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*News and views
from around the
White Rose county...*

**Rotherham
to stage
Yorkshire
Men's
toughest
challenge**

**Captain Walker
makes way for
Dan Brown – p8**

**New names in
County squad – p3**

**Walker's 2020pros vs
Appleyard's Men**



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Gents (50+)

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YORKSHIRE MEN Mouth-watering 'friendly' against 2020protour team at Rotherham

Big challenge ahead for 'new' squad

By Danny Lockwood

There's a real sense of a changing-of-the-guard as the Yorkshire Men's team gears up for the 2024 season, with a mouth-watering match against the 2020protour stars at Rotherham on Monday April 8 first up.

Captain David Appleyard's off-season plans haven't been helped by coaching sessions being lost due to the weather, as his men – and boys in some cases – look to repeat their stellar performances of last year.

A fantastic second-round comeback sneaked the Northern title away from Cheshire on the Isle of Man, before a tense, rain-soaked victory at the England County Championships at Southport & Ainsdale.

New faces are certain as Appleyard takes stock of changed circumstances.

"The plan is to hopefully continue the success that we had in 2023 and maintain and build on that," he said.

"We've obviously lost George Ash and Josh Berry to the pro ranks, while Max Berrisford has gone to America to flight school, to try get his commercial pilot's licence. We've lost Max until the middle of the year.

"And then there are demands on players who did well last year, Tom Osborne, Jack Whaley's at college in the States, Ben Brown with being the English Amateur champion – their time and commitments might change this year depending on what



they're asked to do, and play in events where they can get World Ranking points."

Dylan Shaw-Radford, along with Ben Brown, is in the England Men's squad.

Rotherham's Whaley, who was runner-up in the Welsh

Youth Open and a semi-finalist in the English Amateur Championship last year, finished 2023 in some style. The Dalton State student had two wins and a runner-up finish in his last four US college events of the year. He will be

Yorkshire have named their 12-man team for the match:

Ben Brown (Romanby)
Tom Osborne (Lindrick)
Jake Sowden (The Oaks)
Charlie Daughtrey (Rotherham)
Lucas Martin (Rotherham)
Aaron Brettell (Hessle)
Jake Wallis (Garforth)
George Heath (Wakefield)
Jack Northgraves (Ganton)
George Hanson (Crosland Heath)
Dan Thomas (Ilkley)
Ollie Smith (Sickleholme)

Former Boys
Captain Jake Wallis
already has
experience with
the Men's team



Tom Osborne (left) Charlie Daughtrey and Jake Sowden (right) will have big parts to play for Yorkshire in their crunch 'friendly' against the professionals



a big miss for Appleyard's team.

"That's where we are but in a sense it's good for Yorkshire because it shows that we're doing something right and our players are producing in the amateur game. It shows that what we're doing at the coaching level and in the background is helping them achieve their success.

"We've brought a number of people into the coaching set-up, some of the juniors

who are now on the men's radar, so players like Jack Northgraves, Jake Wallis, George Hanson – we've invited them to come along to the winter coaching sessions so that we can keep an eye on them and bring them into the team environment.

"We've also invited Dan Norman from Teesside, Sam Claypole came the other week – he had a great season last year winning the Leeds Player of the Year and Matchplay title. Habib Khan from the Huddersfield area had a good season so we've broadened our net a little bit and involved more people, because we know potentially we might not have all the top players available for all the matches. We need to make sure our squad is big enough to cover those demands."

Regarding the 2020protour match at Rotherham, he said: "It's something that Adam Walker approached myself

and Jonathan [Plaxton] about at the end of last year. We found a date and thought it would be a good way to get the boys a competitive fixture and get them ready for 10 days later when we face Lincolnshire in a competitive friendly.

"It gives us a chance to give some of the people we've brought into the winter coaching a chance to see how they do.

"It's good to play against professionals and our players can see where their game is compared to the pros on the 2020 tour. I'd like to think it could continue for some years to come."

The contest will be six fourball better ball matches, but all games will play 18 holes, with an aggregate score deciding the outcome.

THE PRO TEAM AND
HOW THEY'LL PAIR UP
– SEE PAGE 8



England call up for Alex

Yorkshire Boys squad member Alex Boyes has been called up to represent England under 16s' Mixed team for their match against Spain. England's four boys and four girls travel to La Galiana Golf Resort in Valencia for the match on April 6/7, looking to repeat their success on home soil last year.

Teesside Golf Club member Alex (right), won the North of England under 14 Championship and finished in a strong 5th place at both the Reid Trophy (English Boys' under 14 Championship) and McGregor Trophy (English Boys' under 16 Championship).

He also had a 7th place finish at North of England U16 Boys' and top-20 results at the Italian International U16 Boys' and Midlands U16 Boys' Open Amateur Strokeplay.

England Golf's Stephen Burnett said: "We have a very promising team made up of eight players from a burgeoning talent pool at under 16 level and it's always heartening to see new names coming through.

With a number of debuts in the offing in Valencia, this match will offer these players competitive developmental experiences they will cherish long into the future of their careers, regardless of the result."



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YORKSHIRE SENIORS 2022 champs hungry for success after Isle of Man disappointment

Captain King's plan for 2024...

By Danny Lockwood

There's a big year ahead for Yorkshire Seniors Captain Andy King, as he sets about trying to bring home yet another Northern Counties title for Yorkshire and win back the national title, while juggling his management responsibilities with England. Oh, and he'd quite like to get a few rounds of golf in himself!

There was heartache for the reigning champs at the Northern Qualifiers on the Isle of Man last year. After being seven shots behind Durham at lunch, Yorkshire fell an agonising 2-strokes shy of a return to the nationals.

"We ended up being the [Northern Counties] champions which was fantastic, again, and it put us in good spirits for the big tournament on the Isle of Man," recalled the Garforth member.

"That was a week long adventure! We play the 36-holes at Castletown in one day but with it being in the Isle of Man we ended up leaving on the Monday morning and not getting home until the Friday night."

He described the experience of mixing with the Yorkshire Men who were in competition on the island at Mount Murray and said: "It



was great to share with them their success the day before our event."

Of the big day itself, he went on: "We were some shots behind after the morning ... but the guys played really well and with three or four holes left to go it was wide open. Unfortunately we came up just short at the tricky short 18th.

Seniors Captain Andy King (left) is hoping for more competition for places in 2024. Johnny Lawrence (right) should be back in contention after his Captain's year at Moor Allerton

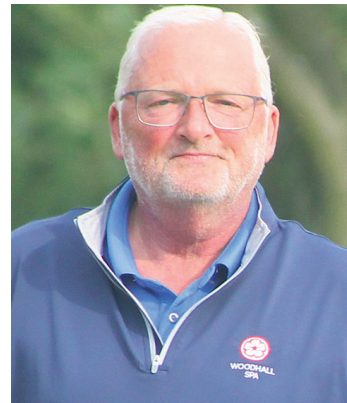
"It's been remodelled and they've brought the sea into play with a ravine in front of the green and depending on the wind and where you put your ball it can be anything from a 9-iron to a 6-iron. It becomes quite a daunting second shot."

Normally just a hazard, it was declared out of bounds and it cost Yorkshire dear with two doubles and a bogey on the last. Durham's last man out held his nerve, closing par-birdie-bogey to seal the win.

"Obviously we were bitterly disappointed, but we came up just short," said King. "That's something for this year. We want to have the team ready to go, be ready for Newcastle [this year's venue] and we'll be back to a more traditional format, going up the day before to practice then the tournament the next day."

Reflecting on 2023, the Captain had high praise for Seniors Champion Frank Greaves.

"Frank has been a squad player for some years but he was the [County Seniors] cham-



pion and he forced his way into the team and did himself proud. He played in the Champion of Champions down at Woodhall Spa and that's what players have got to – stand up, and if they are playing well at events and in tournaments, then they'll get a chance."

The squad was missing a couple of stalwarts last year in past county champion Dave

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DARRINGTON
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2023 was a great year for County Seniors Champion Frank Greaves of Huddersfield GC

Sanby and a seasoned performer in Stephen East, who were both injured for most of last year. Thankfully they're both fit and raring to go so we'll welcome them back," said the skipper.

"Johnny Lawrence, a past champion, was busy with his captaincy year at Moor Allerton, so we'll welcome him back too."

He also pointed to quality golfers approaching the 55th birthday threshold: "The likes of Nick Wylde from Garforth, Barry Hardcastle from Wike Ridge, Warren Lockett from Fixby ... they should be coming into consideration."

King thanked the YUGC for providing a coaching budget for the seniors, with players getting fitness training through the winter and a session with coach Steve Robinson is on the cards, looking at short game and tournament prep.

There's a pre-season squad session at Scarcroft and a friendly against Lincolnshire at Brough, before the season opener – against the old enemy Lancashire at Royal Lytham and St Anne's.

"Obviously everyone is wanting to play in that game!"

Asked if that could be the season decider, in round one, he was adamant not.

"No it isn't. Durham will be buoyed by their success, Cheshire have some outstanding players, Northumberland – all of them, it's become a lot closer, a lot more competitive, and yes the Lancashire game is special, we're



the two biggest counties and it's a big start to the season, but everybody's in with a shout. That's my view."

The selectors this year will be King and long-time county administrator John Grimbleby, assisted if required by YUGC Secretary Jonathan Plaxton. King's 'sidekick' Garry Cuthbert will still be involved with assisting the team but wants to focus on his own playing this season.

"It was a big year for Yorkshire's senior

Dave Sanby had injury issues but was back to help Rotherham lift the inaugural Seniors Team Championship

golfers in that the county got behind the new team championships, they introduced a new matchplay event, we had the English Senior Championships up here at Alwoodley – and while we didn't have a winner, a lot of the Yorkshire players competed and did well.

"Hessle and Garforth both ran [scratch] seniors events and I think both clubs were really pleased with the turn-out and both are staging them again this year ... I'm hoping our players will go out and show what they can do."

There's also the prospect of international recognition. King was called up to assist the England Seniors team last year.

"There's so much happening, lots of big tournaments, national competitions and the prospect of getting to play for your country. It's a great experience being involved with England and playing abroad."

"Richard Jones was part of the England team that won the European title in the Czech Republic, plus being part of the mixed team winning the Home Internationals at West Kilbride."

It all sounds rather exhausting, but apparently not.

"I thoroughly enjoyed last year," he said. "It is a bit of a juggle between playing, doing the captaincy and the managerial bit – obviously the England job is a non-playing role, so there's a little bit of 'not playing' while away with that – but I've been trying to take



on the exercises and keep-fit routines the lads have been given.

"I'm looking forward to the season personally and want to give it another go."

"But we have a big year ahead of us and we've got to focus on going and winning back the English county title!"

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The secret to true golf success – a smile!

Golf. Four simple letters, so much pain, grief and frustration occasionally invoking on another simple four-letter word – darn*!

All for the occasional, fleeting moment of joyous elation – a snaky birdie putt, an up-and-down from a bunker, a booming drive that sails towards a distant horizon with – can you believe how you did it? – a slight draw.

In those rare elations, I suspect the most common thought among mere hackers is the same – why can't I do that every time? In principle

* Other four-letter expressions of utter dismay are available

you'd think we could. But it doesn't work like that, for 99% of us at least.

Does anyone else watch top golfers, marvel at just how simple they make it look, and think 'I can do that!'

Their grip looks the same; transfer of weight, hip and shoulder turn, club smoothly back and then release with the club path on the inside, accelerating through the ball to a front-on finish. Simples!

Which I suppose it is when perceived by the estimated 10,000 hours of practice any 'expert' requires. Maybe my taking up golf with a body already bent, broken and busted by too many years of rugby was asking too much.

SWINGING WILD...

Danny Lockwood



Dan Bradbury – +2 round the 7,600 yard Earth Course, with just a 6-iron

Now, if that sounds a tad despondent, allow me to explain why I found myself overjoyed at our wonderful sport this week.

First was the news of Joe Dean's £170k cheque for an excellent runners-up finish at the Kenyan Open. That young

man has busted a gut to earn his breakthrough, and the background of him driving a Morrison's van in order to scrape together passage to Nairobi made it a fairytale ending indeed.

Hats off to you, fella! It somewhat mirrors the

achievement of Wakefield's Dan Bradbury just over a year earlier, when he turned a sponsor's invite into a life-changing wire-to-wire tour victory at the Joburg Open. What I loved about Dan's story, is that he turned that freak win into a solid season on tour. He took his chance and made it stick. He belongs.

And it was Dan Bradbury who put the biggest smile on my face when he accepted a one-club challenge. Not a four-club bit of fun we might play in midsummer. A single club off the tee, in bunkers, chipping and putting.

Oh, and this wasn't round his home club or a local municipal – no, it was the 7,600-yard Earth Course at Jumeirah Golf. Check it out on Youtube, or via the link on his X/Twitter. I defy you not to be warmly delighted.

As a spoiler alert, Dan picks out his 6-iron and predicts that he would be very

happy to get round in 82.

For a while he's actually under par before finally signing for a +2 74. A 6-iron out of some of those bunkers? He never went in one. But here's the thing I took most from what was, in truth, a fun stunt – Dan Bradbury went through it all with a huge smile on his face, even in adversity.

If one thing frustrates me when watching the multi-millionaires on tour it's that too many of them play the game with a face like a slapped backside. They're downright miserable when confronted with anything less than absolute perfection.

Get a life guys, because you're actually living the life!

That's why my new philosophy is to bin the frustration and expectation. I'm just going to enjoy the luxury of having the time and physical ability to get out on a golf course. Anything else is a bonus. So just smile!



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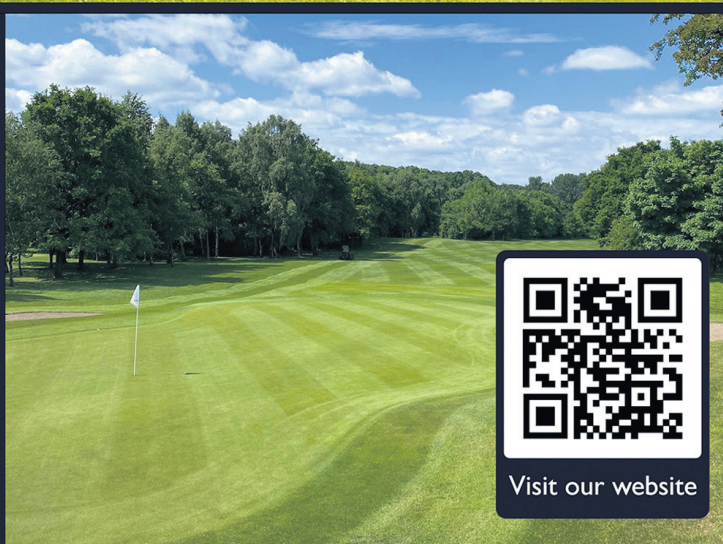
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BIG MATCH Yorkshire Men will face a tough line-up of professionals at Rotherham

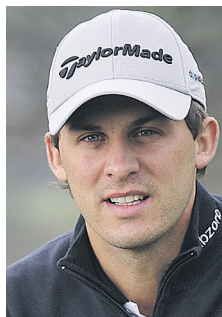
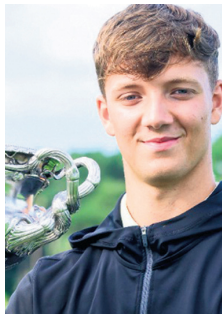
Captain takes one for the team

2020protour co-founder Adam Walker, the inspiration behind a challenge match against Yorkshire's best amateurs, was 'shamed' into dropping himself to first reserve after receiving an offer he couldn't refuse.

Walker had already named his 12-man team for the match versus Yorkshire Men at Rotherham on Monday April 8th, when he got a message from Dan Brown, pleading for a spot.

"I told him 'if you win this weekend I'll drop out'," said Walker. At that point Brown, who had won his first DP World Tour event at the ISPS Handa World Invitational last summer, was joint leader of the SDC Championship in South Africa going into the final round.

Unfortunately things didn't go his way and he finished in a still-respectable tie for 4th. But rather than getting to breathe a sigh of relief Walker, who was a County steadfast for Yorkshire



FAMILY AFFAIR: Brothers Ben and Dan Brown (top) while Chris Hanson will faceneephew George

Captain David Appleyard until turning pro in the middle of last year, just got more earache from Dan, whose younger brother Ben is one of Yorkshire's top performers and in the Men's team.

"It's stupid of me not to put him in after he keeps pestering," said Walker, who had raised the prospect of such a pre-season match with Yorkshire officials even since he and Chris Hanson

launched the 2020protour.

Brown joins a star-studded professional crew which includes just one non-Yorkshire man – Marco Penge – and with more than 200 county appearances between them.

Besides Penge and Dan Brown, there is six time European Tour winner Simon Dyson, John Parry, Hanson and Nick Marsh.

The team has a very strong South Yorkshire flavour with George Mason (Wath), George Ash, Sam Bairstow (both Hallowes), Sheffield man and Kenyan Open run-

ner-up Joe Dean (see p22), precocious DP Tour talent Josh Berry (Doncaster) and Jonathon 'Jigger' Thomson who first picked up a club at Rotherham aged five.

There will be a family affair feel to two of the matches with England Amateur champ Ben Brown taking on big brother Dan, while George Hanson will be up against his Uncle Chris in their match.

As detailed on p3, the contest will feature six fourball betterball matches, all of them going the full 18 holes to provide an aggregate result.

HOW THE TEAMS WILL LINE-UP

2020protour:

- 1 Sam Bairstow/George Mason
- 2 George Ash/Josh Berry
- 3 Dan Brown/John Parry
- 4 Simon Dyson/Chris Hanson
- 5 Jigger Thomson/Joe Dean
- 6 Nick Marsh/Marco Penge

Yorkshire Men:

- 1 Tom Osborne/Charlie Daughtrey
- 2 Jake Sowden/Aaron Brettell
- 3 Ben Brown/Lucas Martin
- 4 George Hanson/Jack Northgraves
- 5 George Heath/Jake Wallis
- 6 Dan Thomas/Ollie Smith



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Masham ladies are HDUGC winter champs



Masham Golf Club's ladies saved the best for last in wrapping up the Harrogate & District Golf Union's Winter League.

Four of the six scheduled rounds managed to be played despite the awful weather, in a format consisting of three greensome pairs, with stableford scor-

ing. A combined 83 points in the final round at Rudding Park on Monday March 4th meant they held off the strong opponents of Otley Golf Club. The winning team on Monday was Melanie Couchman, Nicola Gill, Penny Nicklas, Sarah Newby, Jan McGee and Lady Captain Jackie Thirsk.

Shaw-Radford lifts Sunningdale title



Huddersfield's Dylan Shaw-Radford (right) got the 2024 season off to a great start, partnering his England team-mate Harley Smith to the prestigious Sunningdale Foursomes title.

Male professionals play off +1, male amateurs off scratch, lady professionals play off 2 and lady amateurs receive three shots.

The first two rounds saw both Sunningdale's Old and New courses used, with all matches from the 3rd round onwards over the Old.

Shaw-Radford and Harley (The Rayleigh Club) prevailed 5&4 in the final over home golfer William Shucksmith and Darryl Gwilliam (Coventry), who reached the final by way of a tense 1-up semi-final win against Yorkshire Men's pair, Tom Osborne (Lindrick) and Charlie Daughtrey (Rotherham).

Osborne and Daughtrey had accounted for another Yorkshire county player, Alex Boyes (Teesside) and his Wynyard partner Jack Burton in the quarter-finals, 3&2.

Boyes has been called up to represent England's mixed junior team in Spain.

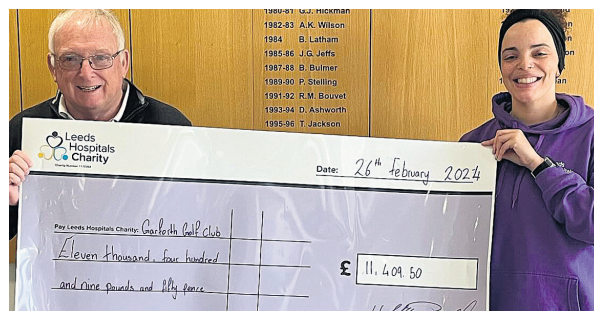
Osborne and Daughtrey had earlier produced a win over tour professional Eddie Pepperell and his pro partner Rob Harrihy.

New professional George Ash (Hallowes) and his partner Mia Eales-Smith (Lindrick) made it to the 3rd round before losing narrowly 1-up to Abbeydale professional Gareth Davies and his partner Robert Harris (Lincoln). Davies/Harris would themselves go out by the same margin in the 4th round.

For the eventual champions, a first round match that went down the 20th was followed by three comfortable wins before their quarter-final against St Neots pair Oliver Toyer and Sam Marshall was edged 1-up.

Shaw-Radford and Smith then had the benefit of a walkover in their semi-final when John Wilding and Ellie Gower withdrew.

It meant they were fresh for the afternoon's final match against Gwilliam/Shucksmith.



Golf club captains' charity efforts are always a boon to the various organisations they benefit, but Garforth's Ken Findlater went above and beyond for Leeds Hospitals' Neo-Natal Unit. He is pictured handing over a cheque for a superb £11,409.50!



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WOMEN'S GOLF Six-event professional tour launched by Adam and wife Sarah

Walkers flying the women's flag

Husband and wife Adam and Sarah Walker have announced a new series of events for women golf professionals.

The Ladies Pro Series was launched on Friday March 8 by the Yorkshire Men's stalwart – who returned to the professional ranks last summer – and has been doing instruction at the Invictus Golf Studio. Walker has form with successful professional and pro-am events via the 2020protour he co-founded with Chris Hanson.

So far the Ladies Pro Series has scheduled six events all with a £10,000 prize purse, but hopes to add more as sponsors and business partners are recruited. The venues are yet to be announced for tournaments whose format will see each professional paired with an amateur partner, with prizes for both the pro's individual score, as well as the combined team total.

The tour's 2024 schedule

Ladies first...
tour artwork,
plus founders
Adam and
Sarah Walker



has been designed to complement the existing Ladies European Tour Access Series, with no clashes of dates in a six-event season, with more to be added that initially runs between April and August.

Following the conclusion of the season, options are currently being explored for tournaments to take place in the Middle East at the end of the year, creating playing opportunities for developmental golfers to enjoy.

In an industry press release,

the Walkers said: "Women's sport is rightly growing across the board. Golf is no different and we want to give ladies the chance to compete year-round with comparable prize funds to the men.

"The standard of women's golf in the UK is exemplary and we want to showcase this and help them develop their game, so they are ready to compete at the highest level.

"Having two young daughters ourselves and having a sporting background we want

them to grow up in a world where sport is fair and accessible to all, and we are excited to be a part of the journey."

With ease of access and a developmental spirit in mind, the tour sees comparatively lower entry fees than many professional events, with a pro's purse of £10,000 for all events in its first year.

Golfers succeeding in the series will enjoy opportunities to earn a higher amount than on all existing female tours at this developmental level.

The ambitions of the tour will be for it to become an official feeder series for the existing structure within ladies professional golf; notably, providing a pathway into the Ladies European Tour Access Series.

The first event will take place the week commencing April 29 with the remaining tournaments held at venues across England, again helping to make the series more accessible.



A quick 9-holes or relaxing 18-holes – come and play at Roundhay Park and Temple Newsam. Stunning vistas across the city of Leeds on TN's 'Lady Dorothy' or a challenge on the 'Lord Irwin'. A leisurely 9 at Roundhay starts at just £10.40, with annual season tickets on sale from April 1 allowing unlimited access to both courses.



Fully stocked golf shops, and golf club bars to enjoy a relaxing drink after your round. Golf memberships available – information on request by contacting the club secretaries

NO NEED TO BOOK – NO DRESS CODE JUST TURN UP AND PLAY



TEMPLE NEWSAM & ROUNDHAY PARK GCs

Temple Newsam golf shop: 0113 264 7362
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Membership is from June 1st 2023 to May 31st 2024



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Whitwood steps up for RL...

Whitwood Golf Club in Castleford continues its annual tradition of supporting the Rugby League Benevolent Fund. Event organiser Sam Wickens is pictured presenting a cheque for £1600 to the Benevolent Fund's head, Stephen Ball.

The event was founded by club member and one of Rugby League's all-time greats Brian Lockwood, who began his stellar career at Castleford, before going on to win trophies at Hull Kingston Rovers and Widnes, while representing Gt Britain and also playing for Balmain and Canterbury-Bankstown in Australia.

Mr Ball commented: "Your support for our work is appreciated and will allow us to continue making a difference to the lives of our beneficiaries."

The RFL Benevolent Fund assists people and ex-players within the Rugby League community with a variety of needs.

Willet's fitness race for Augusta

Yorkshire's first Major winner, Danny Willett, is facing a race against time with the 2024 running of The Masters looming.

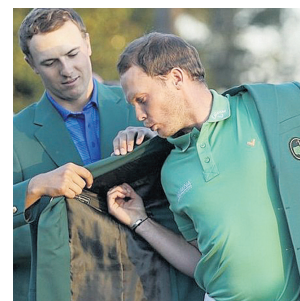
The first Major of the year at Augusta National begins on April 11 and Willett, the 2016 champion, is still recovering from shoulder surgery.

He had been nursing a damaged shoulder and was playing the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth in September. Willett won the tournament in 2019 and had played the first 12 holes in 6-under when his tee shot on the 15th exacerbated the muscle tear. He had surgery shortly after and is busy with his rehab.

Speaking at a Prostate Cancer UK charity event at The Belfry he said that he's back hitting balls. Willett will be in Augusta as a former champion anyway, but hopes to be able to compete. "It will be very very close," he told journalists.

He said: "The beauty of potentially playing is the fact that I know the golf course that well I'm probably not going to be slogging around 18 holes on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in practice rounds."

"I'll be able to take it a little bit easier but I also don't want to go there and



just make up the numbers."

Injuries have plagued the Rotherham golfer since he won the Masters on a day when leader and hot favourite Jordan Spieth fell apart on the Sunday afternoon, although Willett has also won two other events besides the BMW, in Scotland and Dubai.

Surgeons found more shoulder damage than Willett had been aware of, but the 36-year-old said he hopes that once recovered he can enjoy "another 10 or 15 years" of competitive golf.

He has been an ambassador of Prostate Cancer UK for four years, raising tens of thousands of pounds in the process.



Irvine Golf Club

The Irvine Golf Club, Bogside, sports a traditional links course established over 100 years ago owing much of its present day character to the design work of James Braid in 1926. The course provides a challenge to all with its subtle changes in direction and no two holes the same.

Bogside, Sandy Rd, Irvine
Tel: 01294 275979
www.theirvinegolfclub.co.uk



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Kirkby Lonsdale Golf Club are welcoming new members for 2024

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KEIGHLEY GC Attic booklet discovery is a delight for club members

A 'forgotten Fowler'

It is not every day you discover that your golf course was designed by one of the world's leading architects but this has just happened at Keighley Golf Club.

The name WH Fowler had been included in some short notes on the club's history page, and just how involved the great designer actually was came as a complete shock to the club's Chairman Simon Tabel.

The information was discovered in a booklet from 1927 that was found in the club's attic, but the importance hadn't been understood when some of it was replicated on their website.

"When I saw Herbert Fowler's name I realised immediately that this was hugely significant," said Tabel.

"I've been a member for 33 years and no one has ever identified the architect responsible for the course – it's a fantastic discovery."

The records reveal that Fowler, who by then had designed a number of top UK courses including Walton Heath, The Berkshire and, closer to home, Bradford Golf Club, as well as several top tracks in the USA, was engaged by the club in 1922 and completed a redesign that included five new holes.

"He returned to the club to explain his changes to an Extraordinary General Meeting and this, and the £900 cost for the works was approved, with work com-



pleted in 1923."

The course layout is almost identical 100 years later with several design features still obvious.

"Fowler liked long accurate driving," added Tabel, "and many of our par fours are well over 400 yards. There is also mounding and grass bunkers which are typical, and the course uses the natural contours of the land."

The competitors in the YUGC 6th Division Team Championship will discover the delights of this 'forgotten Fowler' in May when Keighley plays

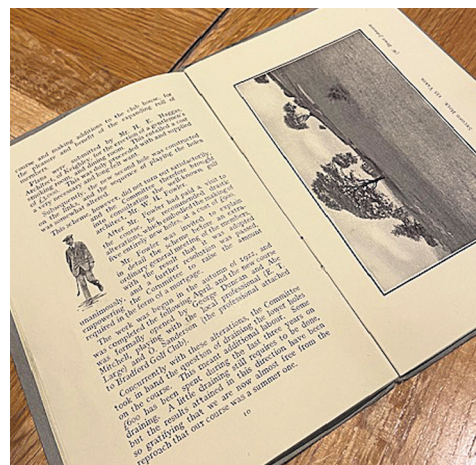
host. The club also stages three Bradford Union events this season.

Tabel concluded: "We've always known it's a good course, now we can proudly say that we are we were designed by one of the best!"

Above left – autumn mist at Keighley Golf Club.

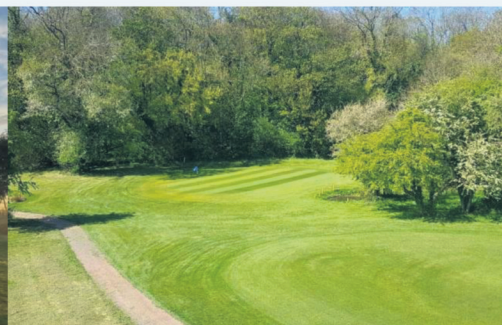
Above right, the booklet discovered in an attic clear-out which reveals Herbert Fowler's work.

Right – Fowler was a fan of long, challenging driving holes



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LABOUR OF LOVE



Alan Key is a man with a plan. And then, when he's brought that plan to life, he has another plan ready in waiting. Where Burstwick Country Golf is concerned, Key is a veritable golfing ball of fire, warming up everything and everyone around him. The flames certainly burn brightly at the club set in rural countryside to the east of Hull.

It's 20 years since the 3-handicapper, now aged 38, was leaving 6th Form just as his farmer dad David was leaving the troubled agricultural sector behind and throwing everything behind a new golf project. It was no an uncommon theme at the time.

While Alan headed off to spend four years at Askham Bryan Agricultural College in York to hone his skills as a greenkeeper, dad David was making one inspirational decision – to appoint lauded golf architect Jonathan Gaunt as his course designer.

The greens and bunker complexes, plus six water hazards dotted around the course, ensure that the biggest hitters will be kept honest around an easy-walking track coming in at 6147 yards off whites and 5780 yards (yellows) for a par of 70, with just a single par-5 and pair of par-3s on each nine.

Burstwick built its first 9-holes in 2003 along with a driving range which has been very much developed since, and which comes into its own during periods like the past four or five months when courses

YG publisher DANNY LOCKWOOD visits a family-run club with its eyes on a golden future...

have basically been underwater. More on that shortly.

The 18-hole layout was duly completed under Gaunt's supervision and the Key family set about trying to build a golf business from scratch. It wasn't always an easy journey.

"There were a few times when we were very close to the brink," admitted Alan Key, who these days is happy to jump on a mower and help the greenkeeping team out, but is the beating heart of everything Burstwick, running the club, overseeing marketing and pulling a pint or two as required. Wife Laura is busy behind her desk, scrutinising the books and handling accounts.

"Looking back, I think we didn't know enough about golf when we started. We should have spent two or three years getting to understand more about the golf industry."

As in most aspects of life, there's no substitute for hard work and total commitment – and for putting your money where your heart and soul is.

On a bright and sunny – if cold – early

Burstwick Country Golf has the Key to success...

March Monday after another spell of rain-enforced closures, Burstwick is buzzing. Its 'Nineteen' restaurant has a steady flow of customers and is a dedicated business in its own right, with the Keys keeping hospitality firmly in-house, employing three chefs.

Outside, an area under construction will be a west-facing patio by the summer. "We get great sunsets!" enthuses Key, whose passion for everything golf now extends to a role on the Operations Committee of the East Riding Union, the reigning Inter-District champions.

But as much as golfers are going out and navigating a course Key describes as "young parkland, that's a bit linky in parts – particularly holes three through 11", the adjacent driving range is a hive of activity.

The 12 bays face down a 300-yard target, but the decision to equip every one with Top Tracer technology has paid off in spades, especially during this wet winter. What's more, unlike the vast majority of ranges, Burstwick has invested in top quality compressed balls, ensuring that the

numbers golfers are fed back from the various programmes at their fingertips accurately resemble the shots they have hit.

Regular users can sign up for monthly challenge leaderboards or play a range of games and world-renowned courses.

And then there are the two teaching studios of the Matt Daley Golf Academy and fellow teaching pro Luke Bell, impressively spacious – nay, luxurious – hybrid facilities which can be temperature controlled enclosed rooms, or opened up to face the range itself. No wonder the pros are busy with around 70 lessons a week.

Out on the course itself, the original layout saw the introduction of some 5,000 native trees. Another 10,000 have been planted over the past two or three years, but Key insists these are more about overall aesthetics than to shape the golf course.

Burstwick has a Caravan Club camping site, but they are hoping to get planning permission to introduce holiday lodges and have been in talks with leading holiday park company Hoseasons on that front.

And beyond that...?

Key laughs. "Well I'd like to re-do the clubhouse, turn it into a two-storey facility, but we've probably got enough on at the minute."

Indeed they have. Having thrived during lockdown – they put on 100 members in just a few months – Burstwick has now capped 7-day memberships at 600 with 58 names on the waiting list. There are 5-day memberships available and the club is actively trying to grow its 45-lady members.

Unlike many traditional golf clubs, membership dues work on a rolling 12-month basis. Join in July or December, renew in July and December. "It helps with cash flow," shrugs the boss. "Made sense to do it rather than load up on one particular date."

Drawing most of its membership from the east Hull area, an initial loss-making annual Pro-Am venture has now come into its own, with everyone enjoying a top-quality day complete with impressive prize table. "We have 42 teams signed up for this year's event on Friday May 24th, playing for prizes worth £6,500 and £750 to the winning amateur team."

"As soon as we've enjoyed the day and got a date for the following year, I contact everyone and tell them I've reserved their tee time, if they're interested. About 80% say yes!"

It seems the passion for all things Burstwick is rubbing off in every which way.



The 2nd has water cutting in from the left, plus Gaunt's archetypal bunkers, mounds and undulating greens

BURSTWICK COUNTRY GOLF

Yellow Tees

1 – 312yds, par-4, SI 15

Slight downhill, dogleg right to left. Play for position with a bunkered elbow and more sand if you go straight and long. Big hitters can go over the corner but two front left bunkers await. One of the flatter greens but with run offs and mounds that are characteristic at Burstwick.

2 – 378yds, par-4, SI 4

The fairways are generous here, but you have a very large pond running down your left, which cuts into the fairway about 75 yards from a slightly raised, undulating green which slopes back left to front right. Bunkers all sit below the putting surface.

3 – 297yds, par-4, SI 12

A gently rising straight hole with OB right and a right-side fairway bunker. The back to front sloping green has something of a back right shelf. As ever, traps abound!

4 – 419yds, par-4, SI 2

Out to the top corner of the course, generous fairway but OB still right. The hole rises before falling away slightly. If your second is blind beware the water hazard below left of a green which slopes from the back left but also falls away front left.

5 – 117yds, par-3, SI 16

A pretty, short par-3 to an elevated green with a shapely, deep front left bunker, one front right and another at the back to catch anything long. Good luck holding the green from there in summer, on a distinct back left to front right slope.

6 – 533yds, par-5, SI 8

Straight on, up-and-over but with a big fairway bunker slap bang in the middle. It will take a good knock to clear it. The hole falls away down to a flatter green protected by a pond in front. A good par-5.

7 – 405yds, par-4, SI 6

A long par-4 running back parallel with the 6th. Big fairway bunkers to both sides, before coming in slightly uphill to a big shaped green with an abundance of undulations and plenty of sand for protection.

8 – 225yds, par-3, SI 10

A mighty long par-3, especially into the prevailing wind with a big bunker in front, about 20-yards short of one of the flatter greens.

9 – 409yds, par-4, SI 1

Stroke index 1, a long par-4, a sharp dogleg right with traps on the elbow and a pond lurking a farther 25 yards on. Come in uphill to a well protected green which appears to slope off both back left and right. Tricky to read.

10 – 263yds, par-4, SI 18

Really nice looking from the tee, driveable in theory but those traps are pretty intimidating. Play in from the right side to another back to a big oval gently sloping green with the usual mounds and run offs.

11 – 314yds, par-4, SI 7

A slight dogleg with the last 70 yards coming in from the right side to a green sitting behind another pond. Too much zip on your ball in summer could draw it back into the water.

12 – 530yds, par-5, SI 5

A slight left to right shape, but favour the left side to avoid the lurking traps. There's plenty of width though. Beware the horseshoe-shaped bunker in front of one of the flatter (though none really are) greens. They're all pretty sizeable!

13 – 266yds, par-4, SI 17

A driveable par-4 in good conditions, but again at the risk of taking on various jeopardies. Go for it if you have an A1 bunker game!

14 – 155yds, par-3, SI 13

A medium par-3, again inviting you to just hit the short grass and avoid the sand and run-offs.

15 – 319yds, par-4, SI 11

A straight on, shortish par-4. Fairway bunkers left but you can also find tree trouble on the right, before coming into a kidney-shaped back to front sloping green.

16 – 389yds, par-4, SI 3

A tough, dogleg left-to-right. A new plantation will deter big hitters from taking on the corner once it matures. A very large, gently undulating green, with a back bunker you might not see on your approach.



Top – Alan Key, Managing Director of Burstwick Country Golf, situated a few miles east of the city of Hull

Above – Matt Daley's Golf Academy has two large air-conditioned hybrid studios and 12 bays all with Top Tracer technology

17 – 132yds, par-3, SI 14

A smaller par-3, just navigate the bunkers to find one of the flatter greens.

18 – 317yds, par-4, SI 9

Heading for home up the side of the driving range, which has OB stakes a yard inside it. There's a final water hazard in play down the left and which cuts into the fairway, though it can be carried. Not just the expected bunkers greenside but a couple of grass bunkers too.



Burstwick's USGA-grade greens are big, undulating and true – a trademark Jonathan Gaunt characteristic

BURSTWICK COUNTRY GOLF

ELLIFOOT LANE, BURSTWICK, HULL HU12 9EF

TEL: 01964 670112

www.burstwick.golf

	White	Yellow	Par	S.I.	Red	Par	S.I.
1	319	312	4	15	268	4	15
2	411	378	4	4	353	4	4
3	333	297	4	12	281	4	12
4	430	419	4	2	362	4	2
5	125	117	3	16	103	3	16
6	566	533	4	9/8	452	5	8
7	416	405	4	7/6	359	4	6
8	233	225	3	10	217	3	10
9	419	409	4	1	358	4	1
	3252	3095	35		2753	35	
10	290	263	4	18	249	4	18
11	323	314	4	8/7	305	4	7
12	557	530	4	5	481	5	5
13	278	266	3	17	237	4	17
14	163	155	4	13	145	3	13
15	352	319	4	11	282	4	11
16	409	389	4	3	334	4	3
17	141	132	3	14	124	3	14
18	382	317	5	6/9	304	4	9
	2895	2685	35		2461	35	
	6147	5780			5214		



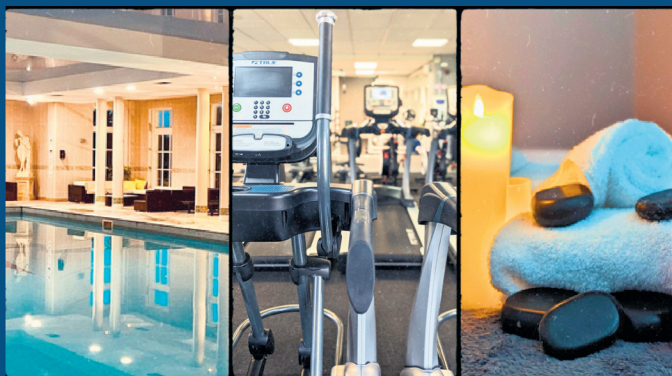
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FOCUS ON Lancashire golf destinations

Warm welcome from neighbours!



The 18th green at Shaw Hill is a distinct two-tier MacKenzie-style challenge

SHAW HILL GOLF & SPA HOTEL

Whether keen golfers are heading to the north-west region, or just want a new destination to explore, Shaw Hill Golf and Spa Hotel ticks an awful lot of boxes.

The independent, family-owned resort is handily located just off the M61 in Whittle-le-Wood, Lancashire and has at its heart a magnificent, 18th century Georgian manor house.

The first golf course on the extensive parkland grounds was created almost 100 years ago and for the past 25 years Shaw Hill has been run as a luxury leisure destination by the Stokes Tyrer family.

Catering for up to 200 guests, Shaw Hill is a mix of the ancient and modern with three of the estate's structures being grade II listed.

Set in 192 acres of sweeping, undulating parkland amidst a huge variety of tree types, golf is very much at the front and centre of the Shaw Hill offering.

With a 30-room, three-floor hotel and comprehensive Spa and gym facilities, it's not just dedicated golfers who can relax and enjoy a welcome break.

With their centenary being celebrated next year, staff are already working on a range of events to mark the occasion. Meanwhile there are a range of stay-and-play golf packages for parties of all sizes, to enjoy a testing layout designed by Laurence Allamby, a young golf professional who studied under none other than

Dr Alister MacKenzie.

Well bunkered, and with careful deployment of run offs and mounding, there are also numerous sizeable ponds located around the course which have to be treated with much respect.

The club has a thriving membership, a country members offer while corporate golf days are also well catered for. The golf co-ordinator can be reached on 01257 269221.

Shaw Hill has four Opens between May and August, including ladies, seniors, juniors and a novel adult/junior pairs on May 28.

Society packages for 2024 start from £42 and golf mini breaks for £160. There are variable midweek/weekend green fees to include tea/coffee and bacon roll on arrival.

For more details visit www.shaw-hill.co.uk

STAINING LODGE GOLF

Staining Lodge Golf Course is an 18 hole par 72 course set in 160 acres of rural Fylde countryside. With views stretching to the Pennines yet only 10 minutes drive from the M55 and handy for the popular resort of Blackpool, the course offers easy accessibility combined with the feeling of being totally in the countryside.

Staining Lodge is a pay and play course that offers memberships and golf contracts whilst remaining accessible to all types of golfers from beginners and weekend golfers to

Continued across the page

Idyllic Fylde parkland at Staining Lodge



From previous page regular players with handicaps and a competitive streak, playing 6,492 yards from white tees and 6,159 yellows.

With a 250-yard grassed practice range and a short game area, the club has recently invested in 5,000 new balls, while a warm-up basket of 20 balls cost just £2.

Staining Lodge has a range of discounts and packages for society, corporate and group bookings while individual packages can be tailored. For a quote call 01253 891336 and ask to speak to Peter or Ewan, or email enquiries@staininglodge.co.uk

BENTHAM GC

FEW golf courses can match not just the quality but quantity of scenic beauty that envelops anyone who visits Bentham Golf Club.

Surrounded by the Yorkshire Dales, Lake District and Forest of Bowland, Bentham, the imposing sight of Ingleborough looms over you as you wend your way around an undulating and always challenging 18-hole course.

Bentham has come a long way since golf was first played in the area in 1922, with five holes laid out at Park Foot between Bentham and Ingleton. The club moved to its present site at Bentham Moor later that same year and Bentham Golf Club was established.

In 1925 the same founders expanded the course to 9-holes, at which point a green-keeper was employed who doubled as a club maker – today you'd call him the club 'professional'!

Bentham stayed as a 9-hole course but by the mid 1990s it was clear change was needed if it was to survive and thrive.

Land that the club could have purchased in the early 1960s became available again and the directors dug deep to create a full 18-hole course.

Out on the course the first six holes take you on the outside of the layout before the 7th tee starts the journey back towards the halfway house.

But the real transformation came in late 2009 when Bentham became a proprietary golf club owned by local business owners, the Marshall family.

For almost 30 years, Thomas and Jane had been successfully running Riverside Caravan Park, also located in Bentham, and felt that the golf course would complement the park perfectly.

Now, the course is being firmly steered by Thomas and Jane's son John Marshall and daughter, Isabel, with a new outlook and revived sense of



The Ingleborough peak is a neighbour, with the Lake District for a backdrop at Bentham entrepreneurial adventure.

Since their acquisition, significant investment has been made not only in improving the course, but adding a driving range, glamping pods and luxury lodges nestled amid the fairways, tuition and a well-stocked leisureware shop, along with revitalising

the clubhouse as the 1922 Bar & Kitchen, open to non-golfers.

As well as golfing competitions, a variety of events are hosted both on the course and in the clubhouse, from night golf to wedding fairs and star gazing to Get into Golf beginners sessions.

There are hopefully many more bright things to come for a club whose owners are open to all sorts of suggestions for ways to enjoy 125 acres of golfing heaven and fabulous, flexible function room facilities with superb catering.

www.benthamgolfcourse.co.uk

STAINING LODGE Golf Club



Society, Corporate & Group Bookings

Discounts and packages are available for society, corporate and group bookings. Please get in touch.

Individual packages can be tailored, for a separate quote please call 01253 891336 and ask to speak to Peter or Ewan, alternatively you can email enquiries@staininglodge.co.uk

Staining Lodge Golf Course
Dover Lodge Farm
Staining
Blackpool
FY3 0DE



East Riding going for third title in four years

Reigning Inter-District champions East Riding will begin the defence of their title at home to Harrogate in May. The 2021 champions went undefeated last year, although they shared a 18-18 draw with eventual runners-up Halifax-Huddersfield in their opening match at Filey.

The 2022 champions Sheffield finished in a disappointing 5th place last year with a 3-4 record and will be looking to bounce back as they open their campaign at Doncaster where bottom club York will be the visitors. This season's Team Championship will be staged at Cleckheaton GC.

Sunday May 19:

Bradford v Halifax-Huddersfield (Bracken Ghyll)
East Riding v Harrogate (Hornsea); Leeds v Teesside (Headingley); Sheffield v York (Doncaster)

Saturday June 8:

York v Teesside (Easingwold)

Sunday June 9:

Harrogate v Bradford (Rudding Park); Halifax-Huddersfield v East Riding (TBC); Sheffield v Leeds (Sitwell Park)

Sunday June 23:

Bradford v East Riding (Woodhall Hills); Harrogate v Halifax-Huddersfield (Ilkley); Leeds v York (Garforth); Teesside v Sheffield (Blackwell Grange)

Sunday July 14:

Bradford v Leeds (Baildon); East Riding v Sheffield (Brough)
Harrogate v Teesside (Otley); Halifax-Huddersfield v York (H'fax Bradley Hall)

Sunday August 4:

York v Bradford (Fulford); Leeds v East Riding (Wike Ridge); Sheffield v Harrogate (Hallowes); Teesside v Halifax-Huddersfield (Eaglescliffe)

Sunday August 18:

Bradford v Teesside (Northcliffe); East Riding v York (Scarborough North Cliff); Harrogate v Leeds (Romanby); Halifax-Huddersfield v Sheffield (Huddersfield)

Sunday September 1:

Sheffield v Bradford (Sickleholme); Teesside v East Riding (Teesside); York v Harrogate (Pike Hills); Leeds v Halifax-Huddersfield (Pontefract)

Sunday September 8th:

Team Championship (Cleckheaton)

Junior YIDU Fixtures

Last year's champions and runners-up meet in the first round of the Junior YIDU for 2024. Winners Sheffield will host East Riding at Serby Park, the pair also having finished in the same positions in 2022.

Thursday April 4: East Riding v Teesside (Driffield)

Sunday April 21: Harrogate v York (Rudding Park); Sheffield v East Riding (Serby Park); Teesside v Leeds (Cleveland)

Sunday May 5: Teesside v Bradford (Middlesbrough)

Saturday May 11: Teesside v Harrogate (Wynyard);

Sunday May 12: Halifax-Hudders v Leeds (Crosland Heath)

Sunday May 19: Leeds v Sheffield (Darrington)

Tuesday May 28: York v East Riding (Heworth)

Sunday June 2: East Riding v Bradford (Beverley & ER)

Sunday June 16: Halifax-Hudders v Harrogate (Halifax);

Sheffield v Teesside (Hillsborough)

Saturday June 29: Harrogate v Sheffield (Thirsk & N'ton)

Sunday July 21: Bradford v Sheffield (Calverley); East Riding v Halifax-Hudders (Skidby Lakes)

Friday July 26: Leeds v Bradford (Low Laithes)

Sunday July 28: Leeds v Harrogate (Selby); Sheffield v Halifax-Hudders (Silkstone)

Thursday August 1: Harrogate v East Riding (Ilkley)

Friday August 2: York v Sheffield (Forest of Galtres)

Monday August 5: York v Leeds (Malton & Norton)

Wednesday August 7: Bradford v Harrogate (Keighley); York v Halifax-Hudders (Kirkbymoorside)

Thursday August 11: Teesside v York (Wilton)

Friday August 12: East Riding v Leeds (Hornsea)

Monday August 15: Halifax-Hudders v Bradford (Willow Valley)

Tuesday August 16: Bradford v York (Branshaw)

Thursday August 25: Halifax-Hudders v Teesside (Dewsbury District)

Thursday August 29: Junior Team Championship (Pike Hills)

REGIONAL FEATURE Visiting some of the district's gems...

A wealth of riches in South Yorkshire

BONDHAY GOLF CLUB

Members at the Bondhay club, nestled at the meeting point of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and South Yorkshire, in the heart of the region known as the Dukeries' have had much to celebrate recently.

Home to the challenging 18-hole Devonshire Course, 9-hole par-3 Academy Course, floodlit driving range, restaurant and bar serving quality refreshments and a recently renovated function suite, there is something for everyone.

Indeed Bondhay was named Turnaround Club Of The Year at the 2023 Club Awards in November. The club was recognised for its dedication to improvement.

The awards took place at The Athena in Leicester, hosted by sports journalist John Inverdale.

Bondhay made it to the shortlist for two categories – Golf Club of the Year and Turnaround Club of the Year – and were nominated on the night for Website of the Year too after the launch of a new website.

This was after being named Golf Club of the Year at the Yorkshire Prestige Awards in July.

The club's driving range now features Trackman technology in all eight bays and affordable packages from 30 minutes to two hours, plus an easy-to-use online booking system – this is the ultimate in golf club accessibility.

In a message to members at the beginning of February, Club Managing Director Lisa Hardisty outlined a wide range of plans to continue current refurbishments across all areas of the club.

There were also plans to replace Bondhay's fleet of buggies in the Spring, with an upgrade to lithium batteries rather than lead for greater efficiency and reliability, with 10 buggies planned to be available for use on any given day.

www.bondhaygolfclub.com

WATH GOLF CLUB

Set in the tranquil countryside of South Yorkshire on the outskirts of Rotherham Wath's par

70, 6,096-yard parkland course was established some 120 years ago.

The peaceful setting of Wath Golf Club means the course is the ideal place to unwind and enjoy the challenges of this testing course with its narrow fairways and small greens. The course is flat and a good test for all standards of golfers.

The club also boasts a well stocked pro shop and short game warm-up area plus a welcoming clubhouse which is available for private event bookings.

There are several membership options available and club members can benefit from the use of the practice facilities (with covered area) plus a full calendar of events and competitions.

Wath has a par of 70, but there are 450 and 436 yard par-4s – off yellow tees – while the three par 5s are complimented by five par-3s.

It all began in 1904 when a group of local businessmen staged a golf competition on a field on the outskirts of Wath. It led to the group forming a club, renting some local



Tranquil countryside and fantastic facilities at Wath Golf Club

fields and starting to develop a small 9-hole golf course.

The club moved to its present site on Abdy Lane in Wath-Upon-Dearne in 1945 and grew first to 14 and eventually to 18 holes in 1988.

Since then a 22-acre practice facility has been added and members and visitors can hone their skills in a multi-game improvement area, where golfers can practice shots up to 120 yards. With a short chipping green, bunker area and a 300+ yard driving

range, plus practice putting greens and warm up bays, virtually every box is ticked! Wath hosts societies on most weekdays and Sunday afternoons – either playing 18 or 27.

Packages can be tailored, with discounts offered for groups of 24 or more. For more information contact 01709 878609 to speak to a member of staff or email golf@wathgolfclub.co.uk

Continued across the page

WATH GOLF CLUB

Set in the tranquil countryside of South Yorkshire on the outskirts of Rotherham, our par 70, 6,096-yard parkland golf course was established way back in 1904. We welcome visitors plus new additions to our thriving membership at one of the most friendly and inclusive golf clubs in the region.



We have memberships available for 5 & 7 Days for Gents, Ladies and Juniors

Society packages available from £30 7-days-a-week (subject to availability)

We have a well-stocked pro shop and 20-acres of practice facilities, while our welcoming clubhouse is available for private events

**For more information please contact the Club Office 01709 878609 – visit our website at: www.wathgolfclub.co.uk
WATH GOLF CLUB, ABDY LANE, ROTHERHAM S62 7SJ**

SOUTH YORKSHIRE IN FOCUS



An invitation to open your shoulders – the 18th tee at Stocksbridge

STOCKSBRIDGE GOLF CLUB

The course is best described as upland heath in its terrain and is relatively short by today's standards but is definitely not to be underestimated.

Do not be fooled by the distance! The small island greens, often surrounded by rough and a flat lie being a rarity makes it a challenge.

It's only a par 65 from the yellow tees but don't be thinking it's a pushover, if the wind is blowing especially on some of the par-3 holes the course will be playing closer to 70.

Stocksbridge Golf Club was formed in 1924. There were three pioneers-in-chief – L. Drabble, J Kilbride and H. Saxby. Three years previously the trio recognised the potential of the less wealthy inhabi-

tants of Stocksbridge and the surrounding area and devised ways and means of bringing the Royal and Ancient game within the reach of the local people.

The course boasted among its attractions the Dragon's Well, where according to folklore, the Dragon of Wharncliffe slaked his thirst in days gone by, by flying across the valley from his lair on the Wharncliffe Crag.



Mature parkland and water in play around Bondhay

The club started as a 9-hole course and was extended to 15-holes in 1982. The current 18-hole layout was completed in 1990.

Stocksbridge is situated 11 miles north of the Sheffield city centre and only five miles from junction 36 of the M1, overlooking the village of Deepcar.

At its highest point 900m above sea level you can enjoy views of the Peak District

National Park to the west and the Lincolnshire Wolds to the east – a full 360 degree view from the top of the course spans 40 miles into the distance. And with the changes in elevation, Stocksbridge has some truly memorable driving holes.

A very sociable club with a strong social membership, visitors and societies are always welcome. See www.stocksbridge.co.uk

HICKLETON GOLF CLUB

Hickleton Golf Club prides itself on being one of South Yorkshire's premier golfing experiences.

Conveniently positioned between the bustling towns of Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley, Hickleton is a testament to all that's good about

Continued over the page

Hickleton Golf Club



Located in rolling countryside in the heart of South Yorkshire, the 18-hole parkland course was designed by ex-Ryder Cup player Neil Coles

"A superb course with magnificent scenery..."



Lidget Lane, Hickleton, Doncaster DN5 7BE 01709 896081
gm@hicklontongolfclub.co.uk www.hicklontongolfclub.co.uk

2024 OPEN DAYS

Ladies Events

Ladies Open Am-Am: Monday 3rd June
£100 per team

Ladies Open Texas Scramble: Monday 8th July
£100 per team

Gents Events

Gents Singles Stableford: Monday 6th May – £20pp

1909 The Open Am-Am:
Thursday 18th July – £100 per team

Gents Open betterball: Friday 23rd August – £50 per pair

Seniors Events (age 55+)

Seniors Open betterball: Thursday 6th June – £50 per pair

Seniors Singles Stableford: Thursday 12th Sept – £20pp

Mixed Events

Bank Holiday Mixed: Monday 26th August – £50 per pair

ALL EVENTS MUST BE ENTERED
VIA THE ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM

www.hicklontongolfclub.co.uk/opencompetitions
(Maximum strokes received 36 for all open days)

**SOCIETIES, CASUAL VISITORS AND
CAPTAINS' AWAY DAYS ALL WELCOME**

REGIONAL GOLF IN FOCUS

The beautiful South

Continued from previous page
golf in the White Rose county, just a 3-
mile drive from junction 37 of the
A1(M).

The club started life in 1909 with a
modest 9-hole course, growing eventu-
ally into today's challenging 18-hole
gem, unveiled in 1976 and crafted by
the legendary Ryder Cup players, Neil
Coles and Brian Huggett.

Over the decades, the club has honed
and refined the course, making it one of
the most sought-after golfing experi-
ences in the region.

An undulating parkland track with
tree-framed fairways, there are
panoramic vistas across South
Yorkshire and the eastern Pennines. As
visitors have been heard to remark:
"Hickleton offers a sublime golfing
experience amidst awe-inspiring
scenery."

The course itself stretches out to
6,446 yards from the back tees and pro-
vides a balanced blend of challenge and
enjoyment. At its heart lies a tree-lined
stream, meandering through the course
and forming a lake that comes into play
on the 1st, 2nd and 10th holes/ the first,
second, and tenth holes. The club
prides itself on a warm welcome to all
and offers a variety of packages
designed to meet all needs, from casual
visitors to societies and bigger events.

www.hickletongolfclub.co.uk



An aerial view of one of Hickleton Golf Club's superb holes

Quality guaranteed on
and off the course at
Waterfront Golf



WATERFRONT GOLF

Waterfront Golf Course is
set in 170 acres of beauti-
ful established parkland.
The course takes in breathtaking
views of the surrounding Old Moor
Nature Reserve and Manvers Lake.

While Waterfront is nominally a
challenging 9-hole golf course – it
was designed by international
course architect Simon Gidman – it
incorporates 18 different tees and
measures over 6500 yards – one of
the longest of its kind in the UK.

The owners' investment in USGA
specification greens means that
'winter greens' are not a thing at
Waterfront. Strategically placed
bunkers and tight fairways ensure
that it is a true test of golf.

The course goes to and from the
clubhouse with the 5th tee at the far
part of the course.

But while the excellent course
speaks for itself, it's back 'home'
where Waterfront quickly set itself

apart from its competitors.

It was the first club in the county
to introduce Trackman systems into
every one of its 32 bays (including
three teaching and fitting studios,
plus a specialist putting studio).

Each bay houses the latest air
compressed mats and easy access
ball trays. In addition, range balls
are a yellow, 2-piece, 100% com-
pression Taylormade ball. The out-
field is also fully equipped with
chipping nets, flags, greens and
trampolines with exact yardages
given in each bay for every target.

As Waterfront says itself: "All
our range balls are 100%
Compression Taylormade balls
which means true yardages. Our
outfield contains yardage markers,
targets and greens to keep your
practice interesting. Our automated
Robot ball picker and grass cutter
ensures clean balls and an immacu-
late outfield all year round!"

www.waterfrontgolf.co.uk



SPRING

— GOLF SPECIAL —



Breakfast

Bacon Cob + Coffee



Golf

Devonshire Course



Meal

Bondhay Bunker Burger

Available
1st April to
31st May

MONDAY TO WEDNESDAY £35 PER PLAYER
THURSDAY & FRIDAY £40 PER PLAYER
WEEKENDS & BANK HOLS £50 PER PLAYER

www.bondhaygolfclub.com

01909 723608 • enquiries@bondhaygolfclub.com • Worksop S80 3EH

SOUTH YORKSHIRE GOLF IN FOCUS

A 'pro' factory on the charge

It's not just fantastic golf courses and clubs that are a trademark of the South Yorkshire scene that is centred around Sheffield. The past few months have borne yet more testimony for the talent-factory that it continues to be.

Joe Dean, the former Lindrick and Hillsborough golfer now attached to College Pines, made headlines a few weeks ago when he managed to take time off from working as a Morrison's delivery driver to bag a second place finish at the DP World Tour's Kenya Open and a handsome £170,000 cheque.

The 29-year-old winner of the 2016 English Amateur Championship at Alwoodley came through DP World Tour Qualifying in November alongside fellow South Yorkshireman Josh Berry (pictured right).

Doncaster's Berry also made the cut at the Kenya Open, finishing in a tie for 23rd and pocketing £18,200 for his best payday yet in his inaugural campaign. Alex Fitzpatrick (Hallamshire – now attached to Hollinwell) was a shot ahead on -7 his tie in 19th being worth £27,350.

Another South Yorkshireman, Hallowes' Sam Bairstow, missed the cut in Kenya, however it was the first time he'd missed the weekend after a streak of five consecutive cuts made, bagging £86,000 in the process.



Joe Dean went into the Nairobi field ranked world number 2,930 but finished joint 2nd behind Darius van Driel in Nairobi after a final day -4 took him to -12 for the tournament.

Describing it as "life-changing", he said: "It's what people dream of." The Sheffield man came through six rounds of final Q School at Infinitum in November, scraping



Joe with the English Amateur Championship trophy

PHOTO: CHRIS STRATFORD

through in a tie for 22nd place. He didn't compete until the Qatar Masters in February as he could not afford to fund the travel. Dean missed the cut in Doha and returned to his job delivering for Morrisons, which he was doing as recently as the week before Kenya.

In Nairobi he found himself two shots behind eventual winner Van Driel after round one, then matched the Dutchman over the next three rounds to finish two back alongside Spaniard Nacho Elvira. The finish jumped him to 36th place on the Race to Dubai rankings.

"After the last three or four years I never thought I'd get another chance," he said, adding that he has "still some gremlins to get past in order to get to my full potential, but like anyone you've got to get over them, squash them and keep going."

"I've never been one of the most over-confi-

dent people – coming into this week was a bit daunting. Second event, you don't really feel like you belong and feel like you're trying to prove something.

"Luckily, I managed to get over that quickly and figure out how to get around the golf course."

After winning the English Amateur he earned a place in the 146th Open at Royal Birkdale in 2017 where he made the cut.

A fallow few years saw him make just two appearances on the main tour in 2019 before he came through this year's qualifying with a tie for 9th place at Donnington Grove Golf Club, before a morale-boosting 2nd at Las Pinaillas to earn his spot at final qualifying.

Meanwhile closer to home, word on the grapevine is that Morrisons have a vacancy for a delivery driver...

STOCKSBRIDGE GOLF CLUB

No Joining Fees, No Waiting Lists

Come and join our great and friendly club in our 100th Year.

Various 12 month memberships now available 5 & 7 Day

Juniors for Only **£50** (free with every full paying adult membership)

We are also offering 2- 5 year membership deals. Time to save even more !!

Also call to find out about our new corporate packages; we offer bespoke deals tailored to any companies golfing needs.

Due to increased demands:- Kitchen & Bar Staff also required. (Please call the Club for more details and how to apply)

Royd Lane, Deepcar, Sheffield, S36 2RZ www.stocksbridgegolfclub.co.uk
Tel: 0114 288 2003 Email: admin@stocksbridgegolfclub@gmail.co.uk



LIFE AT WATERFRONT



WHY WATERFRONT?

Waterfront Golf is a family run club and much more than just a normal golf club. We offer a stunning 9 Hole golf course measuring 6551 Yards when playing 18 holes, a state of the art Trackman range with 26 covered bays and 27 inch screens in every bay, a modern clubhouse with bar and kitchen serving food and drink of the highest quality, and much more!

We strive to be different and offer an experience of what we think golf should be like, we appeal to beginner golfers all the way through to touring professionals at the highest level, which was recognised by England Golf, and resulted in back to back nominations for Club of The Year in 2023 and 2024!

Our membership is growing although we don't have many spots left to offer. We have some of the cheapest fees in our area, with full playing 7 Day membership available for £675. Did we mention we never have temporary greens as well? Our green fees start from £15, call us to book a time

We also offer lessons and club fittings in our teaching studios using Trackman 4 technology. We stock Callaway, Taylormade, Titleist, Ping and Cobra with full fitting kits in all the brands.

Waterfront is open to anybody. We treat everyone with the same welcoming attitude no matter what, and we're the place to be for anything golf in Yorkshire, but even if it's not golf we have plenty to offer in all departments so why not come down and see us!

See you soon!



For more information call us on 01709 877616 or visit www.waterfrontgolf.co.uk



Keep up to date with everything Waterfront, follow us @waterfrontgolf

Waterfront Golf, Station Road, Rotherham, S637BU

Tony nears 'marathon' finish

March 27th will witness a landmark anniversary for Parkinson's disease sufferer and campaigner Tony Bruce – exactly three years since he set out to play golf every day.

It's been a remarkable experience for the York Golf Club member, which has both opened doors – and opened eyes – in the world of disability golf and indeed, sport. On the way he has raised thousands of pounds for Parkinson's charities, and aims to go out with a fanfare at his home club on Thursday April 4.

Speaking after playing 'walking football' with a group of York-area Parkinson's sufferers he said: 'I'm doing well at the moment. A bit stiff in the legs but I'm still managing to get out every day, either to play a round or go up the range to hit 50 to a hundred balls when the course is closed.'

The end of February saw Tony



mark 1,056 days of golf involving 1,240 rounds, but that includes about 40 days when courses have been closed. In his efforts to get out playing he's travelled to Selby, Forest Pines, Darrington and up to the Scottish Borders to get a game.

"The main thing is I'm getting

physical exercise and I'm not worried about the tremor for however long it takes. Like with the walking football today, you're moving about, you're focussed on the game. The streak goes on ... in some ways I'm looking forward to April 4th more than I thought I would be. I need a physical rest or a good massage – one or the other.

"I've done pilates occasionally with my wife, but that's starting to be affected by my balance issues which are creeping in. I'm still doing other sports, bowling indoors twice a week in the winter, three times outdoor – hopefully! – in the summer.

"Health wise I'm still quite positive about things. I know it's not going to get any better. To repeat the analogy, I know I'm not going to win the war but there are still plenty battles I can win."

Once past the three year target, Tony is staging a charity day of

fourball betterball golf at Strensall on April 4, with a range of auction prizes including a fourball with former Scotland and Lions captain Gavin Hastings at his Gullane club. Other items donated include a signed shirt from football star Luca Modric, Lee Westwood and Paul Lawrie signed shirts, plus 10 to 15 fourballs at clubs around Yorkshire.

And once the pressure of playing every single day is off, Tony is looking forwards to a holiday with long-suffering wife Ann.

"It will be nice to get a holiday, go somewhere warm, but then again I don't like sitting on a beach so it would be a busman's holiday – to play golf in Portugal! She's been very supportive because she knows the good it does me."

Tony has raised around £6,300 so far and hopes for a big final night at his home club.

All systems go as Aldwark Manor bounces back...

Aldwark Manor Estate has many reasons to celebrate as golfers in Yorkshire look forward to a new season.

Following a £4.5 million investment in the course and facilities, the 2024 season marks a significant milestone for the club as it coincides with the long-awaited re-opening of Aldwark Toll Bridge.

To celebrate the occasion and to welcome back many players and members who have had to contend with a 25-mile detour to access Aldwark Manor Estate since the toll bridge closed for repairs last Spring, the club is offering half price membership, and a range of other re-launch offers.

The recent investment saw nine holes being redesigned to create challenging new layouts and the introduction of several new water hazards, enhancing the course's appeal to golfers of all levels.

Drainage improvements have been made, a new putting green and bunkers added, and there are 10 more electric buggies to enable golfers to get around the stunning course.

In addition to the enhancements on the course, Aldwark Manor Estate also built 'Bunkers', a new purpose-built facility offering a range of amenities.

It boasts 11 bedrooms to accommodate golfing groups of various sizes, a sports bar and restaurant featuring four large screen TVs, a golf shop, private function room, outdoor kitchen with a pizza oven and BBQ, and large terrace facilities off the first tee.

The Aldwark Toll Bridge, which crosses the River Ure and connects



Little Ouseburn with Aldwark, re-opened on February 17th. Its closure for repairs in April last year created a 25-mile detour via Boroughbridge for those wishing to access Aldwark Manor Estate and the neighbouring village.

Not only is it great news for golfers, but it will enable guests to access much more easily the other significant new offerings planned for hotel.

A further £25 million is being spent on the estate, including the

launch of Chartwell, a fine dining restaurant, this spring, and the introduction of a new spa and additional bedrooms in 2025.

Christophe Gitton, Estate Director at Aldwark Manor Estate, says: "We are thrilled to finally be able to open the golf course for its first full season since the redesign and introduction of our fabulous Bunkers venue.

"In fact, this will be our first full season since before the pandemic, so it's a real reason for us

to celebrate. The course seamlessly integrates natural beauty, challenge, and luxury and we can't wait for guests to experience it.

"The new season coinciding with the reopening of the toll bridge is fantastic news and will immediately improve access for our guests and members.

"The enhancements made represent our ongoing commitment to providing an exceptional experience for our guests, both golfers and non-golfers."

Letter to the Editor

In a fix over hole rims...

Sir,

I read with interest Danny Lockwood's article about the new WHS changes and agree totally with his opinion.

I wonder if he or anyone else can get an explanation from the R&A regarding plastic hole supports/rims not being allowed for handicap qualifiers during winter?

I submitted messages twice via their website but never received a reply.

It beggars belief that these make any significant difference to a player's score but are an essential piece of kit to help maintain the integrity of hole shape on many courses during the winter months. I suspect those making the decisions all play at high class clubs and/or at links venues where it isn't an issue. But the vast majority of us play very wet parkland type courses which are severely impacted in the wet.

It beggars belief that you can allow placing, take all bunkers out of play, even have up to two temporary greens and maintain handicap qualifying but a plastic hole support, no chance!

I'd be delighted if you could take this matter up with them and report in a future issue of your fine publication.

NEIL BROMLEY
HILLSBOROUGH GOLF CLUB
(FORMER GREENS CHAIRMAN)

YG put the query to YUGC Secretary Jonathan Plaxton who believed use of rims was meant purely for environments where the 'soil' couldn't sustain the shape adequately. He checked with Ruth Goodwin, whose reply follows:

I did have a discussion with the R&A with regard to the plastic hole inserts. The only ones I have come across are those which are for use in an unstable environment (such as a desert) where the composition of the 'soil' makes it impossible for a 'hole' to be cut and remain in any way stable.

There is no Local Rule which allows for the dimensions of a 'hole' to be altered, or the placing of an insert to be anything other than 1 inch below the surface of the putting green; unless the nature of the soil requires it to be closer. All this is described under the definition of 'Hole' in the Rules of Golf.

RUTH GOODWIN, REGIONAL
HANDICAP ADVISOR, ENGLAND GOLF

Brabazon 'Q' at Wetherby

Wetherby Golf Club will host 2024 Northern Qualifying for the Brabazon Trophy, the English Men's Open Amateur Strokeplay Championship.

A maximum of 120 golfers will tee it up at the West Yorkshire course on May 14th, with the aim of qualifying for the big event at Hollinwell (Notts Golf Club) from May 23-26.

Alex Fitzpatrick, the Hallamshire golfer fast making a name on the pro scene, is now attached to Hollinwell.

Nuneaton (Midlands) and Marlborough (South) will stage the Midlands and South qualifiers. Yorkshire golfers have had a good recent record. Sam Bairstow (Hallows) won The Brabazon at Ganton in 2021, while Rotherham's Ben Schmidt won it at Alwoodley in 2019, lifting the English Boys' Carris Trophy the same year, and Nick Poppleton (Wath) was champion the year before at Frilford Heath.

Escape to superb SOMABAY

Yorkshire Golfer Publisher **DANNY LOCKWOOD** escaped a rain-sodden English February to sample the delights of Egypt's best-kept secret on a secluded Red Sea peninsula...

Somabay is a self-contained luxury resort on a Red Sea peninsula, about a 30 minute drive south of the popular tourist destination of Hurghada, in Egypt.

It is, to summarise succinctly, absolutely fabulous. I could live in Somabay. Seriously.

Golf is very much at the heart of what Somabay is about, but it's far from being 'just' a golf destination. Mrs L was celebrating a

landmark birthday and wanted somewhere with guaranteed sun and warmth which, in the first week of February, basically rules out Europe.

With midday temperatures in the mid-20s celsius – there's almost always a sea breeze – pleasantly cool evenings, but importantly a brand new golf facility for me to explore, it ticked every box.

The birthday girl doesn't golf but galloping a pony along a sunlit beach, with a stunning mountain backdrop, created an even greater impression than the unbelievable sights while snorkelling on the nearby reef.

Neither of us were moved to try the very F1-looking 700-metre go kart track just outside the Somabay Marina; likewise the scuba diving, kite-surfing or various other water-based activities which includes golfing at sea, hitting from a party boat onto a floating green. You use real golf balls – then snorkel to retrieve them.

The Sports Hub has four Wimbledon-quality tennis courts (the home of tennis's agronomists were consulted) plus squash courts, paddle-ball courts, while an Olympic-sized pool and running track is under construction plus a professional-level football field to attract Academy business. This is sporting heaven.

I had played Somabay's Gary Player Championship course some years ago and it has been finessed somewhat. It is an excellent test which can stretch itself to almost 7,000 yards from the back tees. The 6,468 blue tees were quite enough for me.

Several holes running beside the sea are deliberately crafted to give you a distinct feel of Pebble Beach. I defy anyone not to take out their phone and snap some photos.

But winding inland towards the imposing mountains, the wind comes

into play from every possible direction. The sandy waste areas – think Dubai Desert Classic – are immaculately kept and the fairways and greens were as pure as any I can remember playing. Dynasty Paspalum and Kikuyu grasses, apparently.

Indeed the Clutch Pro Tour is due to take a Pro-Am event to Somabay between April 17-

"It is, to summarise succinctly, absolutely fabulous. I could live in Somabay. Seriously."

22 and all I can say is that they are in for a treat. This is a destination that deserves a 'Big League' profile. Right now Somabay's main tourist business is from Germany and mainland Europe, but with Egypt's second language being English, it is crying out to surface on more Brits' radar.

This part of the world is very arid, but a mix of recycled 'grey' water, desalination and a large solar field outside the resort tick the envi-

ronmental boxes.

On course the par-3 5th (among several others) would qualify as anyone's signature hole, with the green jutting out into the Red Sea and the prospect of playing from the sand or rocks sitting below it on three sides (tip – bail out left!)

For a bit of fun, the 12th – Double Dilemma – has a waste area straight down the centre of the hole, with fairways left and right before going into an elevated green. Take your pick.

On my visit more golfers walked than rode buggies, although there are a few quite lengthy walks between greens and tees. That said, it just allows more time to soak in the stunning views. There is an awful lot of building under-way in distinct 'village' settings around the 10 million square metre estate, but there is also a new Tim Lobb/James Edwards-designed 18-hole championship-level course under construction.

All of that however, strictly speaking, wasn't what I had come to report on – it was the new and stunning 'Scoring Arena'. What's one of those?



A spot of recreational boat golf out in the Red Sea shallows...



...or perhaps try the island-green hole-in-one challenge while enjoying a beer or cocktail at the new outdoor sports bar!

“It’s one-of-a-kind,” according to Business Development Director Mohammed Attallah, a senior figure in Egyptian sport who studied at Manchester University. Think of a short game area on steroids.

“It’s quite a size, some 5,000 square metres,” he explained. “There are 27 distinct scoring zones which provide basically every short game shot you can imagine. Chip and run shots with different breaks to read, flop shots over bunkers, both from above and below, grass bunkers – five types of bunkers in all – all the zones with a variety of flags on them ... think of any short game challenge and we believe you’ll find it here.

“The owners – who also have the excellent Costa Navarino in Greece – basically gave the designers carte blanche to dream!”

The Scoring Arena is floodlit, as is the neighbouring 9-hole par-3 course which, very cleverly, incorporates a Footgolf course within it. It’s a par-3 layout which allows players to hit from a variety of yardages, with 10-yard lines marked out working back from the green.

To the other side of the Scoring Arena is a 300-yard long, dual-ended driving range with both grass and artificial hitting areas, also floodlit.

And just for good measure, a new sports bar on the highest part of the estate overlooks an island green with a distinct look of the iconic 17th par-3 at TPC Sawgrass. Golf Operations Manager Mo Ramadan laughed when he saw the look on my face – a hole-in-one challenge, with mats in front of the open-air bar to hit from. Someone hand me a club!

The Somabay resort is self-contained in that visitors drive from the main Hurghada road across desert and through a security station, before entering the estate. There are four major hotels by the Red Sea, the Kempinski, Sheraton, Robinsons and The Breakers – very much for the watersport buffs, adjacent to the Orca Diving Centre. A second Robinson’s adults-only hotel and dedicated ‘Sports Hotel’ are in the planning pipeline.

A seaside shuttle runs regularly along the beach side to the Marina, with its array of shops and restaurants, including the excellent Sobar restaurant and rooftop cocktail bar. Sunsets in this part of the world are spectacular.

The main golf hotel, lying at the heart of the Gary Player Championship course and a regular shuttle ride from its own private beach, is The Cascades. It has a range of packages including half-board and all-inclusive, plus a huge, award-winning Spa and Thalasso, which is worth a day’s visit in itself.

After a ‘hard’ day’s golf a spell in the 14-station Aquatic pool is a delight. Powerful water jets work every part of your body, from the soles of your feet to the top of your head, before you lay back and enjoy a relaxing floating swirl around a fast moving pool.

There is a separate jacuzzi by the main pool with an adjacent gym and fitness room which incorporates separate sauna and steam rooms for men and women guests.

The Cascades’ main restaurant overlooks the 9th and 18th greens, while above it the Eagles Nest is a traditional English-style pub, complete with a (free to use) pool table.

Next to the gym and pool is Spikes Bar and Restaurant which serves as both a ‘19th’ for the golfers and lunch/afternoon drinks spot for guests.

Cascades has a beach shuttle which runs every 10 minutes and quite besides the luxurious cabanas on the private beach, there is the Sea Shell bar and restaurant. As with pretty much everything at Somabay, every single box seems to be ticked.

For travellers who don’t want the full hotel experience, the resort has its own Airbnb-style business called Stayr, with everything from one-bed apartments to luxury villas complete with pool.

In the immortal words of The Terminator Arnold Schwarzenegger, “I’ll be back...”



The 18th (left) and 9th holes as seen from Cascades



The new floodlit Scoring Arena has 27 distinct short game zones



Desert and 7,000ft mountains for a beautiful backdrop



Take a break from golf – visit the Jasmine Stables and ride by the Red Sea



The Cascades pool area by night

Landmark Anniversary English Amateur staged in 150th birthday year

Stage is set for huge year at Seaton Carew



Where nature meets industry – huge greens and devilish bunkers at Seaton Carew

Phil Cain and Diane Wilson, the 2024 Club and Lady Captains



By Danny Lockwood

It promises to be a momentous and memorable year at Seaton Carew Golf Club, as it prepares to host the English Amateur Championship in what is its landmark 150th anniversary year.

The Teesside links is the 10th oldest course in the country, founded as it was by Scottish doctor Duncan McCuaig when he came to practise in the area, and which rose to real prominence when another doctor – Alistair MacKenzie no less – basically uprooted the old course and moved it closer to the dunes of Tees Bay.

As frustrated golfers find their courses closed due to an unprecedented winter of constant rain, there's been no such problem at Seaton Carew.

As secretary Roy Leonard explained: "Business is absolutely booming at the moment – I'm touching wood – but with the weather being as it is and how it's affected most inland courses, because we're so fortunate to have fast draining fairways and greens I think we've only closed for a couple of days when we had snow and ice."

"It's been quite a balancing act trying to ensure our members can play but trying to fit visitors in around them."

There have been areas of flooding, but the club has the luxury of extra holes which allows it to configure several different layouts – the game goes on.

"We're finding parts of our course under water which is unusual, but of course we're lucky in that we can change the layout."

Seaton Carew will partner with Hartlepool Golf Club for the English Amateur Championship [July 30 –

August 4] with strokeplay qualifying over the first two days, before the knockout stages focus on Seaton Carew's Micklem course.

"England Golf were here in January and they walked the course and were more than happy with it, they feel it's a good challenging layout," said Mr Leonard. "We tend to play the Micklem probably nine months of the year."

"We've been working towards this for the past three or four years, since England Golf awarded us the Championship. We've put in a new back tee on the 14th, but have had a programme of renovating and trying to bring a lot of our bunkers back to the original MacKenzie style, so much more natural than the pristine, contoured things that you have on most courses."

"We work alongside MacKenzie and Ebert and they've been able to get hundreds of old photographs going back as far as the 1930s, which gives us an idea of how they've changed. It was only 1926 when MacKenzie made the changes here. Bunkers and greens have changed so we're working towards trying to reintroduce some of that original MacKenzie feel."

Seaton Carew is proud of its affordability, given its status as a premium links course, and that's reflected in its popularity. The club has a waiting list for membership of over 100 and has had notification of only a handful of golfers leaving the club. It has introduced a modest £250 joining fee.

Similarly the club's Festival Week – this year put back to the first week of September – has long been oversubscribed and there's a waiting list for the Seniors Salver.

Regarding the big anniversary, Mr Leonard explained: "We have a very

full calendar of events anyway, so we're focussing on a one day celebration [on Saturday July 6th] with an anniversary competition followed by a barbecue and band."

"There's also the introduction of a new Ladies Salver to complement the long-standing Seaton Salver."

"We're having a hickory club Texas Scramble on the 6th of June to highlight how much golf has changed over 150 years, and encouraging people to dress in period costume."

In a year of anniversaries – it is also England Golf's centenary – there's another 'big' day in prospect.

"We have an annual home and

away match with Brancepeth Castle, which we found out was originally set up by a few of our members. So we've had a long relationship playing what we call 'the Big Match' and this year it's their centenary, so we'll make a bit of a do of the Big

Match, which is in August – a few days after the English Amateur."

All in all, there is an exciting year in prospect for everyone associated with Seaton Carew and one thing is pretty much for sure – rain will not stop play!



Alistair MacKenzie moved the original course closer to Tees Bay

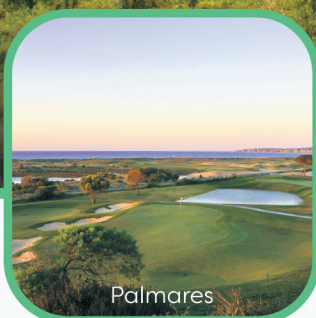


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