

ENDURANCE TEST

The Annual Tournament in South Wales

The wettest for fifty years?

THE Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club offered every hospitality and golf in the classic tradition. Their's is a setting in the old and, many say, the best tradition—common land by the sea, few bunkers, short-cropped turf, a seaward leap into dunes piling on pressure as it goes, and no frills.

One has to be hardy to play this course well in winter. Monday's Stableford round showed this when a blustery wind and grey skies matched the grey stone cottages in the villages. But the greenkeeper can stand an English August as well as anyone and when the first three disappeared over the brow of the first hole at 8-45 a.m., the practice swings of those waiting were as supple as ever. Many stayed supple as far as the 9th where four arrived with the regulation 18 points, G. Woodward (Walsall), D. D. Beaumont (Moor-town), G. Payne (Maidenhead) and D. J. Lord (Swansea Bay). W. J. Kirkpatrick of Dulwich and Sydenham, playing from scratch, had gone one better with 19 points from his one under bogey 36. J. K. Glass on his last day as Chairman and A. Crawford (Whitecraigs) were on 19 with him. But the man of that particular moment was W. J. Kingston (Reading), who had compiled 21 points and was still looking for more.

Then came the seaward half. "No excuses", said Jock Glass, "I just played badly". Kingston, too, dropped away and only gathered a further 12 points. Kirkpatrick, after a useful birdie at No. 11, dropped shots at 14, 15, 16 and 18 for 16 points and a total of 35, but Crawford maintained the same form throughout and came home with one five at No. 11 and eight fours at all the rest for another 19 and 38. New Chairman Lord knew the back nine's snags but though he was level fours till the 16th tee, three fives at the last three only brought him up to 37 points and second place above Kirkpatrick. A steady rearguard action by W. Sumner (Grange Park) added 17 to 17, and a deserved fourth place, but here unfortunately the list closed, so that was that.

Convivial atmosphere

The rain was of less consequence in the afternoon as the assembly went into plenary session, and deliberated the affairs of the Association under the Chairmanship of the President. The official record is elsewhere so we need not elaborate the practical outcome of the debates. The atmosphere, as is proper, reflected something of the convivial refreshment which preceded it and was in sharp contrast to the orderly spirit which prevailed at the last gathering in Wales when heavier rain put it forward to the morning. Two members indeed felt obliged to refresh

themselves during the meeting but their attempt to seduce a senior official from the line of duty was not successful. Any ground which they gained over the rest of the attendance however was soon lost when at 5 o'clock informal business was resumed in another place.

Conditions worsen

On Tuesday the weather went from bad to worse. The morning was wet, the wind blew hard; the afternoon added torrential downpours and lightning playing round the course.

At lunch-time only four players, understandably, had broken eighty: G. Piggott (Henley), playing off 10, had a nett 75; R. J. Pugh, G. Payne 78; while D. Jones, J. K. Glass, D. J. Lord and D. D. Beaumont were bracketed on 79. The leading match of low-handicap golfers were all in the eighties.

It was a mercy that the cup for players aged 65 and over was decided over the morning round only, but there were many less

PYLE & KENFIG GOLF CLUB Length, 6,441 yards

Hole	Length (yards)	Bogey	Hole	Length (yards)	Bogey
1	486	5	10	410	5
2	420	4	11	460	5
3	200	3	12	187	3
4	480	5	13	383	4
5	280	4	14	380	4
6	147	3	15	230	3
7	337	4	16	400	4
8	333	4	17	440	5
9	489	5	18	379	4
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	3,172	37		3,269	37

advanced in years who jibbed at going out again in wet clothes with only the prospect of a few million volts to put an end to their misery. It was equally a mercy that the Rules of Golf make some provision for such conditions and that the hardier spirits continued the competition.

G. Woodward went round in 79, a miraculous score in the circumstances, and secured the Scratch Prize to the general satisfaction. He was particularly unlucky at Worthing when the weather played similar tricks less continuously, and though he had thirteen years out of greenkeeping and away from golf he has come back to both with skill and distinction.

R. J. Pugh, 157, took the first prize in the Senior Division and D. Jones, 154, the first Junior, also the best nett score of the day. As the results show, there were even enough

players finishing to claim all the rest of the prizes. They should all have been awarded a special citation for outstanding courage in the face of the elements. If this report is silent on their performances at individual holes they, better than anyone, will understand the reason why.

Visit of Mr. T. S. Morris

One of the few bright spots in the day was the visit of Mr. T. S. Morris, J.P., President of the Welsh Golfing Union. We were most grateful to him for coming to see us and for his kind gesture in contributing to the Prize List as well.

Wednesday began as bleakly as the other two days but suddenly, about 11 a.m., patches of blue sky appeared and the sun shone. This enabled the competitor who had saturated three outfits in turn and had none left, to put on each in turn and dry them out. The 18 hole medal round was windy but warmer and F. W. Ford (Hampstead), playing off 16, had soon returned a 73 nett. S. A. Tucker came in with 85—11, 74. Then D. Jones (Pyle and Kenfig) returned another 73, but Ford's last nine holes were better so he remained the winner.

The final ceremony followed after lunch when Mr. L. Williams, the Captain of Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club, presented the prizes to the worthy winners, all of whom, in spite of their ordeal, stepped up in sprightly fashion as if it was all in the day's work, as indeed it often is. J. J. O'Gorman's charming daughter, Marion, presented a bouquet to Mrs. Bretherton, and Mr. Dix thanked the Club for their hospitality, their fine course, and the welcome comfort which their catering had so constantly and promptly provided. Whatever the trials of play or the problems of the A.G.M., there is a wonderful atmosphere of bonhomie in these concluding moments which makes all the work worthwhile. And the work put in by Mr. Dix, the Hon. Secretary, with the able and willing help of Mr. Southgate and Mr. Payne of Messrs. Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies who were joined

on Tuesday by Mr. Soutar and Mr. Wilson from the Ipswich headquarters, was continuous, devoted and precise. We are very grateful to all these gentlemen for their cheerful running of the office side of the Tournament and to all those who turned up and turned out to make it a success.

One final word. This was, let us be frank, a badly attended Tournament. Forty odd competitors, thirty odd at the A.G.M.—these are silly numbers for an Association with over five hundred members. Some even question the morality of asking our many kind friends for prizes if the turn-out is only to be about 8% of the membership. All sorts of reasons can be advanced and, depending on the persuasiveness of the speaker, will gain more or less support. The usual statements are—Too far! Too long! Wrong time of year! Clubs won't help with time off or expenses! Interferes with holidays! Can't leave course at that time! Things aren't what they used to be!

Future decisions

All cogent points no doubt, but who is to say if they are right? Only those directly concerned, namely as many of the members as possible! Therefore we shall ask you next month to send us back a questionnaire which is being prepared. Your answers are the only useful basis for future decisions. If there are factors which prevent members attending a tournament in August, the Committee want to know what they are and whether anything can be done to overcome them. This is a changing world and if the old pattern does not fit modern requirements, then the pattern must change. The future pattern may depend on your answers. Be sure to give them next month. It will involve putting a few ticks on a piece of paper and sending it back to Head Office. Then the facts will be known and the right decisions can be taken. Of course, the small entry may have been due to the smallpox scare in the district earlier in the year. If so your answers will reveal this factor. The matter lies in your hands.

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