



LANCASHIRE SUPER SENIORS' GOLF TEAM

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TALKING SENIORS' GOLF: SPECIAL EDITION 8: OCTOBER 2020

The Newsletter of Lancashire Super Seniors

By now, we should all have our new World Handicap Index (WHI) allocated by England Golf/CONGU. Under the current system, I'm 8.7 and my new WHI is 8.6 which means, depending upon the Slope Index of the course I play, I go up or down a shot (or two). Hesketh's Slope is 134 off the white tees, Royal Birkdale is 142 and West Lancashire 144 (unsurprisingly, the toughest in the area, if not Lancashire as a whole). So, as with with everyone, I look forward to receiving an additional allowance, or reduction, depending upon the Slope comparison. Although there was an alleged glitch in the system immediately following release relating to scores being recorded from the 'wrong' tees, the system goes live from 2 November, so we will all have a new handicap for next year.

It will be interesting to see how our handicaps 'yo-yo' during future matches. When I explained the new system to Sandie: WHI x Slope divided by 113, Sandie said she was relieved her game was tennis, "Our handicap system is much simpler: Love/Advantage 15, 30 or 40 for each game, depending upon who you play against."

As can be seen from the 2021 Fixture List below, next year is building nicely and everyone hopes by next Spring we will be in a better position than now for a return to action.

2021 LANCASHIRE SUPER SENIORS MATCHES & EVENTS:

Match No	Date	Match	Venue	Mgr	Availability: YES/NO
1	15 th April	Pre-season get-together	Stand GC	JVC	_____
2	TBC (April)	Formby Hall Captain's team	Formby Hall G&CC	KCH	_____
3	11 th May	Heysham Seniors	Heysham GC	JVC	_____
4	17 th May	Southport & DGA Seniors*	Southport Old Links GC	KCH	_____
5	TBC (May)	NWMGA*	Worsley GC	JH	_____
6	17 th June	Davyhulme Park Seniors	Davyhulme Park GC	KCH	_____
7	6 th July	Bentham GC Seniors	Bentham GC	KCH	_____
8	22 nd July	Isle of Man Super Seniors* (Irish Sea Golf Challenge Match)	Heysham GC	JH/PH	_____
9	26 th July	South Lancs GASeniors* /Ashton-in-Makerfield Seniors)	Ashton-in-Makerfield GC	JVC	_____TBC
10	3rd August	Formby GC Seniors	Formby GC	KCH	_____
11	9 th August	Morecambe GC Seniors	Morecambe GC	JVC	_____
12	TBC (August)	Cumbria Super Seniors*	TBC	JH	_____
13	24 th August	Denton GC Seniors	Denton GC	JVC	_____
14	6 th September	Bolton GA Seniors*	Bolton GC	JH	_____TBC
15	9 th Sept	LSS Palatine Trophy	Davyhulme Park	KCH	_____
16	14 th Sept	Silverdale GC Seniors	Silverdale GC	JVC	_____TBC
17	TBC (Sept)	Clitheroe GC Seniors	Clitheroe GC	JVC	_____
18	TBC (October)	End of season competition	Ashton-in-Makerfield GC	KCH	_____

* Scratch match

NB: Matches shown in bold type have dates and venues secured; Remaining dates shown in regular type are 2020 dates/venues and included for reference only

Team Manager code:

JVC: Jeff Clements

KCH: Keith Hick

JH: John Howard

PH: Peter Hampsey

Qualifying criteria & playing format:

- Age 55 and over on 1st January 2021

- Handicap: Notional handicaps 5 – 10 (However, this does not preclude any Category 1 rated players wishing to play in the Lancashire Super Seniors matches)
- 18 holes scratch or handicap match play; 12-a-side

SENIORS' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2021:

ENGLISH SENIORS' CHAMPIONSHIP:

LANCASHIRE COUNTY SENIORS CHAMPIONSHIP:

EGU NORTHERN COUNTIES SENIORS' CH'SHIP:

BRITISH SENIORS CHAMPIONSHIP

NORTHERN COUNTIES SENIORS QUALIFIER

SENIORS OPENS 2021 :

Frank Stableford Seniors' Open

John Glover Seniors Open

Sir Michael Bonallack Seniors Open

Rut Niblick Seniors Open

Manchester Seniors Open Trophy

Gordon Edwards Seniors Open

David Marsh Seniors Open

Date:

TBC

TBC

20/21 July

TBC

31 Aug

Date:

TBC

7th July

TBC

TBC

TBC

TBC

TBC

Venue:

TBC

TBC

TBC

TBC

TBC

Venue:

Wallasey GC

Morecambe GC

Clitheroe GC

Pleasington GC

Manchester GC)

Bromborough GC

S&A GC

LSS KIT ORDERS:

Team Captain, Clive, advises orders are taking longer to process owing to short working due to the virus, so to anyone who is awaiting delivery, please be patient.

RAMBLINGS OF A WEST LANCASHIRE GOLF CLUB MEMBER:

Harry Tunnicliffe, 2020 President of the Lancashire Union of Golf Clubs and SDGA Chairman, looks back on a half century of membership at Lancashire's oldest golf club, founded in 1873. Here, we continue serializing Harry's 'ramblings':



Harry Tunnicliffe (second left) together with Keith Hick and Keith Gardner and the 2018 Captain of Bury GC

3. The Course

I was lucky enough to have played the pre 1964 Course as a visitor. Hard to remember as it was nearly 60 years ago, but there are still a few reminders some old 'brick' pathways and if you look backwards from the 15th tee you can see what was once a dog-leg right par 4 playing into the trees. From that point, a short hole was played towards the railway and the next hole ran alongside the railway wall, joining up with the current 15th fairway and utilised the rest of the hole as it is now to make a difficult Par 5.

The Golf course was very different when I joined to what it is now. The long-standing Greens Chairman at the time, Pat Murphy, insisted on covering all the fairways with 6 inches of mushroom compost every Autumn, which was horrible to play on for weeks afterwards. Even 40 years on we still get the odd mushroom surfacing on the fairways. He also arranged for the building of several long, airplane runway style tees so that the tee boxes could be moved up and down to ease the wear. This programme was just completed when the new CONGU handicapping system was brought in and competition tees could only be within 10 yards of a fixed yardage marker. We have just about got rid of the last 'runway' tee now! Pat was also responsible for the planting of fir trees, behind the 6th, and by the 11th tee. They never really grew, but manfully tried for 40 years until their demise 2 or 3 years ago when the one on the 6th was dug up and the one on the 11th was cut away to make way for a new back tee.

Major changes occurred around then. A huge bank of soil was put in place between the sea and the course stretching from the practice ground to the 4th hole (previously you could see the sea (and feel the wind)

from most of the 2nd and 4th fairways). The company who undertook the work was owned by one of the members, Peter Wynn Jones who left the Club not long afterwards and joined Royal Liverpool. He took umbrage when he turned up to the Club wearing the most expensive leather tailored jacket I have ever seen, only to be confronted via the Steward by one old member wearing a patched Smoking Jacket (seemingly older than the man himself) covered in stains. Peter was told that he was improperly dressed and asked to leave the bar. He never came back.

Other major changes included the arrival of the hills on the left of the 5th, a new mound built between the 11th and 15th greens (yes, you could look across and see people putting on the other green). The bank left of the pathway from 11 to 12 (where incidentally you can see some brave gorse bushes still surviving 20 years after being planted during Graham Dudley's tenure as Greens Chairman) and the big bank on the left of 12 were 'new'. Obviously many remember the 13th being remodelled (see next para.) but do you remember the 16th having a pit on the right (similar to the 4th) before the big bank was 'dumped' over it. At 200 yards, it was just the right length to catch my drives (I know, only 200 yards, but the equipment was a lot poorer then!) Incidentally the 16th green is in its' 4th position since I joined, and the 6th green is on its 5th design.

The 18th has also had attention. Two bunkers, positioned on the right (near the pond) were filled in and two new ones built on the left. The larger of the two resembled part of a well-endowed female from a distance, and as the barmaid at the time herself was particularly well endowed, it became known as Emma's Bunker. I don't know if Emma ever knew about it, but I'm sure she wouldn't have minded.

Inevitably the course has been lengthened with the introduction of new 'back' tees and then new 'further back' tees as long hitting has become too bigger part of the game. At some point, we will need to introduce new 'even further back' tees to accommodate 400 yard drives. Please, 'Mr R and A', do something about this soon! The course has continued to change in other ways. In my early days, the 13th didn't have the large mound to the left with the 3 bunkers set into it. This was added many years later. It had 3 long flat bunkers in about the same position as the current ones with no revetting! It was possible to reach the green from there but only with a really good shot. I managed it only a handful of times, but always enjoyed the challenge. Unfortunately, the replacement bunkers took that option away. I often asked John Muir if he could turn to page 2 of the 'Bunker building book' when designing fairway bunkers (as they all seemed to look like greenside bunkers) but never heard his response (as it was always under his breath). Deep down, I knew what it was he was saying.

Bunkers have been changed, added and removed throughout my membership of the Club. Modesty forbids me telling you that I was often referred to as 'the best bunker player in the Club' (usually by myself).

However, in recent times the course architect Donald Steel has added several new ones. I met Donald a few years ago at a County Dinner (he was President of the EGU at the time), introduced myself as a West Lancashire member and asked him if we had ever played together. 'No' came the mystified reply followed by a 'why'. Well I said, how do you know exactly how far I drive the ball. On your suggestion two bunkers have been placed in the middle of the 2nd hole which I hit every time (I am a straight, short hitter) and the one on the left of the 5th always catches me as I hit a running shot rather than a long carry.' I don't think he saw the funny side but more recently, the changes to the 2nd, making it a par 5, solved that driving problem for me. Unfortunately, I now have to negotiate the bunkers with my second shot!

Talking about bunkers, the best bunker shot I remember is Sandy Lyle on the 18th at Augusta to win the Masters. Not that it was the most difficult to execute but because of the circumstances and pressure under which it was made. The strangest shot was by one of my long-time friends Rob Wall on the 18th at West Lancs. Rob always takes a long back-swing in the bunkers and coupled with taking several inches of sand, it usually has the desired result. However, if he doesn't take enough sand !!! Whilst playing in the Tuesday 4-somes, I hit our second shot into the left-hand greenside bunker. Rob took his usual full swing, connected perfectly with the ball and hit it straight over the Clubhouse into the car park. I asked him about retrieving it (it was actually my ball) but he suggested that it should be left where it was and, if it had done any damage, it would be reported on later in the evening. Nobody came forward, and we assumed that it was residing in the back garden of one of the houses in Hall Road West.

Even the rain shelters on the course have changed. Mostly no longer there. There was one at the back of the second green, and I well remember that there used to be one on the left of the path between the 7th green and the 8th Tee. Behind it was always a handy spot for many of us to do the necessary. Even though it is long gone, I still feel a psychological urge to go as I walk past the spot. The shelter by the 12th tee has been transformed from its simple beginnings as a wooden structure into a significant construction, at one point containing a Ladies restroom (why do I always associate the shelters with toilet facilities?) and it is now almost palatial to include a bird sanctuary.

For those of you with fancy yardage calculators, bear a thought for the early days when we didn't have anything at all. West Lancs was quite late in installing 150 yard markers (as the greenkeeper and the

greens chairman etc were against having them) and a group of us Saturday morning golfers managed to get permission to do it ourselves. The posts were obtained by Dave 'skittle' Jones, sadly no longer able to play, but at the time in the timber business. They were painted green and measurements were made by Geoff Edwards (a QS in the Council) and we duly dug holes and fixed them in position where they remained for many years. They were eventually replaced by yardage discs on the fairways and yardage markers on the sprinkler heads. Makes me feel like a pioneer!

KEITH HICK RECALLS HIS TIME AT WENTWORTH:

During my time managing all Amec plc's corporate hospitality at Wentworth during the 1980s it was important not just to give all the VIP guests a memorable experience, but to include some very different 'keepsakes' as well.

One of these was to commission a professional photographer to 'freeze frame' everyone's golf swing on the first tee. Another was to commission a caricaturist to capture everyone with a superb framed illustration of themselves. Yet another was to 'borrow' the Ryder Cup from the PGA for an impromptu match – but more of these latter two anon.

Shown below is my freeze frame swing, for forensic analysis, at Wentworth in 1988:



PAST COUNTY SENIORS SECRETARY, IAN WOOLLEY, CONTINUES TO LOOK BACK AT HIS '12 LUCKY BREAKS AS A SENIOR'...

Fifth Lucky Break -1987 Playing in the R&A Amateur Seniors Championship

My first serious effort to get involved in Senior Golf was in August 1987 just after I was 55 in June that year. I found I was good enough to enter the R&A Senior Amateur Championship - 54 holes with 2 rounds at the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club at Deal and 1 round at the alternative course of Princes at Sandwich. These are 2 very testing famous old links courses on the coast in Kent. I went down to Deal not expecting much. But was pleasantly surprised when after 2 rounds I survived the big cut to play in the last round at the Royal Cinque Ports. Bill Sayers from the USA won the title with a score of 226. I finished 12 shots behind - tied 25th out of about 250 entered having scored 78, 81 and 79 – a total 238.

At Deal the first tee is quite a walk from the clubhouse – maybe at least 50 yards away. One poor competitor who had driven down all the way from Scotland was late on the tee because he had a last-minute call to go to the toilet. The R&A had no alternative but disqualify this competitor. Fellow competitors felt very sorry. So much so that we collected a little money and erected a small plaque which was stuck on the door of the actual toilet in the locker-room:-

Here on August 5th 1987 Jim was sat stranded. Poor chap he could not reach the 1st Tee in time. So Jim was DISQUALIFIED by the R&A . He lost the Championship Without Hitting a Shot !!”

I imagine the powers that be at Royal Cinque Ports must have removed that plaque many years ago. But we had a good laugh at the time!!!

So it was on Wednesday August 5th 1987 that I arrived on the 1st Tee at Deal. And although I had practised on both Courses, I was pretty nervous. The Starter was an R&A Official called Gerald Bristowe. For some strange reason I thought he might have been one of the Bristowe brothers I had been at school with until I was 18 in 1950 – which was 37 years ago - and we had never seen each other in between. I plucked up courage and asked Gerald if he happened to be Bristowe Major or Bristowe Minor? – i.e. the elder or younger brother as they were known at school? He was very surprised but guessed we must have been at school together. His reply was then “Where have you been all these years?” I was completely new to playing in such a top rate 3-day competition.

The next year in Edinburgh in 1988 I played again in the R&A Amateur Seniors Championship. The main course used was 2 rounds at The Royal Burgess Club with the other round being played at Bruntisfield – both excellent inland courses. I was again very pleased when I managed to qualify for the 3rd round. The winner was the amazing British Senior golfer Charley Green from Dumbarton. He eventually won 6 R&A Amateur Seniors Championships including 1988 in Edinburgh – but then also at Moortown; The Berkshire; Prestwick; Royal Aberdeen and Formby. I was able to play in 10 R&A Amateur Senior Championships until 1997 at Sherwood Forrest and Coxmoor missing only 1992 at Ipswich. It was great fun being able to play in the best Senior Amateur event in the UK.

As I got older it became more difficult to qualify to play in the R&A event. There developed a huge interest from the best USA Amateur Seniors. In fact so much so that from 1999 until 2019 a USA Senior won 16 Of those 21 Championships. Some of the Americans played so much golf they cannot have spent much time working. The USA guy I played with in Edinburgh in 1988 told me what a tough time he had gone through in the last 12 months because he had “ONLY managed to play in 20 out of 26 two-day events on HIS Circuit”!!! I felt so sorry for him!!! I counted myself lucky to find time to play in one 3-day event a year.

But I must get back to my enjoyment of Senior Golf.

In 1996 the R&A Amateur Seniors was held at Blairgowrie, Scotland on the Rosemount and Lansdown Courses. I entered - as did my good friend Keith Hornby who was a past President of Lancashire. We made a holiday of it with our wives - Joyce and Jackie - staying in a nice hotel near the Club. We met some good friends on our 2 days practicing on both Courses - such as ex Walker Cup Captain David Frame. The first 2 days I was drawn to play with one of the Yanks. He was a good player. He was followed all the way round by his adoring wife who had a very loud voice and was an amazingly vocal supporter. Whenever her husband hit a very good shot – and he did hit very good shots several times - she could not contain herself and she called out in an excited loud voice with a strong American accent which I am sure you could have heard 100 yards away :- **“Bill – you’re My Man !!! Keep at it Bill !!! I know you can do it !!!”**. It was all good fun but it did not help my own concentration!!

More recently in 2018 Trevor Foster won the R&A Senior Amateur Championship. Trevor is a member at Accrington G.C. and has been a stalwart of Lancashire golf. He played his 100th match for the County against Yorkshire at Pleasington at the end of the County golfing season in 2003 when I was County President. In 2018 at Royal Porthcawl in South Wales Trevor played some amazing golf to win the R&A Senior Amateur. He had the second-best all-time score of 208 for the 3 rounds – averaging 69.7 a round. Trevor is a credit to himself, his Club and to Lancashire County.

This year – 2020 – this R&A Senior Amateur Championship, if the Pandemic allows, is due to be played again at The Royal Cinque Port at Deal. But it is a very different format from when I played there in my first Senior event in 1987. This year it is 3 rounds all on one course. Handicap limit 3 – limited to 144 competitors with the lowest 60 playing the final 3rd round. When I played I think there were about 250 entered playing 1 round on the 2 courses. Then there was a big cut to about 80 for the 3rd final round.

When no longer able to qualify for the R&A Amateur Seniors I started in 1996 playing in the English Seniors Amateur Championship. And played in that for 7 years at West Lancs/Ormskirk in 1996 ; then West Hill and Woking(97); Saunton -2 courses (98); Shifnal/Worfield (99) Moor Park (2000); Sherwood Forrest/ Coxmoor (01) and finally Heswall/Bromborough (2002) when I was 70. The format was the same as the R&A Championship of 3 rounds with a big cut after the first 2 rounds. So there were a lot of Seniors playing from all over England. And it was a great chance for me to meet even more Seniors.

My wife and I sometimes went together as a holiday staying in a good hotel near those venues. We met up and became friendly with Lancashire and Cheshire Seniors such as Colin Foye and his wife - he was a regular member of the Lancashire Seniors Team when I was Team Organiser. On other occasions we met up with Keith Hornby a good friend from my home club Pleasington and past Captain and President of Lancashire. And I was lucky to meet became friendly with Gordon Edwards – a Cheshire Senior from Bromborough. Gordon had a super golfing career and was a real pleasure to play with. He won 3 English Senior Titles in 1988, 1993 and 1996. And he won the inaugural Rut Niblick Seniors at my own club Pleasington in 1991. He came to play in the Rut Niblick at my home club Pleasington every year till soon before he died aged 82 in March 2014. We were almost the same age.

In 1994 I played with Gordon Edwards in the David Marsh Seniors – a two-day event at Southport and Ainsdale - which he won. Gordon was aged 62 and still playing off 1. He always played well within himself. But in the 2nd round at the long par 4 17th the wind was blowing hard and was straight against us. The 17th Tee is elevated well above the Fairway with the railway out of bounds on the right. And on the left all sorts of hazards - heather and bunkers. There was no way I had any chance of reaching the Green in 2. But Gordon just opened his shoulders and wacked it long and straight about 30/40 yards past me. He then hit a superb long iron low into the wind. He made the Green in 2 and took 2 putts for a great 4. I struggled for a 5!! That showed me just how good Gordon was.

One of the most enjoyable English Seniors I played in was at Shifnal G.C. in Shropshire. It is a beautiful course with tree lined fairways including an amazing variety of deciduous trees specially selected by a very active member called Bob Yates – he was a wealthy farmer known as a “Barley Baron”. He had grown up playing golf at my club Pleasington before he moved south to go farming. He was a little deaf and spoke with a loud booming jolly voice. Bob was “Mr Golf” at Shifnal. In wider circles he was involved with the EGU and also an England selector. Whilst at Pleasington he had enjoyed his golf but had not been involved much outside the club. When he moved to Shropshire Bob organised fun golf days between Lancashire and Shropshire Farmers - about 8 a side – and often we played at Sandy Lyle’s home course of Hawkstone Park. I used to get roped in for the matches - as I was a Pharmacist and a good friend of Ernest Pawson who organised the Lancashire Farmers. Being a Pharmacist was the next best thing to being a Farmer!! When we “Farmers” played Hawkstone our Shropshire opponents would tell us how far Sandy Lyle hit it on the long holes – usually out of sight!!! No wonder he hit that amazing second shot at Augusta from the fairway bunker on the 18th to win the Masters. Born in 1958 Sandy won 2 majors and was admitted to Golf’s Hall of Fame in 2012. However I must get back to Bob Yates’s club - Shifnal. Jimmy Tarbuck was playing – he had a tremendous sense of humour. After golf a sizeable group gathered round the outside bar and it was just one joke after another when Jimmy got going!!! Two other seniors from the North West also had a lot of success in the English Seniors. Roy Smethurst (Cheshire) won 4 times in 6 years from 2000 until 2005. And Alan Squires (Lancashire) won 3 times in succession 2011, 2012 and 2013 – they were both very talented golfers.

Ian Woolley (More from Ian next month – Ed)

WORLD RENOWNED GOLF COACH HOWARD BENNETT CONTINUES HIS SERIES OF THOUGHT-PROVOKING SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU IMPROVE YOUR GAME:



Howard teeing-off at Hesketh’s 17th earlier this year

Great sayings:

1. Don’t put yourself down, other people will do this for you
2. Great people are just ordinary people with an extraordinary amount of determination
3. Most people fail not because they lack ability, intelligence or opportunity, but because they don’t give it all they’ve got
4. Faith is daring to risk imperfection
5. The road to success is always under construction and carries the sign ‘work in progress’
6. Suffering produces perseverance, thus leading to character and in turn hope
7. Prepare for the unexpected
8. The difference between a 3 handicap and a +3 handicap is: short game, course management and the mind
9. Your bad shots are not going to go away: it’s how you handle them which counts

10. Does your golf control your attitude, or does your attitude control your golf?
11. The will to win is not as important as the will to prepare
12. Always be the optimist; pessimists always look for excuses
13. Luck is the acronym for: labouring under correct knowledge
14. Golf is a simple game, made difficult by human beings
15. "Imagination is more important than Science because Science tells us where we have been. Imagination tells us where we are going" – Albert Einstien
16. John Lyden said it well: First we create our habits and then our habits breate us"

Howard Bennett

Here's wishing yourselves and families continued good health and well being,

Best regards and happy golfing,

Keith Hick
Secretary
26th October 2020

Clive Appleby
Team Captain