

Men's & all Section's Report for 2024

The Club knockout competitions saw a good increase in participation in 2024 fostering a healthy rivalry between participants as each progressed to the later stages, fuelling the competitive juices which will hopefully feed through to the Inter club matches for all sections including in the Men's Hertfordshire Friendly League next year as Little hay finished 5th of the 6th teams in the league in 2024 with just 3 wins from 10 matches and bottom at the season ending needle shield event held this year at a very soggy Panshanger who could not replicate our fantastic weather or result of the previous year as they became the first hosting team in memory to not win the combined Stableford score event losing out on countback to the team that finished bottom of the league Batchwood Hall.

The continued growth of the women's section saw an increased number of participants join in the mixed knockout competition and in the various all sections competitions during the year including the Winter League in which a total of 14 pairs commenced this year's league.

It is a testament to work that Janet Proudfoot and all those who help in the newly reformed women's committee has done to encourage and nurture this new crop of Golfers into the Club via the complex's Academy program, long may it continue.

The Men's Early season Medals fell foul to winter course closures with 2 being cancelled and one rearranged to enable the NAPGC CoE Qualifier to take place, Medal scores during the year were noticeably higher than in past years given the change in handicap calculation and course conditions although there were a couple of notable 65's as the summer progressed

As tends to be the case scoring in Stableford competition stood up better with 40+ being needed to claim most competitions, including the non-qualifying for handicap 3 clubs and a putter competition which just goes to show too much choice is not always a good for your game simplifying the options can give greater clarity on the shot required.

Total entrants in the 28 competitions played in 2024 eligible for order of merit points increased by circa 100 on LY to over 500 participating rounds with the average field size increasing by nearly 3 players.

When the winter tees were finally ready a month later than planned in January there was a shock for many as the new Handicap calculation of par minus stoke index off the now standardised par of 72 for men saw most find they had 4 less shots on the playing handicap which can be hard to understand when you cant see your ball for the mud on it after missing another fairway.

As the new year begins I am happy to announce that I won't be organising all competitions in 2025 as 2 helpers have come forward to assist with various aspects of them.

- Steve Milligan is the clubs new NAPGC and Herts Golf competition representative and has made a start with the club's entries in the Gordon & Mary Foster Bowl competitions.
- Ben Alford is the clubs HFL Captain for 2025 and will oversee the team that wins this year's League 😊

Further assistance is always welcome do come forward if you would like to get involved and help out on occasions, a system as implemented by the senior's section for organisers and starters would be most welcome if sufficient volunteers are willing assist.

IVAN LAWRENCE - Weekend competition Organiser & Club Captain.

Golf Club Membership Report

Annual Membership Overview

Overall Membership

Throughout the past year, the golf club has experienced a decline in its overall membership, recording a net decrease of 7 members. This change reflects varying trends across different sections of the club's membership.

Senior Sections

The senior sections have shown remarkable stability over the year. Both the men's and women's senior sections saw a modest increase, with each section gaining 1 member.

Men's Section

The men's section faced the most significant challenges, experiencing the highest number of membership losses compared to other sections of the club. Efforts are being made to understand the underlying causes and to implement strategies to retain and attract members to this section.

Women's Academy Section

In contrast, the women's academy section exhibited the most substantial growth within the club. This section has seen a considerable increase in members, indicating a positive trend and growing interest among women in joining and participating in the club's activities.

Conclusion

In summary, while the overall membership of the golf club has decreased slightly over the past year, there have been notable developments in specific sections. The stability of the senior sections and the growth of the women's academy section are encouraging signs. Moving forward, targeted strategies will be essential to address the challenges faced by the men's section and to continue fostering growth and engagement across all areas of the club.

HANDICAP COMMITTEE REPORT SEASON 2024/25

OVERVIEW

The standardisation of PAR across all tees and the change to the method of calculating Course Handicap came into effect on the 1st of April. There were a few hiccups with the calculation of handicaps in ClubV1 but they settled down after a few weeks. We also had problems in house with the rationalisation of Stroke Index. This was also resolved within few days.

A review of one members handicap was successfully concluded with an increase reflecting that he had been seriously ill over the preceding winter and his handicap did not reflect his current ability.

As a result of a handicap review carried out in July one member, who was subject to the Hard Cap, was offered an increase but chose to continuing with his attempts to reduce his handicap by improving his scores.

The required, annual handicap review was completed in early December. None of our members was flagged for review but the data inspected resulted in emails being sent encouraging them to submit more cards from general play.

PREFERRED LIES

In past years Preferred Lies have become automatically available from the 1st of October and remained in force until the 30th of April. With effect from October 2024 Preferred Lies are available at any time of year depending on the club committee's decision. This is in recognition that, due to the changing climate, difficult conditions can exist at any time of year. The term "winter rules" is now redundant and we are asked not to use it.

CLUB RULES OF COMPETITION

After consultation, the section of the club's Rules of Competition which sets the entry level for competition (2-7c) was amended so that with effect from 1st April 2025 players will need to have 10 scores in their scoring record which are less than a year old at the date of competition. For knockouts this "date of competition" is the 1st of May – the opening of the 1st round.

One of the Seniors' Pairs competitions highlighted the need for revision of the rules for Pairs Competitions for which the Pairs are chosen by the organiser. Accordingly Rule 2-8 now gives the organiser of such competitions guidance on how fairness can be achieved for late entrants and ad hoc team changes.

RULES OF GOLF

An incident during day 1 of the Seniors' Cup highlighted the general lack of knowledge of the Rules of Golf. One player sought a ruling, before submitting his card, regarding the procedure following expiry of the 3 minutes ball search time. Later we learned that another player had done the same thing but had not sought a ruling. Members are urged to familiarise themselves with Rule 18.2.

In the light of the difficulties which the greenkeepers face with bunker maintenance members are urged familiarise themselves with Rules 15 to 19, inclusive, of the Rules of Golf and in particular Rules 16.1c and 19.3.

In response to a request from a club member, the committee has allowed on a trial basis from the 1st of January until the end of March, the use of the alternative to Stroke and Distance relief when a ball is lost or out of bounds.

Tony Grainger
Handicap Chair

3rd Feb 2025



Competition Report February 2025

All honours boards were updated in early January, 30 boards in total including just one name on the 'hole in one' board.

Approximately 50 trophies have now been engraved in Men's, Seniors and Women's sections.

Almost 75 glass awards will be presented to competition winners. Winners of medals and stablefords will receive one award for multiple wins as in previous years.

All boards and cabinet trophies should now be up to date.

Costs of boards this year is £768

Costs of engraving and Glass awards including some Ladies awards is £2058.72.

A total of £2826.72.

Fixture list is now complete and on website although there have been some minor date changes recently so I will be asking Ted to publish a new list soon. We do have a pretty full fixture list but the committee welcomes any feedback or suggestions you may have.

Very good entries for the two mixed competitions between Men and Women, the 'Cruikshank Salver' and 'The Jenny Williams Trophy'. With the help of Ann and Dorothy we managed to get 12 Women and 12 Men for each competition and had very enjoyable competitive days for both.

The mixed pairs knockout competition saw 10 Women come forward to play. Those that did not have a partner were matched with a Man.

Let's hope we can encourage the same if not more Women to participate in these types of competition this year.

Knockout competitions will open in March and have a closing date in mid April. The draws will be made soon after and ready to commence at the start of May. Entry will be on HDID and as last year the entry fee will be £2 per person per Competition. This will need to be paid before being entered into any draw. Again we shall attempt to pair players up who do not have a partner already.

Competitions have been well represented in the past year. Sometimes 30 plus entrants in the Seniors. In the Men's section there have been 20 plus with around 30 entrants for the bigger competitions like Captains Day and Presidents Putter. Good to see large numbers but would be even better to get more entries for all, but especially weekend competitions. I have always attempted to get the competitions onto HDID at least a month in advance to give plenty of time for bookings.

Terry Clarke

Welfare Officer Report

The 'Safeguarding Children and Young People Learning renewal: Working with Parents and Carers in Sport' course has been completed. It is England Golf's requirement for Club Welfare Officers. The certificate of completion of the course is accessible via our website.

The 'LHGC - Safeguarding-Personnel-Register 2025' has been updated and sent to England Golf.



Women's Section Report February 2025

This has been a good year for Little Hay Women's Section. We have grown via the website, posters on the back of the toilet doors and mainly from the academy. New members have got their handicaps and are developing and improving their golfing skills.

Wednesday's rollup has been very popular particularly on the bright, sunny days we had this year. The Monday games however remain small but for many of us the word competition can sound a bit intimidating. We reassure people that they have nothing to fear. Come and see.

We have had some enjoyable matches with the seniors and generally increased numbers playing in Club competitions.

Our away day in September at Whipsnade Park was not the Indian summer weather we expected. It was freezing cold but despite that, it was a very successful event.

We had our AGM in November. This year for the first time in ages, trophies were awarded for competitions which had four or more players. Winners from the mixed competitions will receive their trophy at the Club AGM. All the winners' names will also be added to the trophies in the trophy cabinet.

At the AGM, several people put their names forward for roles running the section, so we now have a healthy subcommittee. We also encouraged people to shadow roles in preparation for the future. We decided to move back to the term Captain rather than Coordinator for the Women's Section, now that there are more members. For this year, it was agreed that Dorothy and I should continue as Joint Captains.

We are also planning to restart inter-club matches, which again we had to stop due to lack of members. Sarah Baker has taken on the role of looking into restarting fixtures with other Clubs and already has a couple of games lined up. We have put our name forward for the NAPGC Mary Forster Bowl and Rachel Freethy is arranging dates and teams for that.

We had an enjoyable Christmas lunch at the Complex in December and we are now building up for an exciting year ahead.

Dorothy Norman and Ann Hetherington

Joint Captains, Women's Section

February 2025



SENIOR CAPTAIN'S REPORT TO AGM 2024 Season

PARTICIPATION

The Senior Section has organised Medal and Stableford competitions in each month together with 4 Trophy Competitions – The Frank Spence Shield (Pairs Stableford), the John Bidgway Plate (Pairs Greensome) the Vic Allen Charity Shield (Singles Stableford) and the Seniors Cup (Singles Stroke Play over 36 holes).

A total of 53 Senior members took part in these competitions with an average entry of 26 over the period April to October, inclusive. The Winter months of November December and January attracted an average entry of 22. Members also took part in the 2 Seniors Knockout competitions. There were 21 entries for the Ron Griffiths Cup – Singles K/O - and 13 teams of 2 entered the Doubles K/O – the Dave Holden Trophy.

We played 10 Summer Friendly matches winning 4 at home and losing 4 away the other 2 matches being drawn. A total of 26 members played in at least one of these matches. We played 4 of the 5 scheduled matches in the pre-winter phase of the Chiltern Breakfast League and 2 of those were played on re-arranged dates due to the weather. We lost 2 of the 3 Away matches , winning the other but could only draw our one home match. 21 players played in at least 1 of these 4 matches. Over the whole 14 matches played since the 1st of April, 30 members played in at least 1.

TROPHY WINNERS

John McDonagh Trophy (3 Club)
Frank Spence Shield (Stableford Pairs)
John Bidgway Plate (Greensome)
Vic Allen Charity Shield (Singles Stableford)
Seniors Cup (Younger)
Seniors Cup (Older)
Senior Champion (lowest gross)

Les Perry
Martin Mansfield & Dipak Patel
Keith Dorme & Peter Balding
Ted Carroll
Terry Clarke
Quinto Rafique
Mick Milne

ORGANISATION

Thanks to Chris Murray for organising the midweek roll-up. Along with David Garbutt, Chris also organises the Seniors' Medal, Stableford and Trophy competitions. Thanks to them both for their work in keeping our competitions going. Without volunteers to take on these roles we wouldn't have competitions. Similarly the inter-club matches would not take place without a Captain. For the club to continue to thrive it needs members to volunteer to take on these and other jobs.

Tony Grainger

16th January 2025