



Old Lorettonian Golfing Society

Introduction

Welcome to this Winter Newsletter where we both look back at last year and forward to our golfing challenges in 2020.

One of my first duties as President last year was to have dinner with our Scratch Team on the eve of the Halford Hewitt. Apart from talking them through the birdie which Paddy Ledingham and I had made on the 18th playing that afternoon in The Peter Kenyon Bowl at Littlestone (they politely listened as we argued whether my 7 iron third shot on the Par 5 to a trickily positioned pin had left Paddy a 6 footer or a 4 footer to hole for the birdie), I suggested that given the talent we had we should set ourselves an objective over the next 5-10 years of reaching a couple of semi-finals, a final and a victory in major scratch events. Well, what a start! The semi-final of the Hewitt was followed by reaching the final of the Queen Elizabeth Coronation Trophy – see the report below – making it one of our most successful years for a while. I am confident that looking forward we can add to these achievements – and this includes senior events such as The Mellin where we have not been at our best in recent years. OLGS golf should first and foremost be fun but I do often find it is even more fun when you win a bit.

Last year was also one of the Golf Academy's most successful years for a while so I look forward to a new batch of talented golfers joining the OLGS in the coming years. We will include a report on the Golf Academy in each of our newsletters. Rick Valentine and I are intent on working more closely together; clearly a successful Academy is good for the OLGS and we should do everything we can to continue to support it.

OLGS golf, however, is about more than just the scratch events and I am pleased that we still have a range of friendly fixtures at great courses. We are even adding a few new events; we have discovered a match which has emerged over the past few years against Edinburgh Academy at Luffness, while in the South we have now established formally a new event, the **Loretto Public Schools Foursomes**, at the delightful West Sussex course where we invite pairs from other schools to a day which we arrange and host.

We also have some other developments including a new website (see below) and some changes on the Committee. Running golf societies relies on many volunteers so I am pleased to have increased the size of the Committee which will help both spread the load and spread the word. Adam Wraight has taken over from Torquil McInroy as Captain but I have asked Torquil to stay on the Committee to lend his considerable experience. Paddy Ledingham has also joined the Committee to help out particularly in Scotland.

Finally, Robert Rigg, as well as coordinating all the events in the south, has agreed to take on the role of Treasurer. Ian Sinclair had selflessly undertaken this role as well as being Secretary for many years – our thanks to Ian for his many years of service. The fact that the Society's finances are in such good shape is in no small part due to Ian's prudent management.

I wish you all an enjoyable golfing 2020

Andrew Brown

OLGS President



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Autumn Events

Following the successful Hewitt campaign resulting in the first semi-final for 37 years, the team went one better at the Queen Elizabeth Coronation Schools Trophy at Royal Burgess in September. Victories over Hutchesons, Grammarians, Glenalmond and Glasgow High School brought about a final against rivals Merchiston. John Dunn-Butler and Cameron Gray won the first match but Merchiston won the second two narrowly to take the trophy. This was despite an incident in the penultimate match when our immediate past-President, who had come along to support the team, was hit on the head by a Merchiston ball – allegations that he was trying to head it out-of-bounds have been shown to be non-proven! It was a magnificent team performance by Cameron Blair, Ronan Higgins, John Dunn-Butler, Sami Bouzabia, David Dunn-Butler, Ian McDowall, Cameron Gray, Torquil McInroy, George Munsey and Peter Mackay. Particular mention to the Dunn-Butler brothers and Cameron Gray who won four of their five matches.



West Hill -venue for The Mellin Trophy

In the South there were two matches this autumn, the first at Liphook against the Old Marlburians and the second against Fettes at

Worplesdon. Marlborough took the first tie but that was their only success with Loretto winning all four of the others to gain a decisive 4-1 victory on a lovely autumn day. Recent results against Fettes in the annual match at Worplesdon have not been so good (you have to go back to 2013 to find a Loretto win) so a 3-2 lead at lunchtime following fine wins by Brown and Henderson, Shuker and Sadler and McPhater and Duncan gave some hope. Unsurprisingly Fettes fought back taking 2 ½ of the first 3 points which required Brown and McPhater to win the final match to secure a draw in the match which they duly did.



Can you recognise this hole on a famous East Lothian course?

The Mackay Trophy at Denham has not been well supported in recent years and after a couple of late call-offs six OLS turned up – still a 100% increase on last year! Fettes had about nine. The Mackay Trophy was won by your President after a 22 year gap. A 15 foot putt on the final green proved decisive delivering a respectable 36 points, one ahead of Tom Michie. Tom's sister Katrina was gunning for winning the trophy for the third year running but had to settle for third place. While the morning was bright, torrential rain at lunchtime encouraged all to linger in the clubhouse and abandon the afternoon Foursomes. One innovation was that David Cheyne brought his son, Ali, as a guest. Ali



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plays off +1 and I enjoyed marking his card at the stroke 18 hole: 3 for 4 for 1!

Discussions with Fettes afterwards concluded that in future guests should be encouraged and that we would add a guest prize for the day. This will help keep the numbers up and secure the fixture.

The final event of the year was the OLGS Medal which took place at The Renaissance Club on a delightfully sunny afternoon at the end of October. Conditions were tough however with a cold wind but this didn't stop David Dunn-Butler scoring a magnificent gross 69 to win the Loretto Medal. The Handicap Trophy was won by Hugo Balfour-Melville with 37 points, pipping Walter Alexander on countback who took the Gedge Cup for the over 50s prize.



Torquil McInroy is presented with a print of North Berwick by the President in recognition of his long tenure as OLGS Captain.

The Loretto Golf Academy

While Loretto pioneered the Golf Academy idea many schools have since followed so the competition in national schools' competitions has increased dramatically over recent years with the quality of play becoming ever higher. It is therefore impressive that the Academy has enjoyed one of its best years for a while.



The winning Loretto and Scotland team at Celtic Manor

In March, Loretto represented Scotland in the ISGA Home Internationals at Bryn Meadows and Celtic Manor. In wet conditions Loretto scored a decisive win for Scotland.

The following month Loretto competed as one of the best 18 teams in the country in the ISGA National Finals at Princes and Royal St Georges in Kent. Not only did Loretto win the event but Captain, Cameron Gray, won the individual title.

Finally, in July Loretto competed in the HMC Foursomes at Rye where they lost narrowly in the semi-finals to the eventual winners, Reeds, who won all three of the ties on the 18th green. Loretto went on to win third place in the tournament.

The Junior teams have also had success defending the IAPS Under 11 Team Golf title in Shropshire in June then at the ISGA Junior Finals at Radley the Loretto A team won the event and the Loretto B team was second!



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The winning Loretto pair at the ISGA Junior Finals

So a magnificent year for the Loretto Academy and a tough act to follow for the teams next year. We look forward to welcoming all the Academy members into the OLGS in the coming years.

2020 Events

We will be launching a new website in a few weeks' time – this will be both accessible from the OL website but also directly at

www.ol-golf.co.uk.

We also now have an Instagram account – [ol_golfing_society](https://www.instagram.com/ol_golfing_society). You are encouraged to 'tag' it – some of you will understand this! We will be in touch again soon to give further details

A list of fixtures for 2020 is attached. Please take time to look through, put the dates in your diary and get in touch with the relevant contact to express your interest.

We have a number of new events this year.

I will be taking a support party down to The Halford Hewitt to include some golf and cheering on our team. Please drop me a line as soon as possible -mid-February at the latest. This can include a round of golf at Littlestone the previous day and dinner with

the team. The team is looking to build on last year's great performance. The draw looks promising with a first round tie against Downside at Deal on Thursday afternoon.

We are also holding a challenge match for Society members against our Scratch team at Worplesdon in May. Please contact Robert Rigg for this – it will be a flexible format allowing players to play either 18 or 36 - or even just come for lunch!

We are also looking to build on links with the Academy with a match in the Spring as well as the normal friendly match in June.

We also plan to hold a day for all the Upper Sixth (i.e. the leavers) to introduce them to the Society in the autumn. I would like members to make a special effort to join us for that. Ensuring a steady flow of new members is important to the future health of the Society. Details will follow.

Finally, I would like to add two things:

First, even if you are not sure at this stage please drop us a line to express interest in an event at this time of year. This will allow the match managers to plan. There are clearly restrictions on numbers at certain events but rarely can we not accommodate people who want a game. It is fine for 36 hole events to ask to only play 18 – most events are flexible in this respect.

Secondly, if you wish to organise an event an OLGS event in your area, please get in touch. Most of the existing events are either in central Scotland or the south-east of England. It would be good to see some new events in other regions.