/Lindsey Brooks 40 pts.

3rd – *Bob Isaac/Maggie Taylor 39 pts.*

4th – *Keith Atherton/Chris Johnson 38 pts.*

Men

1st = *Alan Mobbs/Terry Smith 44 pts.*

Jim Griffith/Roger Flood 44 pts.

3rd - *Bill Merrifield/Trevor Webb 42 pts.*

4th – *Graham Oakey/Keith Tarran 42 pts.*

19th December - Mince Pie Monday

A pairs competition was expertly organised by Roger Flood. The winning pairs received a bottle of wine which they displayed for all to see on their progression from the eighteenth green to the car park. The losing pairs received boxes of chocolates which they tried to hide on the way to their car boot.



MONDAY MORNINGS

Monday competitions – JANUARY

Date	Organiser	Scorer	Competition
3 Jan	R Chapman	R Chapman	Individual Stableford
9 Jan	D+J Bourne	S Perring	3 ball Stableford
16 Jan	K+J Atherton	D+J Bourne	Texas Scramble
23 Jan	M+S Taylor	K+J Atherton	Red Tee Stableford
30 Jan	R+S Hawkins	M+S Taylor	Pairs Stableford

Ray Chapman



QUOTE



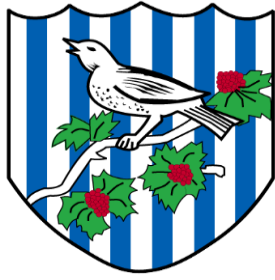
“ A driving range is where a club golfer goes to get all of the good shots out of their system.”

Henry Beard

“ Golf fairways should be made a lot narrower then everyone would have to play out of the rough – not just me!”

Seve Ballesteros

PLAYER OF THE MONTH – Albert Watts



Current Occupation – Retired

Previous occupation - European Sales Manager for a number of U.K. and American companies travelling extensively throughout Europe and the Far East having spent several years in China.

Birth Place/Home Town – Wordsley (a Black Country Boy through and through)

Present Handicap -13

Best ever handicap – Was playing off 8 for about 3 weeks a long time ago

Sporting Life –

A Baggies fan since I was knee high to a grass-hopper when my father took me to watch West Bromwich play, Ronnie Allen and Ray Barlow were my heroes. Ray coached me football after he retired at my school.

Played works league football in both the Wolverhampton and Birmingham leagues.

Best Golfing Moment – Difficult this one I suppose playing in a Pro Am in Malmo Sweden with my late dear friend Lennart. Our pro on the day, was Jasper Parnevik who is a great fun loving character. We were in the 4 ball following John Daly and watched him drive off on this Par 4, John asked his caddie, “I didn’t see my ball,” to which his caddie replied, “Don’t worry John it’s on the side of the green”. Seeing John Daley ‘grip it and rip it’ was awesome.

Being Henley Club Captain in 2006/7 was a great honour for me.

Worst Golfing Moment –Probably reaching the finals of all the 3 major pairs competitions held at Henley having been trying for 20 years and to lose all three in the same year absolutely gutting. I didn’t play for months afterwards but I will be back and already looking forward to 2017.

Honours won –Several Division One Monthly Medals, The Garth Nicholson Trophy Pairs (with Kate), FleetHire Trophy Div 1, Hall of Fame regional qualifier held at Henley, At time of writing still the only Club Captain ever to win both the Captains Incoming and Outgoing competitions.

Strongest Aspect of the Game –Putting but that depends on whether my putter is working or not - it decides to go on strike sometimes. It can be red-hot but also goes cold on me.

Weakest aspects of the game -Getting up and down from 80 yards

Most Liked About Henley –



Have been a member at Henley since September 1995 and there are constants that keep people coming back, one, both the members and bar staff contribute to a very warm welcome. Secondly friendships made. My oldest pal Stan Owen and myself have played for more years together in winter league and pairs competitions than I or he can remember. Pete Holden, Terry Smith and Ron Young - how many laughs and jokes shared - too many to remember by far.

Most like to Change at Henley –

Having been a member for more than 20 plus years I have seen the course in all sorts of conditions. Today it is definitely in the best condition I can remember and that’s all thanks to the efforts of Adam our new greenkeeper and his staff together with the management investment in new equipment. However, and this is a radical idea that I have, and that it is to take all fairway bunkers out of play and convert them to grass mounds instead. As we all know most of these bunkers flood and hold water for many days, the sand gets compacted and heavy which leads to difficult playing conditions.

Favourite player

Past – Robert 'Bobby' Jones an example of what an amateur may achieve **Present** – Ian Poulter should have played in the Ryder Cup.

Make of golf clubs – Ping G30 Driver 10.5 ,Ping i20 Woods 3 and 5, G30 Hybrids 2, 4, and 5, Ping Irons i20 3 to PW, Cleveland Wedges 52, 56 and 60, Ping Anser Putter

Ball preferred – TaylorMade Tour 5 piece or Titleist NXT Tour

When did I take up golf? –

Late in life about 1990 Kate, my wife, booked lessons for us both at a new golf course that had opened close to where we both worked. We booked a course of six lessons and they gave us a free seven iron each. We have been hooked on golf ever since.

Favourite course – There are two favourites:-

Balcomie Links Crail Fife, which is the seventh oldest club in the world a fabulous Links course.

The Old Course at St. Andrews - all that history. To hit a long drive over the Old Railway Sheds on the 17th hole and walk off with a par was just magical.

Other interests. – Peroni, White and Red Wine, Prosecco, Champagne and a very good malt whisky together with a fine medium to rare steak. I also enjoy all sorts of music from classical to blues and of course the fabulous 60's.

Recently I have seen the following in concerts:- Rod Stewart, Roberta Flack, Dionne Warwick, John Lodge of the Moody Blues, and others.

Tip for beginner –

Find a good PGA Instructor and book a series of lessons but keep it simple

Motto in life – *Remember you never get a second chance to make a first good impression.*

Cheers enjoy your Golf

Albert

Gits



This month a number of us have been filling soil around trees. This is still a job to be continued in the new year.

Shame about the dogwoods being cut back at the wrong time of year. Hopefully a colourful display in the winter months next year.

We planted 10 laurel, dividing the 2nd and 5th tees. We will be buying a further 10 to complete the job. Work is underway making use of the donations by the Seniors committee of £250. Approximately £40-50 is being used by Roger Bennett to make bird boxes. (Derek has been consulted). Steve Taylor is also making plant boxes. The rest of the monies will be spent on a full scale and bespoke information noticeboard with an additional whiteboard area to be placed close to the 1st tee. There will be an additional board by the 10th as well.

This year our Git numbers has increased to 13, some with particular skills noted and listed below.



Our thanks go to all of them

Chris 'strimmer' Scrimshire

John 'I love orange marigolds' West

Richard 'my back's killing me' Ward

Clive 'must look after my new knee' Davies

Peter 'woodsman' Holden, the oldest and fittest git.

Steve 'flower box' Taylor

Martin 'ditch strimmer' Bartlett

Gareth 'mattock' Ginns

Roger 'bird box' Bennett

Stuart 'channeller' Brookes

Tony 'new boy, keen as mustard' Scanlon

Dave Bourne, when fit again, will be welcomed back into the ranks Thanks also to **Pete** 'I can't stand weeding' **Colburn** who joined us for a short while. 2016 will hopefully see the the capable and willing pair of **Alf Rourke** and **Rob Bassett** joining our ranks after their extended and well-earned holidays.

Thank you to all and a happy New Year.

Jim Griffith



Henley Men's Seniors Open 2017

Entries are now being accepted for the Men's Open on Thursday June 29th 2017.

The format will be the same as 2016 with Stableford Pairs betterball, Golfers of **any** handicap aged 55 and over can enter. On the day itself a maximum handicap of 24 will be allowed.

Entry costs £16 for Henley members and £22 for non-Henley players, tea/coffee on arrival, prizes and a 2 course meal afterwards.

This is a great opportunity for you to invite a guest along to play our course which should be looking in great condition by June. Rather than playing with another Henley member why not try and bring a guest? You never know they may join?

If you'd like an entry for me please email me at rogerbennett@btinternet.com and I'll get one to you. They are also available on the golf empire website, on our facebook page and one will be emailed to all members shortly. Completed forms can be given to reception, myself or any committee member.

Entries do fill up quickly so please get your entry in ASAP

Thanks Roger Bennett (entry organiser)



Figure 2 Is this the future of Henley Seniors? In sub-zero conditions bags are carried and shorts are worn. Ah, the foolhardiness of youth! (Photo – Jane Roby.)



Why $\frac{3}{4}$ Handicap?

Several years ago the committee ruled that for Monday competitions played on winter greens golfers would play off $\frac{3}{4}$ their club handicap. New members often ask why this is so? The committee took this decision because of the following reasons:-

- 1) The course is over 1000 yards less off the winter tees.
- 2) The vast majority of bunkers do not come into play off winter greens.
- 3) Putting is a lottery.

Due to above changes the high handicappers have a distinct advantage over lower handicappers and scores of over 50 stableford points have been recorded. The recommended $\frac{3}{4}$ handicap reduction (CONGU) seems to reduce scores back to normal and therefore everyone has a chance of winning. Even though no one likes their handicap reduced it seems to work.



NATURE NOTES

The Big Garden Birdwatch will be held on January 28-30th 2017. In 2016 over half a million people counted 8,262,662 birds. This is the World's largest annual wild life survey and if you would like to join in you can request a free pack from the RSPB at this address:

<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/packrequest/>

Although several species have significantly declined in number over the last 25 years, some you may see in your garden have reversed the trend:

Buzzard, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Collared Dove and Blackcap have all increased by 300%, whilst Green Woodpecker, Magpie, Jackdaw, Carrion Crow, Sparrowhawk, Great Tit, Nuthatch, Red-ringed Parakeet and Goldfinch have all doubled in number.

Declining however are: House Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Starling, House Martin, Linnet, Song Thrush, and Mistle Thrush. There are several others that you are unlikely to see in your garden of which the most significant is the 90% fall in the Turtle Dove population but Pied Flycatcher, Nightingale, Yellowhammer, Yellow Wagtail, Lapwing, Grey Partridge and Corn Bunting are also in serious decline.

Not all bad news though as some species new to the UK now breed successfully. Little Egrets first bred here in 1995 but are now numerous with over 700 breeding pairs, Spoonbills raise young in one or two coastal locations, Common Cranes, with an existing population in Norfolk, have been re-introduced to Somerset, White-tailed Sea Eagles are spreading through the Scottish Highlands, Red Kites of course are always seen during a drive down the M40, Ospreys and Bitterns are nesting in several new locations and not yet breeding but visiting regularly are Glossy Ibis, Hoopoe, Bee-Eater and Great White Egret.

Another bird doing well that you definitely will not see in the garden is the Bearded Tit, or more correctly, Bearded Reedling as it is not truly related to the tits. A series of mild winters and additional migrants from Scandinavia have contributed to a significant increase in breeding pairs. Totally dependent on and living exclusively in reed beds they were confined to a few sites in Lancashire and East Anglia but have been slowly spreading inland with even a few sightings in the Midlands. Notoriously difficult to see as they only pop up out of the reeds for a few seconds but they do make a distinctive "ping" call to give away their presence. I was delighted to photograph this one at Cley in Norfolk



Derek Healing



BOOK REVIEW



I am sure many of us unwrapped new books on Christmas Day and maybe some reviews will appear in future Sagas.

Waiting on my bedside table are:

'Chaos' Patricia Cornwell

'Rather Be The Devil' Ian Rankin

'Betrayal' Martina Cole

I am in the middle of **'A Life of Questions'** by **Jeremy Paxman**. Excellent read.

Ray Chapman



JIMS AFTERNOON

Loco at the Ricoh

One winter afternoon a certain elder golf statesman decided to watch Wasps at the Ricoh. He had travelled afar and upon reaching the stadium he became confused, very confused. Limping around the perimeter he at last noticed signs for the entrance to the West Stand, or so he thought. His 'friend' was not so sure but went along with this, knowing it was futile to reason with the deranged! Unravelling his faintly printed computer print out he placed it in the machine at the turnstile. No result. Further attempts produced nothing. Attendants flocked to help the poor man whilst impatient queues formed behind him. Luckily these were not football fans!

Studying the poor print out they eventually let him into the ground. Alas, after a few minutes it dawned on him he was in the wrong area, the North Stand Gate 20 on not the West Stand Gate 20. After several attempts to explain his mistake to various attendants and getting nowhere he realised that his ticket had been retained at the turnstile. He returned to seek out the attendant with his ticket. This poor man attempted to explain that he had in fact given the ticket back. Our man from Henley GC was now bereft, worried that without his faintly printed handout he would not be allowed to re-enter at the appropriate gate. He again repeated his request for the original steward to return his crumpled ticket. Still no luck and further stewards assembled, informing him that he wouldn't be able to get out to come back in! With rising frustration he searched his pockets and there it was, his ticket. What a miracle he thought, though his 'friend' had repeatedly told him to look in his pockets.



By now the match was approaching kick off and still our man was nowhere near his destination. He began his weary journey around the perimeter, hips working well but knees rejecting the need to hobble to the correct turnstile this time. Would you believe it, his

ticket was rejected once more. Summoning a steward he was eventually let in.

45 minutes after his initial attempt to enter the Ricoh and having disrupted every spectator in his row to allow him to get to his seat he had reached his destination just as the whistle was blown.

This story really is true. The clue to his name is in the name of one of the stands. Got it?

Jim Griffith



WEST STAND REPLIES!

I rather think one of the party is abrogating all responsibility. Typical Exeter fan!

John

Fiddlers Golf!

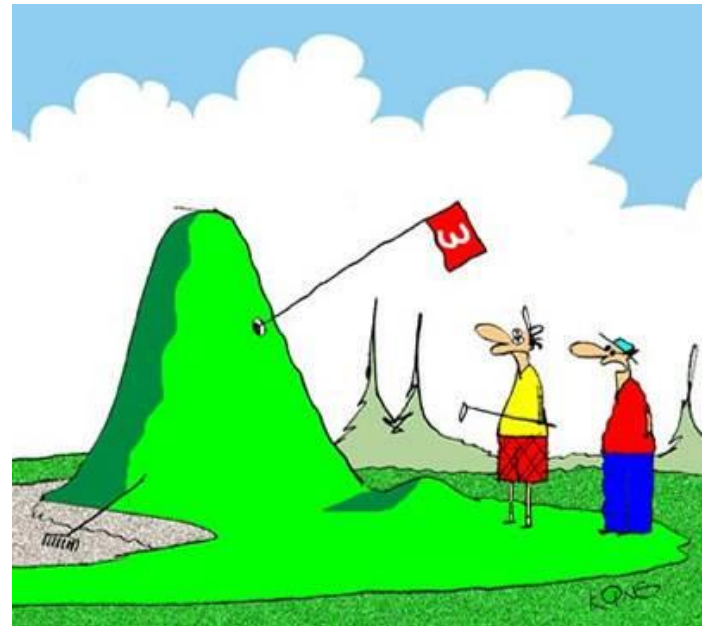


Figure 3 - Les, when you told Adam that the third hole was too easy I think you upset him a tad. In future keep your thoughts to yourself!



Final Thought

According to the Daily Telegraph (29/12) with the arrival of winter weather the advice for the over 65's was to stay indoors, wear several layers of clothing and take plenty of hot drinks. As you can see from a Thursday Fiddlers photo below three intrepid pensioners ignored this sound advice and waited patiently for the fog to lift at 8.15 am.



Figure 4 - Three escapees from an unnamed institute gather on the first tee all set to lose a dozen golf balls in the persistent fog and -4C temperature! Neale Hyde was on hand to replenish their dwindling reserves with balls 'on offer'.

Note – only 79 days to go to the first day of Spring.