



LANCASHIRE SUPER SENIORS' GOLF TEAM

Secretary

Team Captain

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TALKING SENIORS' GOLF: SPECIAL EDITION 4: MAY 2020 *The Newsletter of Lancashire Super Seniors*

As the Covid-19 public health emergency continues to evolve, we have seen an earlier than expected return to golf, albeit on a restricted basis – but at least we are able to play again – unless still in self-isolation for the duration.

Our Working Party, comprising Clive Hastie, Jeff Clements, Paul Stanley, Roger Cox, Ken Stafford, Rory Callan, Stuart Bourn and Keith Hick, has reconvened with a Zoom Videocon to look at what options there are for the 2020 season. Agenda items included the following:

- Identifying potential LSS Team Captain candidates to succeed Keith Gardner
- Introducing the Keith Gardner Memorial Trophy as the identity of the annual pre-season day at Stand GC; purchase of a suitable trophy
- Consider 2020 season options re continuation/deferral of fixtures in light of the Covid-19 public health emergency
- Introduce a 'Bubble Golf' format on a trial basis for one match (see more below)
- Securing 2021 fixtures
- LSS Accounts

Across the wider domain of golf, it is accepted these are unprecedented times for everyone, from club members concerned about family and friends, to golf club staff worried about their livelihood and well-being. At times like these being a member of a private member's club takes on a whole new meaning. Each of our respective clubs have published updates explaining how the challenges of Covid-19 are being addressed. More than ever before, it is imperative we support our club. Of equal importance, for those who enjoy playing representational matches across Lancashire and further afield, such as ourselves, your support and continued involvement with LSS is vital.

At some stage, sooner or later – we all hope the former – Covid-19 will gradually fade in the memory. This will allow us to return to action, both locally and across the wider realm.

Celebrations of a return to some sort of normality will be many as, once again, we embark upon our collection of fixtures and rekindle friendships made over many years.

This Newsletter is helping to underpin our LSS values and provide continuity until a return to full action is sanctioned.

In the meantime, our Working Party will continue to monitor the situation and keep everyone fully informed of progress.

KEITH GARDNER PRESENTATION MONTAGE:

Many thanks to everyone who have contributed towards the cost of Keith's montage. Contributions, which are suggested at a minimum of £5, are welcomed from LSS players and may be forwarded to LSS Treasurer, Ken Stafford, either by bank transfer (Sort code: 09-01-28 account no. 92196819 Mr K J Stafford) or cheque. For those wishing to send a cheque, Ken's address is: 'Garthmore', 5 Henshaw Woods, Todmorden, West Yorks OL14 6RA.

We promised to keep you entertained during the current 'pause' in playing action, so read on:

As everyone will perhaps recall, Special Edition 2 of our Newsletter carried features by Howard Bennett and Paul, the 'Singing Caddie' Stevens. This month, we continue with more contributions from Howard and Paul, together with a contribution by Barry Ward. Barry, a world-renowned golf journalist, golf magazine editor and author of a plethora of golf travel books, was a fellow member of Hesketh prior to a career move which took him to pastures anew. Now living in the beautiful county of Rutland, Barry has travelled the world and we are delighted in welcoming him as a

contributor to our Newsletters – beginning with his recollections of the 1961 Open Championship – his first brush with championship golf - lead on Barry.....

Sheer Golfing Magic at Royal Birkdale, penned by Barry Ward:

As a golf writer I attended many Open Championships over the years, my first while I was London Sports Editor for the Sydney Daily Telegraph. The brief: to cover all events in Britain and Europe in which Aussies were involved.

Thus, only a few days after taking up the post, in July 1961 I was dashing to Lancashire where I found myself at Royal Birkdale covering the Open Championship and rubbing shoulders with the great players of the day. I thought all my birthdays had come at once! It was an eye-opening experience for a tyro golfer and two of those legendary players gave me an insight into the realms of the game at the highest level; they were scenes that have stayed with me to this day.

The first involved Australia's Kel Nagle, the defending champion. I was soaked and frozen but I tracked him, enthralled, as he crafted what was arguably one of the greatest rounds seen in the Open. When few in the field could better 80 in conditions that were close to unplayable, Kel returned a 75. In rain and gale force winds, on many tees blasting across the line of flight, he seemed to have the ball on a string, shaping it this way and that, leaning it into the wind to keep it on-line, and at no time do I recall him hitting it more than 20 feet off the ground. It was pure golfing magic. Kel hit off in mid-morning but around mid-afternoon the tide turned and, as usual, the wind changed direction and dropped to a stiff breeze. Playing conditions eased and Bob Charles came in with a 68 to take the overnight lead.

The other memorable example, one since marked by a plaque that is still in situ, came courtesy of the legendary Arnold Palmer. I was close to him when he produced the moment and the shot of the tournament. Also nearby was Henry Cotton, who described it as "the bravest shot I've ever seen."

It came on the 15th, now the 16th, in the final round. Arnie was on the rampage, in the hunt for his first Open title, and level with Dai Rees at the top of the leader board when his tee shot on the demanding par four faded on the wind and came to rest in deep rough. Disaster beckoned. Not only was his ball in wet, clinging rough it was almost touching a thumb-thick sapling.

With the green still some 160 yards away, through a cross wind and up-hill to boot, most players in the field doubtless would have opted for a sideways pitch out to safety, hoping perhaps for a bogey at worst. Not Arnie. He took his six iron and, his huge hands a blur, he gave it everything he had, removing the sapling and a doormat-sized patch of rough in the process. The ball finished maybe 20 feet from the flag and a safe two putt par left the great man in the lead. Up ahead, Rees dropped a stroke on the 17th; Arnie held fast to win by one.



Harry Tunnickcliffe, 2020 LUGC President, SDGA Chairman and Millenium Captain of West Lancashire GC, inspects the plaque on Royal Birkdale's current 15th fairway, dedicated to the famous 6 iron shot by Arnold Palmer en route to winning the 1961 Open Championship.

My notes and the printed report of this momentous championship have long been lost in my travels but those two events have been indelibly etched upon my memory. The one involving Arnie, indeed, became significant in the sense that his charismatic playing style and his spectator appeal rejuvenated the Open. So much so that the classical Birkdale links required modification to better accommodate the huge galleries he attracted.

Spectator movement had created problems, both of crowd vision and mobility, so it was deemed apposite to modernise the links, a project undertaken by F.W. Hawtree, father of Martin and then head of the architectural family which has long been associated with the club.

His solution: to re-site several tees, allowing easier movement for the huge galleries who, formerly given freedom of the fairways, were now guided along prescribed routes by a system of constructed pathways and fencing. He also created a new hole, the short 12th, to replace the par three 17th which had been one of the major bottlenecks, and shortened the opening hole for similar reasons.

To off-set this, new tee positions lengthened several holes by between 20 and 60 yards and the par five replacement for the old 17th meant that the finish was now one of the longest in the world's major events, with three of the final four holes in excess of 500 yards.

The results were seamless and successful: the course retained its challenge without blemish and within a decade several major events, and the vast galleries they now attracted, endorsed the Hawtree formula as the correct solution. Indeed, many players regard Birkdale as their favourite Open venue, holding it in similar affection to Muirfield, at once fair, cerebral and technically challenging.

Most current American professionals have acknowledged their debt to Palmer, the first great international player of the modern age. We British are also in his debt and for similar reasons: through his magnetism and dramatic playing persona he transformed the Open Championship into one of the great sporting events; he made the world sit up and take notice.

Arnie's victory at Royal Birkdale in 1961 and at Royal Troon in 1962, and his subsequent Open appearances, brought a vast increase in the number of spectators and a subsequent rise in ticket revenues and prize money. And, having won, he was smitten: he came to love the event and the challenge of links golf and persuaded his fellow US pros that playing in the world's oldest event on our great links was a necessary part of their golfing education, an invaluable addition to their playing CV. Until that time few of their leading players came to the Open more than once, mainly because of the time factor in travelling and qualifying and the minimal rewards. But Arnie built the Open into his playing schedule and his rivals began to follow him over.

A side effect, one still in evidence today, is the constantly escalating prize money prompted by hugely increased revenues from world-wide television that his presence initiated back in the 1960s. So, to my ever-lasting good fortune, my introduction to the Open coincided with Arnie's arrival on the British golfing scene and the transformation, the re-birth if you will, of its principal event. How lucky can you be?

Barry Ward

Next, Paul Stevens vividly remembers his times caddying at St Andrews- and the infamous 17th or 'Road Hole' on the Old Course:

Just a couple of things about the infamous 17th Road Hole!

When I was caddying for the excellent Joe Ozaki in the Dunhill Cup, I was having a drink in the Jigger Inn after the round (having beaten Frank Nobilo quite convincingly) and listening to several of the rookie caddies giving their advice on how to play the road hole correctly (ie line off the tee; direction of the approach shot with many of them wrongly stating that the best way was by going left of the road hole bunker and playing the 3rd shot from the 18th tee. I politely interjected and advised them that they were wrong and that the line off the tee was not that crucial (as long as you did not go too far to the right and out of bounds!). The reason that I gave for this was that playing the 2nd shot from the left hand rough was not critical, as no matter where the pin was cut, that you should not be going for it at any time, unless you were Tony Lema in his victory, who had hit the ball so far down the fairway, that he proceeded to hit a soaring 7 iron onto the green and actually screwed the ball back to the pin!!



Paul with five-times Open Champion, Tom Watson

My explanation was that the 2nd shot should be aimed at the flag pole, well to the right of the green with preferably a slight draw and definitely not a club that would travel the required distance to the pin!

If executed correctly, this should leave a long putt or a pitch and run shot to somewhere close enough to make par. (which is exactly how Joe Ozaki had followed my instructions to the letter to make his 4 and beat Nobilo!)

Upon finishing my explanation to the rookie caddies, a solitary voice from the corner of the room boomed out: "Now there is someone who really knows what he is talking about!" and on looking around, I discovered that the voice was that of legendary St. Andrews caddie, Tip Anderson (of Arnold Palmer fame), who had actually carried Tony Lema to victory in The Open! We were very close friends who shared massive respect for one another.

Having watched Seve execute the plan perfectly on 17 and almost hole his long putt, leaving a tap in 4, the next part of the saga was about to unfurl.

Seve had hit 6 iron from 200 yards (albeit from the left hand rough) but was never going for the pin and went well right. Tom Watson had hit a perfect drive into the fairway (after thinking that he had gone out of bounds!) and was 210 yards from the pin on a slight upslope and was very undecided about his club selection and with no words of advice from his caddie, Alfie Fyles, proceeded to select a 2 iron!

The ball soared into the stratosphere and landed on the green and went straight over the back and was indeed very fortunate not to clear the wall and finish out of bounds. As my dear friend Barry Ward writes: "The rest, as they say is history!"

People remark about the prodigious length of Seve but Watson was also enormously long and when I caddied for him later that year at Royal Melbourne, to win the "5th major" at that time, he admitted to me (ad verbatim), that he had hit 4 clubs too many! Alfie never caddied for Tom Watson again!

Although I was delighted to see my close friend Seve (who had asked me to caddy for him on numerous occasions) win, I was also very sad not to see one of the finest links golfers ever, Tom Watson, not to complete the Scottish Grand Slam and also win at the Home of Golf and also beat the record of 5 wins by Peter Thomson and thereby equal the record of Harry Vardon, which he should then have beaten at Turnberry in 2009 and become the oldest winner of all time! He would NEVER have got that 8 iron out of my bag on the 18th (which should probably have even been a wedge! or a little 9) but that's another story about not having a true caddie on his bag!

Take care everyone and stay safe and hopefully we may meet again on my after dinner speaking tour in Nov/Dec 2020 and in the future

Yours in Golf

Paul Stevens aka The Singing Caddie

Now, we turn to Howard Bennett's thought-provoking coaching tip:



Howard presenting his coaching evening at Hesketh GC during February 2020

There are many ways to play golf. What method do you teach? What systems did you use to help players develop and reach their potential? These are good questions and there is no simple answer. I was working with individual and different groups, with their own unique mixture of strengths, weaknesses, personalities and physical capabilities. Humans are not perfect and there are many challenges which need to be addressed. Take a look at this short video to see how some people approach their golf.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/4occ886hulcgkcp/Changing%20lives%20through%20the%20power%20of%20golf%20.mp4?dl=0>

Howard will be delighted to answer any questions – please email them to Keith.

LSS SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTERS: We're awaiting your contribution:

The idea is very simple – we plan to keep our Newsletter Special Editions flowing until we once again play with our golfing pals and the many friends we have made across Lancashire and further afield.

So, here we go; the rules are there are no rules, only a few guidelines to help shape our Special Editions, which are:

- Each Special Edition will contain a selection of memories, anecdotes, recollections from your association with golf
- These can typically include highlights from your golfing career as a player or team member
- Great players seen at first-hand, spectacular shots witnessed or an event which left a lasting impression
- Humour
- Photographs, cartoons, drawings and diagrams, either as individual items or in support of your contribution
- And...keeping bang up to date, any amusing stories from our respective 'confined to barracks' experiences

Each edition will also keep everyone up to date with the current fixture situation. As can be seen below. Where a match has TBC alongside, a decision will be taken whether or not to proceed.

OVER TO YOU.....

So, come and share your memories, stories, funnies, or whatever, to help keep us smiling through these trying times and send them to LSS Secretary, Keith...you never know where this might lead.....

In the meantime, stay safe and well for your families and yourselves.

'BUBBLE GOLF':

Assuming there is a continued phased resumption of play, namely initially club members only playing at their home club, this would preclude inter-club etc matches/driving long distances. With this in mind the above 'Bubble Golf' has been conceived as a means of playing LSS matches once golf resumes:

1. Introduce a demi virtual match between LSS and the opposing club/Association etc as follows:
2. LSS and opposing Team Captains select their teams - of 8/10/12-a-side as agreed between them - as normal
3. Each team member plays a nominated round of 18 holes on their own course, full handicap Stableford - in a two ball format, keeping their own score
4. The 18 hole Stableford scores of each respective team pair, played on their own course, are added together for an aggregate team pairing score, with the highest aggregate score declared with winner of that game ie: LSS Player 1 plays 18 holes at Course A while LSS Player 2 plays at Course B. They advise the LSS Team Captain who combines their score for matches 1,2,3,4,5,6. The opposing Club/Association Team Captain also combines his pairings scores. They confer and report back to the LSS Secretary who declares the winner and includes the result in the next Newsletter
5. All play from Yellow tees to avoid any confusion or problems re White tee availability
6. All rounds to be played on or before the original match date and reported to respective team captains, who confer by email, and announce to LSS Secretary

Advantages of the above include continuity, even though the 18 holes are played on different courses and under differing weather/playing conditions. It also gets round the problem of nil socialising pre/post golf and keeps players from LSS and opposing clubs/Association involved until some form of increased activity is sanctioned. It also reduces/negligible risk of cross-infection between players.

This idea came about following the recent talk of 'Bubble' groups of friends/family of up to ten or more being allowed. The term bubble is now being used more widely in various other sports as they look to restart - and it means we get to play competitive golf, albeit with a difference.

Should we decide to adopt it, and our opponents also accept it, our season can be salvaged with something meaningful.

As a first step, LSS Secretary, Keith, will explore this option and report the response in the June Newsletter.

2020 LANCASHIRE SUPER SENIORS MATCHES & EVENTS:

Match No	Date	Match	Venue	Mgr	Cancelled: YES/NO
1	16 th April	Pre-season get-together	Stand GC	JVC	<u>Yes</u>
2	29 th April	Formby Hall Captain's team	Formby Hall G&CC	KCH	<u>Yes</u>
3	12 th May	Heysham Seniors	Heysham GC	JVC	<u>Yes</u>
4	19 th May	Southport & DGA Seniors*	Southport Old Links GC	KCH	<u>Yes</u>
5	28 th May	NWMGA*	Worsley GC	RC	<u>Yes</u>
6	25 th June	Davyhulme Park Seniors	Davyhulme Park GC	KCH	<u>TBC</u>
7	7 th July	Bentham GC Seniors	Bentham GC	KCH	<u>TBC</u>
8	23 rd July	Isle of Man Super Seniors* (Irish Sea Golf Challenge Match)	Heysham GC	RC	<u>TBC</u>
9	27 th July	South Lancs GASeniors* /Ashton-in-Makerfield Seniors)	Ashton-in-Makerfield GC	JVC	<u>TBC</u>
10	4 th August	Formby GC Seniors	Formby GC	KCH	<u>TBC</u>
11	10 th August	Morecambe GC Seniors	Morecambe GC	JVC	<u> </u>
12	17 th August	Cumbria Super Seniors*	TBC	RC	<u> </u>
13	25 th August	Denton GC Seniors	Denton GC	JVC	<u> </u>
14	7 th September	Bolton GA Seniors*	Hart Common GC	RC	<u> </u>
15	10 th Sept	LSS Palatine Trophy	Davyhulme Park	KCH	<u> </u>
16	15 th Sept	Silverdale GC Seniors	Silverdale GC	JVC	<u> </u>
17	21 st Sept	Clitheroe GC Seniors	Clitheroe GC	JVC	<u> </u>
18	8 th Oct	End of season competition	Ashton-in-Makerfield GC	KCH	<u> </u>

* Scratch match

Event Manager code: RC: Rory Callan JVC: Jeff Clements KCH: Keith Hick

Note: Following the recent demise of Bury GA, the match planned for 9th July at Brightmet GC, is cancelled

Best regards,

Keith Hick
Secretary
Lancashire Super Seniors
 20th May 2020

