



# THIS TLE

Morning shadows from the clubhouse

## Chaos at Presentation Night! We honour our many winners from competition in 2009

With more than eighty present to witness the proceedings, Chaos reigned at our Presentation Night celebrations. Captain Chaos, that is, the aptly named incumbent being David Jackson who was host for the evening with presentations to Seniors, Juniors and Ladies from the appropriate captains and David doing the honours for the men's competitions.



*Alex Ballard with Freddie, one of our smaller juniors (5' 3")*

What made the evening special for most of us was chance to hear from the various captains starting with Alex Ballard for the juniors. Alex was quick to pay tribute to our Juniors organiser, professional Simon Amor. This drew the first spontaneous round of applause from the audience. The junior league team just failed to finish in top spot (half a point!) but the year had been a triumph for the Amor brothers with Ben and younger brother Jamie coming on in leaps and bounds and picking up most of the junior trophies en route! Memorably, Ben also came within a putt of being the youngest ever Club Champion. Alex also paid tribute to the new names emerging in the junior ranks and wished his successor, Jake Scholes well for his coming year of captaincy before presenting our Patron Freddie Boardman with a Junior team jumper. I doubt he will make the team, however.

John Mack was next up, looking every inch the seniors captain: he was on crutches. Recovering from a serious foot operation, (*I believe Slog recently claimed it had been removed from his mouth - most unkind. Ed*) John sported a

surgical boot as he delivered his speech with attendant crutch-bearer on hand (his vice-captain Graham Jefferies). In an amusing and self-deprecating talk, John claimed the biggest success for the Seniors was locating the right trophy and remembering who had won it!

Trish King claimed bragging rights for 2009 with a cupboardful of silverware and the Club Quadrilateral. Thankfully, there was none of that disgraceful "Courtesy shots!" heckling. Nobody likes to hear that.

The men's silverware presented an eye-blinking array and proved more than a challenge for the confused Slog who had been given the seemingly simple task of shoving the right pot forward for captain David to present. It's a shame. Still, all seemed to go well enough with vice captain Neil Patch now on hand to call up the winners.

Neil's hardworking golf committee were praised by the Captain in a gracious speech to end proceedings in which he thanked everyone for making his year so special. Neil seemed to doubt the motivation for this, however, referring darkly to the Captain's Last Supper and the fact that "it won't make any difference". Wonder what he meant?



*A stunned Chaos hands Roger Henry the midweek matchplay trophy*

*Valentines on Saturday 13th February at 7.00!*

## THISTLE

### Snow Joke!

A desperate message from our Seniors Correspondent

Yep, done the walk to the pub over the white, sparkling meadows. Trekked up on the downs to view the winter wonderland below.

Cleared the drive, three times. Had the central heating boiler break down for two days. Struggled into Hungerford to find Tesco stripped of milk, bread, sugar and salt. Stacked two cubic metres of logs in minus seven degrees. Played endless games of Extreme Scrabble\* with my lovely wife. (\*Extremely unlikely I'll win a game).

Receiving constant weather updates from John "Smug B\*\*\*\*\*d" Rhodes in South Africa. Repelled hordes of freezing rodents from taking up residence in the thatch. Getting low on oil.

Refused permission to stay in bed until it thaws .... and haven't played golf for weeks.

So taking everything into account the sooner the white stuff disappears the better.

Phil Cook



*Phil sent this during a bout of emailing by frustrated seniors with nothing better to do. The Seniors AGM and Three-club Challenge had to be postponed until Monday, 1st February.*

### What's Occurring?

Some Important Dates for Your Diary

🕒 **Saturday 13th Feb: Valentines, 7.00 for 7.30.**

A super gourmet-style dinner plus entertainment. £19.50, pay at the bar.

🕒 **Monday, 22nd Feb: The Club AGM, 7.30.** Some

important items including a revised constitution, a new membership category, catering and of course the subscriptions for 2010/11. More information in the foyer plus a chance to comment or ask a question.

🕒 **Saturday, 28th March: Captain's Drive In, 12.30.**

See Neil Patch open his year with the traditional drive down the tenth and a competition for everyone.

### Handicap Review

Why not hand yourself in?

Does your handicap reflect your current playing ability? If not, you may wish to draw this to the attention of the Handicap Committee who are about to commence their annual review.

The review is an important part of the new handicapping system and has to be done in a uniform and equitable manner so as to ensure, so far as practicable, that all golf clubs determine handicaps by the same process. If your handicap is changed, you are individually informed of this, not just by a notice on the club's notice board.

Your handicap may be reviewed without you requesting that it should be. There are certain triggers in the software that will cause it to be flagged for the attention of the committee.

With this in mind, you may wish to 'fess up' and save being shopped by a computer. Only joking.

**Your man in charge of the review is Neil Patch who is raring to go, I understand, and already has certain names in mind. You can be assured that whatever Neil and his team come up with it's for your own good.**

### What's Happening With Bunkers?

Hand raking and hand trimming of bunkers is a very costly exercise. Although well-placed bunkers add to the challenge and enjoyment of a course, they must earn their keep. Over time it may be that with the advances in golf ball and club technology and changes on the course some become of marginal value.

Head greenkeeper Robin Greaves says "bunkers are raked out three times a week and then foot-marked on the other days. In February/March all bunkers are edged and sand replaced as needed. Sand replacement is an ongoing job throughout the playing season." In addition, Robin's team edge (grass cut) and stone pick once a month, on average, throughout the season.

As part of the course maintenance plan, greens chairman Roger Hill is continually looking for ways to improve the quality of the course without increasing costs. Removing bunkers that add little to the enjoyment of the course can release valuable time that can be spent on the care of greens, tees and remaining bunkers.

"It's a judgement call" says Roger "and you can't please all the people all the time! But we do try to strike a balance that gives maximum playing enjoyment at reasonable cost."

*Valentines on Saturday 13th February at 7.00!*