



Ups & Downs

Pyecombe G C

Newsletter

May / June 2012

No. 125

Editor Alf Bickham

CAPTAIN'S REPORT

May and June have been disappointing weather-wise but also tinged with sadness at the sudden loss of Ann Cook, a stalwart of the Ladies section and supporter of mixed golf. Our sympathy and thoughts are with Peter and his family at this time. I am also sad to report that another long standing member and former Head of House, Bob Watson, is seriously ill with a recurring heart problem. Again our thoughts and best wishes go to Bob and his family.

As for our wonderful summer weather, the wind, rain, fog and rough has made the Golf Course very challenging, or as some would say 'very difficult'. I must congratulate those of you who have managed to reduce your handicaps over the last month or so, while those of us mere mortals continue to build up our point ones every competition, we would say that you must have played exceptional golf or been very lucky.

We have played several of our Open Competitions, the Men's Team Rumble proved to be a very good day with the Team of Mike G Price, Jim Dossetter and their guests from Worthing, Peter Gobel and David Williams winning the day from my Team of Ian Hawes with our guests from Haywards Heath, Alex Mackenzie and Bruce Wheeler. The Men's Invitation was won by George Eves and his guest Peter Dray from Highwoods. The

Seniors Open was won by our own David Hackett while the re-established MacDonald Thistle Open was won by Julian Deans.

I had to miss the Club Championship due to my mother's ninetieth birthday celebrations but I was pleased to see that one of my ex-pupils, Phil Hubble, finally achieved his goal of becoming Club Champion, well done and well deserved Phil. (See Report on page 7)

We are the current holders of the Jack Squirrel Trophy and in the first leg at Mannings Heath we came away with only a 5 point deficit and I am hopeful that we can make that up in the home leg in August to retain the Trophy. We gained a good half from our match against Puttenham but in the Mid Sussex League we lost 5½ - 4½ to Ifield, it would seem that again we are destined to be contesting the fifth place in the League with them.

The Fund Raising Day proved very successful and it was very good to see the Club House really full. It is a big THANK YOU to all who supported the Event and especially all those involved in the organisation to make it such a success. Congratulations to the winning Team Lew Smith, Frank Dennis, Bob Foster, Ross Twine, Tim Gleave and Steve Blake who eventually donated their prize money back to the Fund, as did the other placed teams. To

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MEMBERS CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Leave in the Office with the Secretary or in an envelope in the foyer marked for the attention of Alf Bickham / Newsletter or send Alf an Email message to his Email address of: alf@abickham.freemove.co.uk or to make contact by telephone, call him at home, Tel. No. 01444.242101

CAPTAINS REPORT (Continued)

..... date the Day raised just under £5000, with Friends of Pyecombe donating £2500 and the Management Committee approving a similar amount from Club Funds we have more than enough to purchase the Green Iron and have some left for Course improvements.

Three rounds of the Summer Champagne Golf Challenge have been played combining golf, food and Football, although we could do with more support, the football, the semi-final and final of the Champions League and the European Championship, England v Sweden provided a very exciting atmosphere in the Club House. Watch out and join in with the next round coming soon.

The Sussex Pubs Golf Challenge was a very good, if a little drawn out Event (I will not complain about slow play again). In very windy conditions the Team from the Downs Hotel, Woodingdean won the day. It is thanks to Jason for organising this Event and to the sponsors Harveys of Lewes and W J King of Horsham.

The P@VIT & Exclusive Golf Teams are progressing through the Plate Competitions. The P@VIT Team easily beat Bognor at home and now play Hassocks at home, while the Exclusive Team beat Foxbridge and now play at West Chiltington. Our best wishes go with both Teams to continue their successful runs.

As I move into the latter stages of my Captaincy I hope for more settled and warmer summer weather as I organise the Gala Day, Chris White Trophy and Captain's Day, The Charlie Beamish Trophy on the weekend of the 4th and 5th August. These events are open to ALL MEMBERS and on the Gala Day, the Saturday, members guests are very welcome. The Gala Day is £10 per head (£40 per team of four players), details and tee time sign-up sheets are displayed in the Club House. I look forward to seeing you all on those Days.

David Schwartz

A Very Warm Welcome to Pyecombe Golf Club

During May and June I have welcomed the following new members:-

John Jordan	Juho Jumppaner	Luca Oliver (Junior)
Viv Woodcock-Downey	Adrian Bayley	Paul Drake
Glen Brackenbury	Vincent Gould	James Garth
Tom Robinson	Tim Terry	Lee Browne
Graeham Williamson	Matthew Bament	

If you meet them on the Course or in the Clubhouse I am sure you will make them most welcome. I hope they will enjoy our Course and facilities for a very long time.

David Schwartz

LADIES SECTION

Life has been a bit frantic I'm afraid, and now at the beginning of July 2012 its time for Up and Downs again. Where does the time go, it seems like only yesterday I was doing the last news letter, I must be having a good time?

The sudden and unexpected death of Anne Cook came as a big shock to everyone, she will be sadly missed by all her friends at Pyecombe.

The Spring meeting went well with Aileen winning the 1st Scratch (Beeches Cup), with Jo in 2nd place. Aileen also won the 1st Handicap (Norman Cup) and the lowest number of putts (Thwaites Tankard) well done Aileen, a big achievement.

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LADIES SECTION (Continuation)

The Presidents Cup was won by Vi Auchterlonie and Myself, I must have had a good partner. The prizes and trophy for this event were presented by president Reg.

The weather as we know has not been at its best for this time of year. The strong winds and heavy rain, has made golfing rather difficult, but the course has been in very good condition, considering all the rain which has certainly made the rough grow !!! I am just preparing for my Lady Captain's day on Tuesday 3rd July, Just hope the weather holds out, with maybe a little sunshine, or is that too much to ask for, so we can all have a Fun Day.

Janice Hawes Lady Captain

The President reflects

By the time you read this we shall have started the second half of the year – time is flying by as usual! The summer Club competitions are well under way and a number of County events have come and gone. The excellent weekly online Pyecombe newsletter produced by Alan Davey and his colleagues in the Office keeps you updated (and much amused!) far more regularly on happenings than Ups & Downs ever could. Nevertheless, I would like to just mention a few familiar names. Those of you who have mobile phones (hands up anyone who hasn't!) and are technically minded, will know that 3G relates to the 3rd generation of standards for mobile phones – however I would argue that the 3 G's stand for something else – three individuals who recently made quite an impact on the County scene. I refer, of course, to the Greenfields. Aileen has long been successful at County level and this year she was joined by husband Trevor (who is the current County Captain) and son Matt in qualifying for the final stages of their respective Scratch Amateur County competitions. Aileen reached the semi final of her event before going out at the first play off hole. Trevor also went out at the 19th hole at the quarter final stage of the men's comp and Matt reached the semi final only to bow out at the 18th despite getting a par. I think this is the first time we have had three players from Pyecombe reach the final stages. All three distinguished themselves and put Pyecombe well and truly on the County map. Well done you three!

It was a pity that Trevor and Matt had to miss our Club Championship due to the County event. The winner, the very popular Phil Hubble played magnificent golf in carding 73 and 72 in gale force winds that literally blew the rest of the field away. One can't help feeling that no one would have beaten Phil that weekend.....!

Finally, I was much relieved that the sun shone on the Ladies President's Trophy competition day – it usually rains on Tuesdays doesn't it?!! The winners were the Lady Captain Jan Hawes and an occasional golfer with a long name. Below is a photo of the triumphant couple – I am not sure what Jan's partner is thinking about! Do I hear cries of fix?! Never!



Reg Auchterlonie

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It is pleasing to report that a great deal of effort is going on behind the scenes to modernise your Club and prepare for the future. Included is project Xibo, which will improve communication to members and visitors. Xibo is a digital signage option, centrally managed by our staff and distributed to different screens around our Clubhouse. The software is free. The screens and control box have been donated. We have therefore at minimal cost a solution to impress our visitors and keep members updated.

It is around this time of year that your Management Committee's activity becomes extra busy. We review in detail our expenditure so far this year and review in outline our potential expenditure for the next year. This will help our deliberations in setting next year's subscription.

Our membership is comparable with last year, but the mix amongst the various categories indicates that income will be under that achieved in previous years. The up side is that our green fee income is up compared with budget and previous years. This is encouraging given the excessive rain we have experienced of late. Other course closures twinned with less than ideal conditions underfoot may have helped.

A tight control of our outgoings is being maintained, however our Bar & Catering margins are a slight concern. In addition there could well be some other cost factors to consider next year.

During the last month we had a successful fund raising day going towards developing and improving your course. There have been positive comments as well as negative comments. Clearly not all members agree with the approach. The sum raised was in the order of £4500, which was a great figure and is a sum we would not have without that fund raising day. The lottery, with next year's subscription as the prize, is still open and you are encouraged to further help your Club. Again this approach is not without its detractors. A number of people are working hard for the good of your Club and I would ask those that find the approach less than satisfactory to come forward with some alternatives.

From April until the end of June our course and the surrounding area received the highest rainfall since records began. This has certainly made the grass grow. If I can take you back some 18 months we were experiencing a dry winter, the Amazone had been used on the rough and it was severely cut back in order to create wispy rough. We then entered a very dry spring, the rough didn't grow and playing conditions were less than ideal as balls scooted off into the undergrowth. The decision for the winter just past was to ease back a little with the Amazone, particularly in certain areas (the rough to the right of the 2nd fairway for instance). The decision looked sound, particularly as March was warm and dry. Then the deluge started and all the best-laid plans look foolhardy. The exceptional wet spell has meant additional grass cutting way above the norm. Our course is not alone in this and if you visit other courses you will find we are all in the same boat. I know from bitter experience that it is difficult, but enjoy the course with its good definition and changing characteristics.

The Management Committee have reviewed the number of reserved car spaces allocated committee members and have agreed that not all are required or necessary. During August the car park will be re-lined to improve parking and following that reserved spaces will be reduced and will only apply to the following people:

Captain	Lady Captain	Managing Secretary
Professional	Late Night Bar attendant	and one for a designated person

The President, Chairman, Vice-Captain, Immediate Past Captain, Treasurer and Lady Secretary have agreed to the release of their assigned space. Seven spaces presently reserved are therefore being made available for general parking.

Len North

HOUSE REPORT

Just a brief report to say that with the support of the office we continue to try to maintain the clubhouse and its surroundings to an acceptable standard. Work continues on the alarm and emergency systems making them fully functional and effective. Next month will see the relining of the car park. This has been timed to be done when the work on the Green's is carried out. There will be some disruption to parking over a couple of days. Please contact me with any suggestions, complaints etc as this will assist the committee formulate next year's plans.

Chris Openshaw
Head of House.

Cyril Blake Report Etcetera

(Extract from Office newsletter 27th June 2012)

It was heartbreak again for the Cyril Blake boys. Worthing, who had beaten us comprehensively in the final last year, had home advantage in this year's quarter final. With all matches evenly poised, it was only in the final stretch that Worthing gained the upper hand. A defeat for Duncan Campbell and David Jagger on the 16th green was balanced out as Keith Gorringer and Paul Cook found the recipe for success, winning on the last. Next up, Mick Green and Alan Davey failed to read crucial birdie putts on 17 and 18 and fell to a last putt defeat! It was all down to George Eves and Peter Charman, the result a 3-1 defeat! Bad luck chaps, next year maybe?

In the Mid Sussex League match against Ifield, Pyecombe tumbled to another defeat, although again margins were small.

So to the sharp shooting Colts. 'Logans Heroes', travelled to Cottesmore and continued their most recent form falling to a 5.5 to 0.5 defeat. One bright bit of news was that legendary big hitter Lew Smith recorded the longest drive, such a shame it was on a par 3. Cahel notes 'the Colts travel to West Hove and will be hoping to put an end to the away defeats'; (Man Sec note - presumably all their remaining matches are at home!)

Men's County Scratch Team Event

(Extract from an Office newsletter)

A thrilling but ultimately disappointing day' would best sum up events at Copthorne in the Men's County Scratch Team event. The best that Pyecombe could muster against the best of Copthorne proved an intriguing match. A one point deficit at lunch after the morning foursomes, proved crucial and despite Trevor (who won both his matches) and my (Alan Davey) best efforts to rally the troops, the team only managed a 4 - 4 score in the afternoon singles. Bad luck boys.... best have a run in the plate then!!

And so to Bognor, where the Category 2 and Category 3 players played away in the first round of the County Exclusive Golf Competition. The result a 2.5 - 1.5 defeat....best have a run in the plate then!! So all eyes on Monday's Cyril Blake Team to see if the dinner service collection would gather further momentum. This team, that were losing finalists in the County Seniors Foursomes event 2011, faced a Beaufort Park Team boasting handicaps between 15 and 28...have you played there?

3 thrashings, 2 for, 1 against, left just the deciding match on the course and with the mesmerick swing of Peter Charman, accompanied by 'big man in a small body', Neil Beard Neilson, a win in a tense encounter down the last. Well done chaps.

ON THE COURSE MAY/JUNE

We have now (3rd July) taken delivery of the much heralded turf iron and will be putting it to use immediately. There will be a certain amount of experimentation by Simon Wells within the first few weeks of use to ascertain how to gain the most benefit from the machine on our greens. We would appreciate any feedback on greens quality, which we can hopefully attribute to operations carried out. Once again, a big thank you to all members who have supported the fundraising efforts and to 'The Friends of Pyecombe' for their contribution.

Path works by the greenstaff are on hold at present until late summer, as they are concentrating all efforts on course presentation (cutting etc), due to the exceptionally heavy growth on the course. To support the greenstaff our Captain is organizing another volunteer group on the 25th July, to rake loose debris and shell the path from the 8th Green to the 9th tee. For those who feel this may be a bit heavy going, we are in need of help to remove Ragwort from the rough also.

Please see Captain's board for details and please sign up.

Moving on to the highly contentious issue of the rough. When I think of some of the reasons I choose to play at Pyecombe, scenery, wildness, remoteness, I look around the course at present and feel it fulfills those criteria admirably, it looks the part of a true downland course with the swaying rough providing wonderful definition throughout the course, but obviously providing a tough penalty when straying from the fairway or semi.

Our management of the rough is I believe a balanced attempt to both live with and control nature's wildness. We need rough to provide penalty for errant shots, definition for a downland course and to encourage flora and fauna, but do not want it too wild. To achieve the latter we scarify the rough in February, an annual operation, decreasing available nutrients, so as to encourage wispy growth. The last couple of years we have experienced dry conditions and suffered little growth and resorted to measures such as the net on the 2nd to catch balls. This year we left that area due to complaint about balls bouncing down into the trees previously. With the strong growing conditions experienced this year the rough has flourished everywhere, providing a tough penalty, compounded even further by the recent continual windy conditions. We are not alone in this, with most courses in a similar condition.

We do not possess equipment to cut and collect the rough at Pyecombe nor have available manpower to do so. With very strong growth at present, all time is taken cutting areas where our ball is supposed to be, greens, aprons, fairways and semi, etc. We are however looking at costs and logistics for some limited rough management.

On a personal note, as a mid handicap golfer, I believe the rough has highlighted the shortcomings in my own game with a vengeance, making me realize that for most of the year we play a very open course, where poor shots suffer very little penalty. Playing a downland course I believe, entails adapting our game to a myriad of conditions, hard ground where bump and runs are order of the day, wet conditions where one can hold greens with ease, drought conditions where little or no rough prevail and the course may play easier, playing low shots in wind and also the conditions we have at present where it is more difficult and brain prevails over brawn. I often hear our course referred to as a Downland Gem, at present we are seeing another facet of that gem. We need to adapt our game and endeavour to stay out of the rough by whatever strategy needed. I don't suppose I will be bemoaning the rough any less than many of my fellow golfers during coming weeks, I will also be stocking up on budget golf balls, just in case!

Happy Golfing

Gary Hann
Chair of Green

Club Championship Report

The weather on the first day of the club championship, Saturday 9th June, was very windy with gusts of up to 40 mph. This made it all the more remarkable that Phil Hubble managed to shoot a 73, closely followed by Stephen Daly's 74. One's heart must go out to Alan Davey who stood on the 17th tee at level par only to double-bogey the last two holes for a 75.

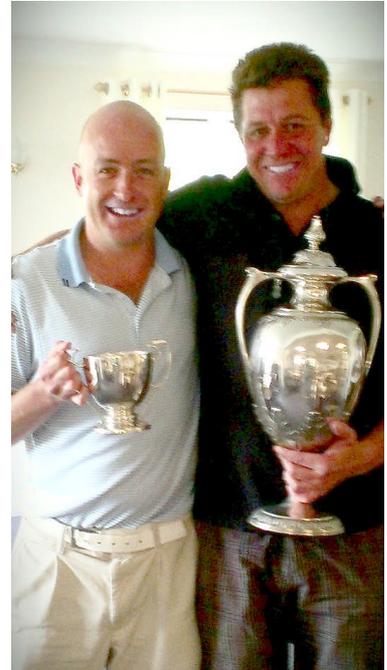
The overall winner of the club championship receives the **Campion Cup** for achieving the lowest **gross scores** and the player returning the lowest **net scores** over the two days is awarded the **Warren Cup**.

In the second round played on the following day, Sunday 10th, the best rounds were returned by the following:

1st - Julian Deans	70 - net 67
2nd - Steve Bunt	78 - net 67
3rd - Duncan Scott	71 - net 69
4th - Andrew Foot	74 - net 69
5th - Dave Lodge -	84 - net 69.

Over the two days the best cards returned had the following gross scores:

1st Phil Hubble	73 + 72 = 145
Club Champion	
2nd Julian Deans	80 + 70 = 150
3rd Duncan Scott	80 + 71 = 151
3rd Steven Daly	74 + 77 = 151



Cup Winners
L/R: Phil Hubble, Steve Bunt

This year the best **net** scores in the **Warren Cup** competition, the Handicap championship, were:

1st Steve Bunt	73 + 67 - 140 (hcp 11) Winner
2nd Phil Hubble	71 + 70 - 141 (hcp 2)
3rd Steven Daly	69 + 72 - 141 (hcp 5)

Other competitions that took place over the same weekend were the **Mistlin & Chapman Cups** played on Saturday 9th June over 18 holes. These were for 16-handicappers and higher. The Mistlin Cup is a **gross** competition and the Chapman Cup a **net** competition. The leading scores were:

Mistlin Cup			Chapman Cup		
1st Neil Janes	90 gross		1st David Champion	95 (net 72)	
2nd David Tibble	91		2nd David Tibble	91 (net 73)	
3rd David Foster	92		3rd Neil Janes	90 (net 74)	

The ladies also played a competition during the championship weekend, their (inaptly named) **Summer Cup**. This competition saw **Alison Vermes** scoring a gross 85 (net 77) to win the cup, defeating Jan Brittin by 2 shots.

L/R: Jan Brittin, Alison Vermes and playing partner Annie Prior.



PGC – SOCIAL SCENE

Umbrellas up, Waterproofs on, Summer is really here!

It wasn't the weather that put the punters off the proposed "Beetle Drive" on a Saturday early in May, it was bad planning by the Football Association. Fancy changing the FA Cup Final to an evening Kick-Off. It may be a convenient excuse for the cancellation or perhaps it didn't capture the member's imagination as we thought it would?

More importantly Round 2 of the Champagne Challenge was enhanced with the stunning defeat of Bayern Munich by Chelsea in the Champions league final. Oh and yours truly won the evenings Champagne. Thanks go to Nigel's team for serving up a tasty Chilli Con Carne & Rice supper, all swilled down with favourite tipples. With two "Holes in One" on the day and another to come on the Sunday, the vibe in the Clubhouse was good.

Monday 4th June - "Fun(d) Day", "Jubilee Day" call it what you will, was a fantastic day for the club. Much money was raised throughout a day of well organised spontaneity. Well done to all organizers and participants alike. The Buzz in the clubhouse continued through to the club championships, and it was good to see a packed lounge celebrating with the various competition winners.

Round 3 of the Champagne Challenge was played on the day we all started thinking "Just maybe" England can do it. Well after watching England beat Sweden 3-2, two things never change, (1) England will always flatter to deceive us, (2) You can always count on a good Ham, Egg n Chips at the club. Duncan Scott won the Champagne on count back from Graham Farmer. The Eclectic scores will be going up on the board shortly. So with 3 more rounds proposed it's not too late to post a score or three and get involved. Dates will be confirmed shortly.

NOTE – Race night has been moved (Date TBC)

SOCIAL EVENTS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Champagne Supper Challenge Round 4 – Mid July (TBC) Sussex CCClub- T20
- Champagne Supper Challenge Round 5 – Fri 27th July (Olympic opening ceremony)
- All Day "Hog Roast" – Sat – 4th Aug
- Captains Cream Tea – Sun – 5th Aug
- Olympic Barbeque – Sun – 12th Aug
- Champagne Supper Challenge Last Round (6) – Fri 17th Aug
- Comedy Night – Fri 31st Aug

PLEASE ENJOY YOUR PGC

Colin Kemp
Social Secretary

Coping with thick rough

Typical British weather – a mixture of incessant downpours and sunny spells – has led to a fast growth of rough in recent weeks and therefore problems for most golfers.

Escaping from the rough involves a decision making process:

How deep is your ball in the rough and where is it in relation to giving you a reasonable chance to salvage a couple of points on the hole?

Should you throw caution to the wind and try to hack the ball as far as possible towards the green at the risk of finding even more trouble? Or should you perhaps take the cautious approach and get back on the fairway and start again from a better lie?

It's a case of balancing the risk with the likely rewards – or penalties.

If you're lucky enough to find your ball in deep rough you have to consider if you have the right tools and the right technique to get your game back on track at one stroke or take your punishment, find the fairway and maybe drop only one or two shots in the process.

Very often inexperienced players will try to get away with using a club that's poorly suited for the purpose. It's all very well opting for a 4- or 5-iron or hybrid for a shot of 150-160 yards from a good lie, but not from a bad lie in the rough.

If the ball is buried deep in wet, clinging grass, take a club that has plenty of loft and is heavy enough to help cut through to the bottom of the ball – a pitching wedge or sand iron is often the best club for this purpose.

Open the clubface, making allowance for the clubface to close or shut as it makes contact with the grass and re-grip firmly. Position the ball towards the back of your stance and make a steep angle of attack as you strike down towards the bottom of the ball.

The set up and angle of attack will cause the ball to fly on a lower trajectory and as a result, won't carry as far as it normally would. Even if it means playing out sideways or even backwards it's often a better option than trying to propel the ball over too much rough.

There are occasions when the rough is spindly but not so heavy, in which case you can often risk a high lofted wood or hybrid club but, again, slightly open the clubface before re-gripping and allow for a right to left flight as the club closes towards impact.

A number of you that don't hit such a long ball have also been mentioning having difficulty with the carries on the course at the moment. If this is the case, try using a 3 wood for your tee shot or consider replacing your driver with a more lofted one. The slower your club head speed is, the more lofted your driver should be in order to get the ball up in the air and to maximize carry and distance.

Always remember that if you are in the rough, take your punishment and get back into play as soon as you can, presuming you can find it in the first place!

(Continued on next page)

Reasons for having golf lessons.

1. More consistency: Most golfers who come for golf lessons are looking for more consistency. They wonder why they can sometimes hit the perfect shot and the very next swing can propel the ball straight out of bounds. There are no two ways about it, consistency comes with good technique. The better your technique the more consistent you will become. I am often asked “What did I do wrong?” when a bad shot is hit. The truth is that maybe you just weren’t as lucky as on the good shot!
2. Give yourself something to practice: Just hitting balls on the practice ground will simply re-enforce the faults that you have, probably leading to a decrease in performance. Practice make permanent not perfect.
3. Decrease the risks of injuries: Some of the movements that many golfers make are quite unnatural and put considerable strain on the body. I regularly come across people with various ailments, particularly bad backs which are specifically brought on by incorrect movements and set up.
4. Get rid of a repetitive fault: Most of you probably have a destructive shot that continuously rears its head, whether it is a sliced tee shot or a thinned chip. A lesson and a bit of practice could eradicate it and make the game a great deal more enjoyable.

Lessons are available on both weekdays and weekends. Pop in for a chat, we’re here to help.

Jason

Sussex Pub Challenge

(Report to Press)

The inaugural running of the Sussex Pubs Golf Challenge at Pyecombe Golf Club held on Saturday 30th June saw 17 teams of 4 representing pubs throughout Sussex, competing for the first prize of a barrel of beer and a tour of the brewery at W J Kings in Horsham. The event proved a great success and was won by Gary Cager, Brett Rowland, Roy Wheeler and Andy Tilley representing the Downs Hotel in Brighton. The White Admiral, Brighton came 2nd, the Duke of York, Sayers Common were 3rd and Quench from Burgess Hill finished 4th. The leading pair on the day was Gary and Brett from the Downs Hotel who picked up a second Barrel of beer, this time of Harveys Best Bitter, ensuring that it would be a good night back at their Pub. Thanks should go to W J King and Harveys for sponsoring the event, the latter also providing some refreshments out on the course keeping the golfers’ spirits up.

1st Downs Hotel, Brighton
2nd White Admiral, Brighton
3rd Duke of York, Sayers Common
4th Quench, Burgess Hill

Leading pair, Gary Cager and Brett Rowland – Downs Hotel

Nearest the pin 5th Chris Smith – Quench
Nearest the pin 8th Mick Buckman - Duke of York
Nearest the pin in 2 18th Darren Deacon – The Bugle
Longest Drive 9th Toby Willis – Duke of York.
