

March
2023

The Slice!

Issue 5

Tasty portions of Innerleithen club news, served monthly!

Dear reader,

The new golfing season is upon us! Hopefully we've seen the last of the snow and ice and the weather will be kind to us. Our presentation night was a great success. We saw the culmination of the winter stableford series. The refurb of our clubhouse is complete and a thank you must go to Keith Norman for fitting the new blinds (Thanks also to those who supported the sweepstakes, bonus ball or provided a donation). We've had holes in one this month and this weekend we welcome no less than 30 visitors for our Open Texas Scramble. This month's edition includes a special feature by way of an interview with Club President Norman (Dod) Smith, which I hope you find interesting and enjoyable. There has been plenty going on so let's get on with it! I hope you all have a great season.

Ed



Results – March

March Medal – Sat 4 th March				
Pos		Gross	H/cap	Net
1	Bob Kennedy	83	20	63
2	David Philip	71	5	66
3	Niven Simpson	84	17	67

The March medal saw some new names towards the top of the leaderboard. Taking third place (behind Mike McGovern) was Niven Simpson. The clear highlights coming on the back nine with “two little ducks!..... an eagle “2” on the 11th and a birdie “2” on the 16th! Well done Niven – A Quacking Round. (sorry!)

In second place and deservedly securing qualification to the Super Medal was Davie Philip. Davie had no fewer than 5 birdies in scoring a superb scratch 71. Davie stood on the 12th tee three under par and no doubt had thoughts of a score comfortably in the 60's, however the afternoon turned cold and the wind got up making conditions difficult. Great score Davie and a special mention must go to Jack, who, whilst taking ill early in his round, accompanied Davie allowing him to complete his round.

The winner was never in doubt. A score of net 63 was posted early doors by Bob Kennedy and it was to remain unbeaten. A very solid round by the big fella and notable that where many a good round comes unstuck, Bob remained composed, playing the last three holes in "one under". Well done Bob.

Winter Stableford Rd 11 – Sat 18 th March				
Pos		Pts	H/cap	
1	Josh Landers	48	20	
2	Bob Kennedy	44	20	
3	Ian Stewart	41	10	

30 members tee'd it up for the final round of the winter series. **Heading into the final round, the series scores were:**

- 1- Scott Boak - 193 pts
- 2- Grant White - 191 pts
- 3- Craig Rendle - 190 pts
- 4- Orry Jardine - 190 pts
- 5- Ronnie Landers- 188 pts
- 6- Mike Veitch - 187 pts

Mike Veitch (6th) could only equal his worst series score of 36 pts, thus relegating him to a final position of 8th. Ronnie Landers (5th) was unable to play due to a prior appointment at the beauticians. The "Master of Plaster" Orry (4th), improved his series total with a credible 40 pts. Rendle (3rd) was also unable to play as he was working out in the gym situated next to Ronnies beauty salon. Grant White (2nd) replaced 31 pts with 32, which was good enough for relegation to 4th in the final standings! "Caravan Kid" Scott Boak (1st) managed to grab defeat from the jaws of victory with a score of 37 pts.

There was no doubt about the overall winner. True to his form throughout the winter, young Josh replaced his worst score of 31 pts with..... 48! An excellent round which included three birdies and parachuted Josh from 7th to 1st! Well done young man and we look forward to more good scores as we move into summer. Do we?! 😊

Final Result:

- 1 – Josh Landers 203 pts
- 2 – Orry Jardine 197 pts
- 3 – Scott Boak 193 pts
- 4 – Grant White 192 pts
- 5 – Craig Phaup 191 pts
- 6 – Craig Rendle 190 pts

Captain v Vice Captain – 25th March



The course was presented in great condition, with the first chance to play off “the whites”. The weather was favourable. The draw was made and so the scene was set for a competitive Captain v Vice. Both Keith and Alan were in confident mood, however Vice Captain Alans confidence was short lived, as soon after the shotgun (Brendas car horn) sounded, word filtered through on the course of a “2 down”

here and a “3 down” there. Alan and wife partner Debbie put up a strong performance themselves (well, Debbie did), however they could not live with the Captain and his top pick Danni McMath. Danni was in superb form and carried Captain Keith to the first point of the day. There were a few close matches, with several not so close. Indeed, some were annihilations! “Team Vice” took a mere 3 points from the 20 on offer. A great day nonetheless, for all involved and well done to Keith and his team.

Interview with Club President Norman Smith (Dod)

Ed caught up with Dod at this home just prior to the Scotland v Ireland 6 Nations match:

Ed: We’ll start at the beginning Dod. What age did you join the golf club and what are your earliest memories?

Dod: I was 14. I’m 75 now so I’ve been a member for (lengthy pause) a guid few years, although Gloria and I moved to Coleraine for a few years.

Ed: We don’t have many members left with your knowledge of the club.

Dod: What, auld b*****s you mean?

Ed: I never said that! I didn’t know you lived in Ireland....

Dod: Aye, Gloria and I got married on 10th April 1971. In June that year, we moved to Coleraine in Northern Ireland and we stayed there for 5 years. Ballantynes had a factory there you see. My oldest daughter Leeanne was born there. We moved back home to Walkerburn after 5 years when my Dad died and my youngest daughter Jennifer was born not long after. We all moved to Innerleithen in 1976 and have lived here since.

Ed: What are your early memories of the golf course?

Dod: The course was a bit different. There was a fence that went all the way up the 4th fairway next to the road. The current 4th hole was the 1st hole. The main green at the hill hole was where the winter green is now. Players often landed up the top and then chipped down the slope, over the edge and back down the hill! I got a 13 there once! The 6th was a par 3, almost 200 yards teeing off from up the hill with the green beside the road. The 7th tee (Common) was straight across from the 6th green and it was a short par 4 to where the 6th winter green is now. You could drive it if you hit a guid yin. Lee Pools was all practice area and the 8th tee was on the same side of the road as the 7th green. There were sheep on the course because there was no cattle grid. They were removed for the championship!

Ed: What about the clubhouse?

Dod: The clubhouse then was the rusty green greenkeepers shed next to the practice green. We had some great nights in there. Of course, we had some characters back then: Ally Robertson, Jock Hailstones, Alex Mathieson, Ronnie Eckford, Jim Blair, Alex McIntosh. The clubhouse had a bar and we had some great nights. I remember one night we were having drink on a Friday night. It was the night before the captains day. Davie Mason was the captain at the time. There was me and most of that lot. We all got drunk and ended up sleeping in there all night. Davie arrived for his captains day and we still there, with Kim (Robertson) cooking us bacon!

Ed: When did you win your first championship?

Dod: 1968. I was 20.

Ed: Do you remember what clubs you had?

Dod: Wooden shafts with persimmon heads. I started playing left handed. Ian Turnbull persuaded me to change so I changed to play right handed but with a cack-handed grip. Eventually I changed to a normal grip.

Ed: What was your lowest handicap?

Dod: 1. I remember years ago you were given a handicap and that was it. If you shot a 65 you were cut 5. You were told and that was it! No computers. In fact, life was simple then. No mobile phones. That's all you see nowadays... folk playing with their phones.

Ed: Agree Dod. I remember you just had to be ready in time to meet folk for wherever you were going. I struggled a bit with that. Back to golf.... How many Championships have you won now?

Dod: 9.

Ed: What a record Dod. How many has Gloria won?

Dod: (pause and a stare).... 10.

*Ed: So it **is** true that Gloria is better than you at bowls **and** golf?*

Dod: She's good at bowls aye! (*slap on the knee and laughs*). There were some good players back then: Ian Turnbull was a 10 time champion, (Young) Frank Pearce, Ron Russell, Alan Davidson, Gordon Vannan, Robert Kurowski, Willie White to name a few.

Ed: Is there anything in particular you remember about any of your championship wins?

Dod: I remember one final I was playing Andrew Mair. We were playing the 17th and I was 1 up. Andrew hit a good shot and Gary McGinley heard him say "I've got him". Of course Gary told me what he'd heard and I thought – no chance. I hit my 3rd onto the green and holed a 20 foot putt for the win.

Ed: Aye, you've always been and still are, a hardy competitor Dod. You hate getting beat.

Dod: Oh aye. I remember Davy Lindsay beating me in a championship final one year. I'd been at a party the night before and had far too much to drink. I played well in the morning but the drink caught up with me in the afternoon. We were playing the afternoon round. I was a few down but hit a good shot off the 12th tee. I then shanked my 2nd up the hill, turned around and shook Davy's hand. Lorna, Gloria, Davy and I all went out in Peebles for a Chinese meal and drinks to celebrate Davy's win.

Ed: That's great Dod. How it should be?

Dod: Oh aye. We had some great characters and some brilliant nights up there. I remember one day we'd had a few drinks. Jim Blair had a camel coloured Ford Fiesta. Jim was a big whiskey drinker. Anyway, we noticed his car was away! When we passed down Leithen Road later, there was a recovery vehicle at Church Street. Jim had driven into a new car, which had ended up in a front

garden there! Another great character was George Todd, George took off from the clubhouse in his car one day, drove down past the Cauld and didn't make the right hand turn and drove straight on into the whin bushes to the left. George took off down Leithen Road.

Ed: You must have enjoyed a few trips abroad through golf?

Dod: We won the Mail on Sunday. That was me, Alan Turnbull, Colin Fraser, Raymond Caine. Davie Philip was a reserve and Phaupy played in a few of the games in this country. We won 7 matches to get to the Belfry. When we won at the Belfry we went on to Deauville Golf Course in France. There was me, Gloria, Raymond, Alison, Alan Turnbull, Colin Fraser, Alison Notman and Phaupy. What a trip! We beat a Welsh team in the Semi-finals then beat a team from Shropshire in the final. We enjoyed ourselves put it that way. I remember a good trip to Saunton Golf Club in Devon with my winter league partner Jim Morton. Jim was some boy. That was the final of the Daily Mail Foursomes.

Ed: Do you have a favourite course?

Dod: Oh aye. Royal Portrush. Port Stewart is a great course as well. When Gloria and I were living in Coleraine, I joined Castlerock Golf Club but got the chance to play the others. Great courses.

Ed: What are your best memories of your golf at Innerleithen?

Dod: Obviously winning my Championships. I've been Captain twice and now President taking over from Mackie (Fraser) several years ago. I remember some great outings to places like Southernness. We just had some great characters back then.... Outings were 36 holes and there was a hellova drink taken at lunch. I remember one outing where Andrew Fairnie went out for his afternoon round.... Tee'd the ball up on the first... swung and completely missed the ball!

Ed: You don't play quite as much as you used to....

Dod: I play a lot of bowls now and enjoy that. I go between the two.

Ed: Have you won much with Gloria over the years?

Dod: Aye. We won "The Families" four times. I usually played in the "Geordie Bell" with Ella (Wilson) and we won that twice but I remember Gloria and I played in the Selkirk mixed pairs. The last 3 holes at Selkirk are par 3, par 5, par 3. Gloria hit a great drive on the 17th, I hit the green with the second shot and Gloria sunk the eagle putt. We finished 3-3-3 to win.

Ed: Do you enjoy playing with Gloria?

Dod: Aye, as long as a keep ma mooth shut!

Ed: I notice you've got a caddy cart now?!

Dod: Aye. A done no bad carrying them until a was 70.

Ed: And you're still as fit as a fiddle walking miles each Monday?

Dod: That started off just me and Hunter. One week I'd bring the sandwiches and Hunter would bring the beer. We'd swap the next week. Now we have a fair few of us. We have various walks. Portmore Estate, Up to Loch Eddy, Gala to Innerleithen. They all end up with us having "a few" drinks.

Ed: Well Dod, I've really enjoyed this and could blether all day. You've been, and still are, a big part of Innerleithen Golf Club and you're most certainly one of the clubs "characters". Thanks Dod.

Dod: You're welcome. I'm off to the club to watch the rugby.

Ed: Enjoy the game.

Medal Sponsors

We are still looking for a few sponsors for our monthly medals. Medal sponsorship is £70.00. There is a sheet within the clubhouse or alternatively, contact any committee member if you feel this is something you would like to do. New sponsor this month comes thanks to Steven Gibb (BARC Coach Hire). Thanks to all so far.

March:	Roddy MacLean	July:	Port Brae Wealth Management
April:	Craig Archibald	August:	Alan & Debbie Strain
May:	BARC Travel	September:	Dod Smith (President)
June:	Smith & McMath	October:	BARC Coach Hire

(November – March are still available)

Player of The Month



POTM for March has been decided over the two competitive rounds as per the results above. The winner this month was decided without requirement for much deliberation. With a fantastic net 63 in the Monthly Medal, accompanied by 44 pts in the final round of the winter series, POTM for this month is Bob Kennedy. Well done Bob.

Monday Seniors Section

For those members of a certain age who might not already know it, the club has an active Seniors section which plays every Monday morning and all members age 55+ are very welcome. Just book as normal through BRS.

There is a monthly club medal off white tees (but not the back tee on the 12th) which is usually on the first Monday of the month, and another stroke play competition off yellow tees mid-month. These are interspersed by 12-hole stableford competitions with eclectic scores also kept for Summer, Autumn and Winter Series. A summer outing is held and there are occasional matches against other Borders clubs.

If you would like to be included in email communications about the Seniors section (and don't already get these emails) please add your name and email address to the sheet on the Seniors Noticeboard which is in the Gents changing room.

Course Report

In April we will continue the spring maintenance. We will be verti-draining the greens on 18th April. The greens will then receive an application of fertiliser which contains a wetting agent followed by a light top dressing.

The bunkers will be maintained, this will involve them being edged and topped up with sand. Remove high area in 6th burn just below the bridge to improve water flow. This will prevent the build-up of silt and reduce the number of weeds. The trees on the course will be trimmed, especially on the 8th to improve visibility from the tee. The BT cable damage will be repaired, this will involve removing stones, lifting low areas and applying sand and seed. The fairways will continue to be patched and any protruding stones will be removed.

At the end of April / beginning May the fairways will be sprayed with a selective weedkiller to get rid of weeds, mainly daisies. In May we will continue to spray fairways. Burns, paths and tree surrounds will also be sprayed. By this time, we will be into the full summertime maintenance program.

In Other News

Bonus Ball: We intend to continue running the weekly Bonus Ball draw. Please continue to support this if you are in a position to do so. The profit from this will be kept to make improvements, which are not essential, but desirable and of benefit to members.

Holes in One:

Congratulations go to:

Scott Boak who holed in one on at the 7th hole.

Patrick Shek who holed in one on the 5th. Well done gents.

“The 19th Hole”

Continues to thrive! Brenda and Gus fed forty or so hungry golfers following the recent Captain v Vice Captain Match. Their first large catering event and they coped remarkably. The food was delicious. This was followed by the preparation of a lovely buffet for presentation night that evening! Brenda and her team are so appreciative of the support they have received from golfers and members of the public alike.

Future Competitions/Events

Saturday 8th April:

Fully booked out with 30 visitors. Registration will be within the clubhouse. Please register in plenty of time. We are a friendly welcoming club and we know members will demonstrate this to our guests on Saturday. Enjoy the day.

Friday 14th April :

Ladies 3 Club Challenge

Saturday 15th April:

Monthly Medal

Friday 21st April

Ladies Slag Trophy

Saturday 22nd April:

Ford Trophy (Incorporating Round 1 of Championship qualifier)

Wednesday 26th April:

First midweek medal

Friday 28th April:
Ladies Stableford

Saturday 29th April:
Henry Ballantyne Round 2 (Incorporating Round 2 of Championship qualifier)