



# THISTLE

## Pro Am Success For Team Patch!

**In a nail-biting 18th hole finale, the BMW-sponsored Marlborough team scooped first place in the prestigious Wales Open Pro Am at Celtic Manor, home of this year's Ryder Cup. A nett eagle at the fiendishly difficult last hole by general manager Les Trute sealed victory on count back from last year's winners the Celtic Manor Resort Captains.**

Captain Neil Patch and Nina Davies were joined by Les and the team was completed by Swedish pro Fredrik Andersson Hed, winner of last month's Italian Open. It was a great team effort with everyone contributing to the winning 17 under par total. This will undoubtedly be one of Neil's moments to treasure from his year of captaincy. Nina was one of only two ladies to appear in the thirty teams that took part and was followed by some admiring spectators who commented on how well she and the team were playing.

"We were following Monty's team so progress was slow as he had to keep stopping to give interviews!" said Les. And that 18th hole? "I think we were the only team to get three balls on the green - most ended up in the lake. I had driven into the rough so decided to do the sensible thing and lay up." Blimey. "My third ended about fifteen feet above the hole - anything short runs back down the bank into the lake. Then I holed the putt." Where would it have gone if it had missed? "Let's just say, when it went in it was gathering pace!"



*The green at the 595 yard 18th hole*

**What a great day with the players treated to wonderful hospitality by BMW and the host club and topped off by rugby legend Gareth Edwards presenting the trophies. Our thanks to BMW and our super team for putting Marlborough Golf Club at the top of the leaderboard!**

### Better Bunkers

**We are now getting more compliments than complaints about the bunkers!**

Reaching this happy state at last has not been without its problems, as Les Trute acknowledges. "We used the winter period to get the worst ones dug out" said Les "so as to give more protection from flints that emerge from the subsoil. It's an issue that won't go away but we are doing our best to keep it under control. Unfortunately, there was some delay in obtaining the sand and then the snow arrived!"

**It seems that now the new sand has settled, the benefits of this are being noticed and appreciated by players. There should be fewer flint problems and a sufficient depth of sand to encourage good bunker shots.**

### Cannons or Tee Times?

**Captain Patch asked the question in the last Thistle and judging from the responses on Slog's Blog the answer from you is "Stick to the cannons!"**

The question was asked about our special event days when cannon starts in the morning and afternoon can mean the whole course is closed all day. When the number of participants is small this can be a problem. It looks as if there is no easy answer but whenever sensible to do so we should stick with the cannon start formula. It does help to build atmosphere in the clubhouse to have everyone finishing around the same time.

**As usual, it is not going to be possible to please everyone all the time but, hey, that's why we've got a general manager! Over to you, Les!**

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## Patron's Day

**It was Freddie's day and he looked after us well.**

Serving drinks from the halfway house he provided welcome relief for those of us not scoring so well. No such problems for Ron Hearfield, Gordon Jaffray, Mike Budnjak and Bruce Fitchett who comfortably took the Patron's Day trophy and some nice engraved crystal as mementoes of their win. The ladies crystal went to Jenny Swift, Sheila Hubie, Nina Davies and Kate Bowers.

**Another great day sponsored generously by our marvelous patron. Many thanks Fred!**

## Wiltshire Junior Team Championships

**Sixteen teams came, the pick of juniors from the county, but only one team could win. Marlborough, of course!**

Well we did have home advantage as well as a very good team of talented youngsters. Junior captain Jake Scholes led from the front with a magnificent nett 66, backed ably by Ben Amor (69), Jack Deane (73) and Alex Ballard (81) giving a nett team score of 309 which was all much too much for the chasing pack, the closest of which was a distant ten shots back.

"I am delighted for them" said Simon Amor the Junior organiser "They are a really nice bunch of boys and they fully deserved their success. I understand they will now go on to represent Wiltshire in the national finals."

Simon added that he had received a complimentary phone call from the Wilts County Golf Union about the warm welcome and hospitality shown to all competitors as well as calls from participating clubs congratulating us on the condition of the course. North Wilts took the best gross team trophy with 230 (219 nett) and congratulations to them too.

**Great performance, boys and well done to all those who helped make the event such a success. Best of luck in the finals!**

## Doreen Does It!

A tense encounter with Tidworth for a place in the quarter finals of the Ladies County Knockout saw Doreen What unpack her clubs and go back out after the sides were locked at two games each.

Like the trooper she is, Doreen came through on the first extra hole while her team-mates swilled pints at the bar. *[Surely some mistake. A small sweet sherry, perhaps? Ed]* "So we are now in the quarter finals!" said team member Jenny Swift. The rest of the team was Mandy Cooper, Kate Bowers and Wendy Lappin.

**Meanwhile the friendly matches are going well with wins against North Wilts 3-1 and a 4-0 against Newbury & Crookham. *[Gentlemen please note! We have trouble with that fixture. Maybe we should field a mixed team next time. Ed]***



*Handicap 5' 3"*

## Freddie and His Magic Balls

Our venerable patron, Frederick John George Boardman, advises from his official corner of the bar that the weekly sweep on the Bonus Ball number in the National Lottery draw will shortly pass the £2000 mark in monies raised for the Junior Foundation that bears his name.

"I had a full and luxuriant head of hair when I started this swindle" lied Freddy "but extracting money from you lot and keeping track of it has aged me terribly." He seems to be making a good enough job of it nevertheless. "Boardman Corner" has become a no-go area for many members not wishing to part with the few pounds they have left after buying a drink. Anyway, well done Mr B and thanks to all those who have helped raise the money by buying one of Freddie's balls and perhaps picked up one of the weekly £30 prizes. *[I have two. Ed]*

**Supporting our Junior section has always been very important to Freddie who also makes a small amount available to buy a National Lottery ticket on behalf of the group. Who knows, there could be a luxury lifestyle just around the corner!**

## Minimum Clubs = Maximum Points!

Seniors chairman Brian Alford proved that fourteen clubs was an unnecessary luxury when he won the Seniors limited club competition with 47 points using a seven iron and a putter!

Admittedly, the handicaps are somewhat enhanced the fewer the clubs taken. Keith Whetten and Roland Fisher must have felt they were in with a chance with their 45's but it was not to be.

**Next year let's get rid of the putter and take just one ball!**

## Anyone Seen a 7-iron?

**We don't usually do this but just this once and as it's a little out of the ordinary!**

It's a Yuyuri Prototype blade 7 iron with a white and black golf pride grip. Lost by Justin Whitehouse around the 14th green on Saturday, 2nd May.

**Anyone forgotten they picked it up?**

## SUMMER BALL - JULY 2nd!

Posters now up in the clubhouse. Super menu, great band! Price held at just £30.

Come alone or in a group - everyone welcome. This year the lovely Becky Hiller will be singing some popular jazz to welcome us in during drinks and nibbles - don't miss it!