



INTRODUCTION

In this edition:

Grafton Morrish Victory!

Social events

Hamish Ritchie and John Oscroft

Autumn Medal

Scratch Events

We were denied a Hewitt victory this year by an inspired performance by Uppingham at Royal St. George's in April, but there is no stopping Loretto. After our ladies won The Silver Tassie at The Berkshire in June, on their debut outing, the boys have won The Grafton Morrish Schools Trophy at Hunstanton, also for the first time.

The Grafton Morrish dates back to 1963 and is different from the Halford Hewitt in a number of ways. Each year, every school has to qualify at regional events in May so the schools in the finals vary from year to year. 48 schools play in the finals, and as all have qualified, all are quite strong, unlike the Hewitt where only 20-30 of the 64 schools realistically could win the tournament. The Grafton Morrish also includes strong sporting schools such as Millfield who don't play in the Hewitt. Each team also only has three pairs so the strength in depth that Loretto enjoys with the five pairs at the Hewitt is less of a factor.

The first rounds are played at Hunstanton and Brancaster with Hunstanton hosting the third round onwards. For many years we struggled to qualify for the finals. Last year we qualified but lost to Radley in the first round before

going onto win the 'Solihull Salver' – a Stableford competition for the first and second round losers. Obviously, the team decided that this year the main trophy was their target!

The team was captained by Joel Westwell who maintained his Hewitt partnership with Adam Wraight. The other two pairs were the two James', McCormick and Guterman, while Cameron Blair played with Michael Allen.



Winter golfing gear was required for the first day at Royal West Norfolk, Brancaster.

We were drawn on Day 1 at Brancaster against Sherborne in a tough section which included the likes of Tonbridge, Malvern, Clifton, Sedbergh and Marlborough. To compound matters the weather on the Friday, day 1, was persistent rain and 40mph winds. Not pleasant! The speed of play was painfully slow but this didn't stop the team prevailing against Sherborne and then again in the



afternoon in a tight match against Marlborough.

On Saturday conditions couldn't have been more different with glorious sunshine all day. The morning match against Giggleswick was the closest of the week; while Joel and Adam in match 3 were fast out of the starting blocks and raced to a 7/6 victory, the two James' lost to the Giggleswick first pair so it was all down to the middle match. Loretto won the 17th to go 1up but a magnificent birdie by Giggleswick on 18 halved the match so it was on down the 1st for sudden death. A half there meant they went back up 18 where this time Giggleswick couldn't repeat their earlier heroics and a steady par was enough for Loretto to go through.



Joel enjoying the beautiful weather on Saturday

The extra holes meant that the Quarter Final against Clifton went out late and Clifton were strong in the first match and Loretto again went 1 Match down. However, the two James' and Joel and Adam were always ahead and played impressively to deliver a 2-1 win. Loretto had reached the semi-finals.

The semi-final on Sunday morning was against Berkhamsted who had defeated Eton the previous evening. The first 9 were very tight. Joel and Adam in match 1 held a slender 1

hole advantage after 9, but the two James' were 1 down in the second match after 10 and we were 3 down in the third match after 11. This was when the tide turned; in match 1, the two James' fought back to win 3/2 and remarkably Michael and Cam, from being 3 down after 11, fought back to be all square after 16. As it was, Joel and Adam secured their narrow victory to ensure Loretto went through.

So, it was into to the final against Woodbridge who had beaten Charterhouse in the other semi. Woodbridge had also never won the Grafton Morrish so there would be a first-time winner. Woodbridge had, however, seen off some big names to get to the final including Winchester, Glasgow Accies, Bradfield and Charterhouse. Loretto got off to a good start in all the matches; the two James' leading out with Cam and Mike in the second and Joel and Adam in the third. The two James' held onto their early lead throughout and won 4/3 meaning that we only needed one win from the other two matches. In match 2, Loretto had gone 4up after 11 but Woodbridge then mounted a fightback. Dormie 3 to Loretto became Dormie 2 and with Adam and Joel just 1up in the final match the tension was mounting on the 116 strong WhatsApp Group! As it turned out, at the tough long par 4 17th, Cam and Mike were able to get the half and Loretto had another new trophy.



James McCormick, Michael Allen, Adam Wraight, Joel Westwell, James Guterman and Cameron Blair

Huge congratulations to Scratch Team Captain, Adam, and Joel who captained the team during the finals and all the squad who participated through the qualifying.

Further congratulations go to the Team for their strategy of switching qualifying from Edinburgh to the Midlands in 2023 to enable us to get out a stronger side.

It had been thought that it might take a few years of familiarisation to get our hands on this trophy, so to win it in effectively the second year in which we have taken part seriously is a fantastic achievement.

The weekend before our Scratch players had been involved in the Queen Elizabeth Coronation Trophy at Royal Burgess. It's a pity that these two tournaments are held so close together as it makes it difficult for players to commit to playing in both, but much credit to Mike Allen and Cameron Blair who did!

We had a very good run in the tournament defeating Crieff, Merchiston and Lenzie before a narrow defeat to the eventual winners, Heriots, in the semi-finals.

The Loretto School Foursomes

We held another very successful day at West Sussex when 30 players from over 20 schools competed for The Loretto Foursomes Trophy. Injury to Chris Henderson meant he was unable to defend the trophy he won the previous year and this year's honours went again to Anthony Wolfe and Paul Marciandi from Haileybury, the winners in 2022. Nicky and Kathy Torlot won the Mixed prize.

Seven OLs competed and your President, who partnered Robin Shuker, managed a very respectable 37 points to come second. Kerry Mclean and Christopher Herdman-Newton took third place for Loretto with 36 points.



Kerry Mclean teeing off at the 2nd.

The weather was again very kind to us and everyone enjoyed the usual sumptuous West Sussex lunch afterwards. There is considerable fondness for this fixture and plans are afoot to increase the numbers further next year.



The President presenting himself and Robin Shuker with the second prize!

Other Social fixtures included the triangular match at The New Zealand Club against Sedbergh and Dulwich and in Scotland we had matches against Sedbergh and Merchiston at Muirfield. In the match against Edinburgh Accies at Luffness New we now compete for a fine Silver Quaich but unfortunately it was the Accies who prevailed again this year with a 4-1 victory before an relaxed Luffness lunch where I'm assured by our Captain Christian Bruce the Lorettonians performed much better.



Christian Bruce handing the Accies Captain the Silver Quaich at Luffness New

Hamish Ritchie and John Oscroft

We were all very sad to learn that within a few days of each other we lost two stalwarts of the OLGs, Hamish Ritchie and John Oscroft.

Hamish had a very distinguished golfing career. An Oxford Blue he became Captain and then Chairman of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society and then also Captain and Chairman of his home club, Denham. He became a member of the R&A in 1974 and served on many committees before becoming Captain in 2008. Amongst all this he also found time to be President of the OLGs from 2001 to 2007. Hamish represented Loretto in both the Halford Hewitt and The Mellin for many years.

John Oscroft was instrumental in organising and supporting social OLGs golf in the south east over a period of nearly four decades. He was ever present at OL social events and a great supporter of young OLs.

Both Hamish and John were Loretto Governors and both enthusiastic supporters of the setting up of The Golf Academy and both were thrilled by the recent successes of our scratch team and Loretto's growing reputation in golf. We will miss them both.

There will be a Service of Thanksgiving for Hamish on Tuesday 12th November at St James' Church, Gerrards Cross and afterwards at Denham Golf Club. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Milla Cameron at milla@fountaincourt.co.uk