



NEWSLETTER



College Pines Golf Club, Worksop 25th March 2018

They say that springtime is a time for new beginnings, well that was certainly true for UGAGB. The new season brought with it a new President and committee, new members, new shirts and a new editor of the monthly newsletter.

At last our golfing season had arrived and the first event was to be held at College Pines GC. A well established, heathland course set amid idyllic surroundings of Clumber Park and Worksop College.

Eighteen playing members who had registered for this event, were present. All happy to see one another and especially ex-President, "Jaroslaw Bdzola" who joined the group on the day.

Whilst everyone was gathered in the bunker bar, following bacon sandwiches, tea and coffee our new President, Roman Skalsky gave a warm opening welcome, particularly to our two new recruits, Mike Bartkiw and Dave Brown, both representing our contingency from Lancashire.

Playing cards at the ready and onto the draw. Three playing groups of four and two groups of three were formed and the time had come for the 2018 season opener to begin.

Outside we had been blessed with some dry weather, sunny conditions with a little warmth thrown in. Very lucky as the previous week the UK had received a real beating from the beast from the east. Getting some last minute practice on the driving range was Zenon Sydor, Stephen Holmes along with Paul and Sara Allen. Jon Iwanejko, Mick Borys and John Pasicznyk were all ironing out some putting issues and Mick Melnyk sunk his first pint.

Remarkably the Par 73, 6330 yard course was in fairly good shape considering what the beast had thrown at it, in previous weeks. The fairways were dry allowing balls to scuttle on freely, however the greens were a tad fluffy which made for some tricky putting decisions with many points being lost in and around this area. With five par 5's and some lengthy par 3's, the course proved challenging, this reflected in the scores with some low scoring cards being handed in.

Some five hours later and the game over, players had returned to the club house each with a story to tell and most feeling the after effects of their first outing of the season. Later we were called into the champion's room for our meal and together we all filed out of the bunker bar leaving behind its unique collection of golfing memorabilia. The meal was plentiful and well received, home-made steak pie with chips followed by some customary, crumble and custard.

President Skalsky made his inaugural presentation of prizes, which saw Mick Borys claiming the lions share. Minor prizes went to Mick Borys, nearest pin and nearest pin in 2, Sara Allen nearest pin and Mick Bartkiw longest drive. Mick Borys also shared the birdie pool pot of £36 with Bazz Bdzola and Graham Meggitt.

Division Two was made up of eight players. Bazz Bdzola came third and Mick Rewilak second both with 31 points, Mick winning this duel on countback. However, Sara Allan once again showed her class, taking first prize for this Division with a creditable score of 33 points.

Division one was made up of ten players. Debutant Dave Brown came third with 31 points, 2 points behind Zenon Sydor who claimed second spot. Winner of division one and overall winner of the Presidents Trophy with a score of 34 points was Mick Borys. The Presidents Trophy was presented to Mick by Graham Meggitt, last year's winner.

Finally new red and black UGAGB golfing shirts were handed out to all members which are to be worn at future events this season.

Our next event is in Lincolnshire at Belton Park Golf Club on 22nd April 2018.

Belton Park Golf Club, Grantham 22nd April 2018

The second event of the golf season took us to the wonderful setting of Belton Park Golf Club. This club was recently included in the Golf Monthly top 100 Hidden Gems and was said to be ***“A hidden Gem... a golf course that embodies fun from start to finish; one where the scenery, the atmosphere and the feel-good factor count for more than the severity of the test”***. This statement was certainly true and whilst being demanding in parts, the course played fair and was enjoyable.

We had nineteen playing members, one more than last month, all were very warmly welcomed by our host Christine who was extremely hospitable and went out of her way to ensure that we were looked after with supplies of tea, coffee and bacon baps. She even offered our early arrivals a sample taste of a new beer which had just arrived on the market, Carlsberg 1883. Everyone who tasted it appeared to appreciate its unique well balanced aftertaste including Mick Melnyk who compared it to “mother’s milk”. A fine start to the day and yes in true Carlsberg style, this was **“Probably”** going to be one of our best golfing days ever..!

Having each paid President Skalsky two pounds for entry into the birdie pool and playing cards chosen, four, four balls and one, three ball group were formed. All smartly dressed in new red UGAGB shirts, Mick Rewilak requested everyone to gather outside the small but neatly presented clubhouse for our first group member photo shoot of the season. The weather was perfect for golf and for taking pictures, although slightly less than perfect was the host who had kindly agreed to take the pictures. Bless him, he had trouble focusing on the camera viewfinder and the resulting photos were in definite need of some photo shopping!

From the practice green onto the first tee. Belton Park GC had a total of 27 challenging and attractive holes, all set in beautiful parkland in the heart of Lincolnshire. Today we were to play the 18 hole, par 71, **Brownlow course**, with 6490 yards of stunning landscape overlooking the grade one listed mansion “Belton House”. The course was in good shape and was about to offer a challenging test of golf, regardless of handicap.

One by one our members took their initial tee shots, generally producing some admirable drives down the dog leg left fairway. The only non-playing member was Mick Gillies, he had recently undergone hip replacement surgery and arrived to the event on crutches. Looking well after his operation, he was here to offer support to his brother Geoff. Mick chauffeured Geoff around the course in a buggy they shared, offering his knowledge, advice along with his repertoire of jokes along the way.

There were a couple of nearest the pin prizes (holes 6 and 14). Paul Killoran applied tremendous skill to win NP on hole 6, similarly Trevor Johnson pipped the rest of the field with NP on hole 14. Ever consistent Mick Borys once again showed why he is a low handicapper by firing in with an impressive second shot to comfortably take the prize for NP in two on hole, 3. Surprisingly big hitters Mick Borys nor his son Stef Borys were in contention for the longest drive. Mick Rewilak lead the way but Zenon Sydor who formed part of the final grouping, hit a screamer which whizzed past Mick’s earlier attempt to win longest drive on hole, 18. All in all the course provided a good test of golf, the attractive golf course setting with its herd of fallow deer and roaming Canadian geese provided a marvellous backdrop which was a joy to play.

Back in the clubhouse everyone was ready for the meal of the day which consisted of steak pie dinner and a very substantial portion of apple crumble with custard. Service was a little on the slow side, perhaps respectfully delayed due to the presentations which were all awarded immediately after the first course.

Mr President announced that generally the overall scoring was better than the previous month's. There was a total of nine birdies recorded with three going to Stef Borys who for his fine performance collected £12. Not far behind was father Mick Borys who sunk two birdies, £8 for Mick. Single birdies were also secured by Geoff Gillies, Ray Gregory, Paul Killoran and Zenon Sydor, each collecting £4 for their achievement.

Now to the main awards. The two divisions were made up eleven participants in Division Two and eight in Division One with final places being announced, again by President Skalsky.

Flight two produced some very good scoring. In third place was Ray Gregory with a score of 36pts, second with 38pts was Mick Rewilak but with some valuable coaching from his brother Mick, Geoff Gillies took pole position with a terrific 39pts.

The top trio in flight one also came in with credible scores. In third spot was Zenon Sydor with 29pts, a close second was Mick Melnyck, 32pts but winner of Division one with a solid 33pts was Stef Borys. Unfortunately for Stef 33 pts wasn't quite good enough to take the overall trophy.

Although Jon Iwanejko was unsuccessful in his fight to retain the trophy he won last year, he did manage to keep his hands on it for one more month, having that morning, left it at home. Graceful in defeat, he along with all other participants congratulated the overall winner, Geoff Gillies who with 39pts was duly crowned Challenge Trophy champion 2018.

Bringing closure to the formalities, Mick Rewilak announced the venue for next month's event, he will be sending out in due course, notification emails to all members. In the meantime and for your diaries, the next event will take place in Gods own country at:- Leeds Golf Centre, Wikeridge Road, Shadwell, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS17 9JW on 20th May 2018

Leeds Golf Centre, Shadwell, Leeds 20th May 2018

Ey Up, the moment had finally arrived, it was a date on the calendar which everyone had been eagerly awaiting. England's finest County had already played host to two major sporting events in May, The Tour De Yorkshire and the World Snooker Championships. To complete this prestigious sporting hat-trick our very own Spring Cup Golf Tournament was heading to West Yorkshire. Yes the UGAGB had arrived in God's own Country and the weather and Yorkshire folk gave them, a reet grand old welcome.

Today's event, organized solely by new committee member Mick Rewilak was held at the Leeds Golf Centre, the home of modern golf, as stated on the entrance signage. Although a relatively new complex, it had already won the much coveted title "Club of the Year 2018" at the England Golf Awards.

Early arrivals had gathered outside, capturing the early morning sunshine. With the tantalizing smell of bacon sarnies in the air, it wasn't long before everyone was entering the club house which was light and contemporary, each like crazed carnivores, awaiting the entry of the mountain of butties. With brown and red sauces at the ready, the boys quickly demolished the stack.

Although the turnout was moderate, with only fifteen members making the journey, it did enable us to select five teams of three and for the first time this season a team event was included. Ten division two and five division one members each made their way to the first tee including Slawko Bdzola who following illness and a long road to recovery was making his first playing appearance since our weekend away in 2017. After a few group photos and some course management instructions from Mark the starter, team Aces took their places and drove their shots down the first fairway of the par 72, 5936 yard, Wike Ridge course.

The afternoon temperature was set to reach 22 degrees and soon our members were scattered around the neatly manicured course, recognizable in their red shirts, all but Mick Bartkiw, a staunch Manchester City supporter who having already reluctantly worn the red shirt earlier this season, decided he would revert back to his preferred colour of blue. This proved lucky for Mick who went onto win a treble of minor prizes.

The first of Mick Bartkiw prizes came on the 2nd hole. An impressive and extremely long 559 yard hole. Due to its length, Mick Rewilak had the unique idea to include a nearest the pin in three and thought this would offer an exhilarating challenge for our members. It certainly did and with three magnificent strikes, Mick Bartkiw's golf ball found its way to the green and pole position.

As well as hosting one of the longest holes in the north, this championship golf course offered a further seventeen dramatic holes, all set within acres of stunning woodland scenery.

When score cards are handed out, one of the first things our members look for is the longest drive hole. With a few big hitters missing from today's field, everyone felt they were in with a chance. Hole 12 was the nominated hole which came with its own dangers. Hookers in our group had to be aware, water down the left would gather any shot propelled in that direction. The narrowly cut fairway ensured accuracy was order of the day. A few members managed to skillfully guide their shots down the center, recording their names on the marker and positioning it where their ball had laid to rest. Zenon Sydor was the eventual LD winner, Zenon executed a cannon like blast which rocketed past the marker, landing some 50 yards beyond the previous leader, Dave Brown.

With bunkers galore and breath-taking water hazards including a lake and fountain guarding the 18th green, Wike Ridge unquestionably gave our members a wonderful golfing experience and is definitely a course which most would like to revisit.

Team tens were the last group to finish and having signed their score cards, which incidentally were marked with pencils earlier gifted to each member by Paul Killoran, they handed their cards in to President Skalsky. At this point it was noted that there had been a slight blip when initially highlighting the stroke index on the scorecards. This caused a little extra work for the committee and a slight delay for the meal but the problem was soon fixed and the final positioning approved.

Food was served in the 19th bar and grill restaurant and whilst it was very tasty, it was noticeable that portions were a tad nouvelle cuisine style, both courses being rather delicate with an increased emphasis on presentation. Maybe not to everyone's preference, particularly after an energy zapping round of golf?

With score cards in hand, President Skalsky was eager to announce the final positions but first Geoff Gilles was finally presented with the Challenge Trophy he won at last month's event.

Mick Bartkiw picked up his nearest pin in three prize (Hole 2) along with the nearest in two (hole 18). He also was one of four players who made birdie each collecting £6 per birdie for their achievement. Other birdie winners were Dave Brown, John Pasicznyk and a couple for Mick Rewilak. Other minor prizes went to Graham Meggitt, nearest pin (hole 5) and Geoff Gillies, nearest pin (hole 7).

The warm late spring weather also brought with it some hot scores. In flight two Paul Killoran finished third with 35 points. He was unlucky not to finish higher but a couple of blobs on the back nine proved costly. Paul's team partner

Graham Meggitt benefited from his misfortune, this allowed Graham to squeeze into second place with 36 points. However Division Two winner on the day was Mike Bdzola (Bazz) with a magnificent 39 points.

The top flight scoring was very similar. In third place with 34 points was today's big hitter Zenon Sydor, second place was claimed by "Mr Consistent" John Pasicznyk, 35 points. The top spot in Division one went to one of the season's newcomers, Dave Brown who produced a solid performance and 38 points.

Winner of the team prize were the Jacks (Dave Brown, Paul Killoran and Graham Meggitt). All three team members picked up divisional prizes, therefore it was inevitable that their team score of 87 would prove hard to beat.

Having already been named Divisional winner in flight two, Mike Bdzola (Bazz) was duly crowned Spring Cup Champion 2018. Last year's winner John Pasicznyk, presented Bazz with the trophy.

Finally everyone showed their appreciation and congratulated Mick Rewilak for organizing a great event and a tired Slawko Bdzola personally thanked his playing partners for their help and assistance around the course.

Our next event is in Leicester at Stapleford Park Golf Club 24th June 2018.

**Stapleford Park Golf Club,
Stapleford, Nr Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire
24th June 2018**

Today the UGAGB travelled to Leicestershire, famous for its Stilton and Red Leicester cheeses, a county where the remains of King Richard III were found under a Leicester car park in 2012 and where travel firm Thomas Cook was founded in 1841. Stapleford Park Golf Club was our venue, an enchanting place where some of our members were hoping to make a little history themselves, especially Mick Melnyk who when entering the locality of **Melton Mowbray**, was convinced that having the same initials in his name "**MM**" was a sign that he would be in prize contention, later in the day.

The impressive entrance to Stapleford Park Golf Club and grounds was delightful, it gave a good first impression and provided everyone with a feeling of great expectation. The Pavilion club house had a magnificent thatched roof and was built in the style of the old cottages on the Stapleford estate. The non-descript entrance to the Club House was hidden away from the small wooded car park by surrounding parkland and whilst having a beautiful exterior and an interior decorated to the highest level, there was a definite lack of golfing memorabilia and history to help give the club house any distinct identity.

Due to several reported injuries, the UGAGB also found itself lacking in members for this event, regretfully the following members all failed late fitness tests and sadly had to withdraw from the event.

- Mick Rewilak Bursitis - Tennis/Golfers elbow
- Pete Wolociuha Swollen ankle
- Jaroslaw Bdzola Swollen feet
- Mick Gillies Recovering from Hip Replacement
- Zenon Sydor Supporting his wife who had a suspected fractured arm

We wish them and family members a speedy recovery and hope they will soon regain full health and fitness. On a happier note President Skalsky, who himself was suffering from a frozen shoulder, declared himself fit to play and whilst at times, clearly suffering, he soldiered on in true Ukrainian spirit.

And so, after the ceremony of the traditional bacon baps, we all withdrew from the dining area to gather at the first tee. Unbelievably, with the exception of a couple of four balls and a bloke with his dog, we had the whole course to ourselves. In fact it felt like UGAGB had more members on the day than our hosts. For the record we had 5 teams of 3, which consisted of 14 competing members and 1 guest. Earlier that morning course cards had been completed for 13 members and 1 guest but to everyone's pleasant surprise, non-more than Bazz, Andy Bendzak appeared for his first event of the season. Apparently Bazz had forwarded his usual email inviting everyone to the event but for some unknown reason, Bazz hadn't receive back Andy's acceptance nor as a result, had he recorded him to play.

At 11am team Aces, formed by committee members Skalsky, Bdzola and Meggitt, took their places on the first tee. One by one the remaining groups followed, each tackling the relatively short but undulating 273 yards par 4 which was scattered with tricky and strategically positions fairway bunkers.

Remarkably free from intrusion, the 5 teams worked their way around the relatively open course which was reminiscent to a links course. Spacious and peaceful, it offered no shelter from the mid-day sun and soring temperature.

Geoff Gillies made easy work of the par 3 hole 5, which measured 175 yards. His perfectly guided iron tee shot was good enough to clinch nearest the pin, his second shot making birdie, job done. Moving on to hole 12, Boom-Boom Bendzak made his mark, outdriving the whole field to take longest drive. At the 14th, Stef Boris produced a fine tee shot to secure NP but unlike Geoff earlier, Stef let his birdie opportunity fly away, only to make par. The last of the minor prizes went to Mike Bartkiw who finished his round in style. With the final put of the day, he made par on last hole and in the process, won NP in 2.

Team of the day was the Aces, they led from start to finish and claimed a cash prize with a modest 77 points. Well done to Messrs B. Bdzola, Skalsky and Meggitt.

Back in the club house, which incidentally was opened in the Autumn of 2000 by Justin Rose, one of England's highest world-ranked golfers, everyone gathered for some post-round analysis and drinks. Later in the relaxed setting of the oak beamed dining area the society was served a very nice 3 course meal and midway through President Skalsky announced the major prize winners and the overall Summer Classic Champion.

Similarly to the team winners, scores were fairly modest and on reflection most members went home believing they could and perhaps should have won prizes, if only they hadn't dropped 2 or 3 shots caused by basic errors, things could have been so different. However on the day Division One winner was John Pasicznyk 33 points, 2nd Graham Meggitt 32 points and 3rd Mike Bartkiw 30 points. In Division Two 3rd place went to Bazz 29 points, 2nd Roman Skalsky 32 points. Division Two winner and overall champion was Geoff Gillies who recorded 36 points, this with a couple of blobs on his card.

Unfortunately, last year's winner Mick Gillies wasn't there to present his brother with the trophy but nevertheless Geoff was happy to accept it from President Skalsky and for another year, this silverware was safely returned to the family trophy cabinet.

Our next event takes us to the region of Towcester in Northamptonshire for our much anticipated annual weekend away, this year to be held at Whittlebury Hall Golf Club and Country Hotel – Fri 27th to Sun 29th July, look forward to seeing you there.

Regards,

Graham

Weekend Away 2018
Whittlebury Hall Golf Club and Spa Hotel,
Nr Towcester, Northamptonshire
27- 29 July 2018

Day 1

It was Friday 27th July 2018, around 6am and in various parts of the country, with travel bags packed, 19 members and 3 guests were about to make their various journeys to Whittlebury Hall Golf Club and Spa Hotel, this year's venue for our annual weekend away.

In the weeks leading up to the event, the weather had been glorious and even with a few days to go, weather apps and media reports were indicating possible record temperatures. As a result shorts and caps were packed plus sun factor 30 for protection, happy days...☺

One by one members arrived, they warmly greeted each other, offering traditional pleasantries before trading some obligatory banter. This year's playing format had been changed slightly to accommodate the Gillies brothers, Mick and Geoff. They could only stay the one night, playing Friday and Saturday, therefore a decision to play for the weekend away trophy over two days was made. On the third day an inaugural Awayday competition was introduced, forming part of the order of merit and after Bazz had reminded everyone of the weekend's format, we were good to go.

The course, adjacent to Silverstone motor racing circuit, was laid out over 4 loops of 9 holes. The hot dry conditions had severely parched the fairways but the greens were in reasonable condition. 4 teams of 4 and 2 teams of 3 competed on the first couple of days. At the end of each round a ghost player was awarded to the teams with 3 players, this to even things out.

1905 (yellow) was the first course we played, 1905 being the year the course was built on the Whittlebury estate, a course with magnificent old oak trees and lakes in the parkland. Team Aces were first to play, made up of family members, brother's Mick and Geoff Gillies, plus father and son Andy and Ryan Bendzak. Standing on the first tee, they looked confident, each hoping for a perfect start. Although fearless on the outside, their insides must have been churning. The competing pack standing close behind, breathing down their necks and occasionally trading light banter, designed to unsteady their nerves. Appearing to work, they released hooked and sliced drives and a quartet of balls each escaping the fairway.

Each team in turn, were called onto the tee and soon all were tactically working their way around the course. The eagerly awaited tournament was under way.

The Royal Whittlewood course was our back 9 challenge, offering interesting holes, it certainly tested the players who all returned with varying scores. Head of the bunch and early joint leaders for the weekend away trophy were Paul Killoran and Mick Gillies with 36 points, close behind Stef Boris and Mick Bartkiw on 35 points followed by a pack of 9 who were all within a point or two.

That evening, following a splendid three course meal in the Aston Restaurant, President Skalsky presented Team and minor prizes. The Jack's were team winners, Mick (**Hovis**) Melnyk, John Pasicznyk, Mick Rewilak and Matwiw Bdzola. Team Runners up, the Queens, Paul Killoran, Michael Bdzola – Jnr, Mike Bartkiw and their ghost player Dave Brown. Two nearest the pin winners were John Pasicznyk and Zenon Sydor. Nearest the pin in 2 and Longest Drive was won by Keith Holmes and Mick Borys respectively. There were also 7 birdies submitted.

Sleepy Zenon Sydor retired to his room early missing the after party being hosted by youngsters Matwiw (Tee) and Buddy in bar 339. Alcoholic beverages were in plentiful supply and during the party in true tradition, several toasts were offered followed by numerous choral renditions of mnohya lita which surely echoed along the maze like corridors of the hotel.

Day 2

Suprisingly everyone was up the next morning bright and early, all ready for a well presented and plentiful breakfast which awaited them.

At the club house a photo call was announced and everyone gathered on a trio of steps for a group snap shot. The weather was very blustery with occasional showers, compared to the previous day it was distinctively chilly. Little did we

know, that later in the day the skies would darken further, not as a result of the weather but a golfing decision which was to prove controversial.

The windy conditions made playing extremely difficult, this was very noticeable in the scoring with only 6 players managing to improve on the scores of their previous round. Realising this might happen, Steve Holmes decided to make an early assault on the leaderboard, this was necessary if he was to reduce his overnight deficit of 6 points.

The first 9 holes were played on the **Grand Prix 1905** (Blue) course. The sound of racing cars coming from neighboring Silverstone could be heard, at times sounding like a swarm of bees about to attack. However the only attacking which was being done was between Sydor, Killoran, Matwiw Bdzola and Holmes, all desperately trying to be first to the finishing line and chequered flag.

On the returning back 9 (**1905** yellow course) shot of the day went to Roman Luczyn, who claimed nearest the pin, on hole 15. Taking a 7 iron, he precisely controlled a sweet shot to within 4 feet of the pin, giving him a feeling of great satisfaction. It was also on this back 9 which brought us to a point in the weekend which nobody could have predicted.

Today longest drive was nominated on hole 4, however marker placement on this hole was overlooked and later switched to the final hole. Unfortunately after the penultimate group had taken their LD tee shots on hole 18 and when making their way towards the LD marker, it was noted that although being endorsed, the marker was positioned just off the fairway. At first there was some uncertainty as to what action to take so the onus to make a decision was placed on a committee member who formed part of that team. After some deliberation a decision was taken to void the competition and the marker was returned to the clubhouse. This matter is now being addressed by the committee to avoid similar awkward situations and unnecessary embarrassment to members and committee alike.

On a brighter note, none of this affected Steve Holmes who continued his battle against fellow competitors and the elements. His final put gave him top spot and a total 40 points for the day and 70 for the tournament. Now it was left to Zenon Sydor to rain on Steve's parade but Zenon could only manage second place with a total of 69 points. Later that evening Steve was crowned champion and winner of the Weekend Away Trophy which was presented to him by last years winner Stef Borys. Runner up was Zenon Sydor and third place went to Matwiw Bdzola after beating Paul Killoran and Andy Bendzak on countback.

John Pasicznyk claim his second NP of the weekend whilst Michael Bdzola Jnr won NP in 2. A total of 8 birdies were claimed. Team prizes went to Jacks, Roman Skalsky, Andy Bendzak, Stephen Holmes, Mike Bartkiw. Team runners up were the 10's, Zenon Sydor, John Pasicznyk, Ryan Bendzak, Graham Meggitt. Surprisingly, despite the difficult playing conditions, 8 birdies were registered.

Prior to the meal that evening and after a tough day on the course several members decided to make use of the Spa enjoying the facilities and some quality chill out time together.

Day 3

Not only was the wind strong but the first heavy rain for several weeks arrived and for a long period of time it was relentless. Due to the inclement weather, several members decided against playing leaving just 12 players to battle the course and conditions in their challenge for the inaugural Awayday Trophy. This number reduced further after 10 holes when 4 members decided to call it a day and retired from the game. Unfortunately none of their cards were signed, therefore they were seen as incomplete and were recorded as disqualified.

With only 8 players left on the course, everything was to play for. A special mention must go to young Matwiw Bdzola "Tee" who scored 33 points and had he been a member would have won the competition. As it turns out, the trophy was kept in the family won by his sibling Buddy who scored 31, scoring 19 points on the back 9 of the Grand Prix 1905 (blue) course and beating Zenon Sydor on countback who scored 17.

The rain died down on the back 9 with only had strong winds to contend with. Not surprisingly there were no birdies scored on Sunday.

And so, another memorable weekend was over, everyone enjoyed the location, courses and each other's company and now look forward to the announcement of the 2019 venue.

Finally it must be mentioned, these events do not happen by themselves, once again Bazz Bdzola spent several months of his time organizing everything for this one weekend. In appreciation of his fine efforts a big **THANK YOU** was offered to Bazz in the form bottle of single malt whiskey and greeting card.

Our next event follows shortly, on Sunday 19th August at Hallowes Golf Club in Dronfield, Derbyshire and we hope to see you all there.

Hallowes Golf Club, Dronfield, Derbyshire 19th August 2018

With the weekend away now a distant memory, the UGAGB members were eager to meet up again. The follow up venue being Hallowes Golf Club, nestled in the undulating slopes of the Peak District. A course we played last year, so good it warranted a return. Today's event was our annual stroke play Championship which was convincingly won last year by Jon Iwanejko, regrettably due to personal reasons, Jon was unable to attend and defend his title. We wish Jon and his family all the very best and hope to see him at next month's event.

The weather was overcast but mild and although at times it looked like showers were possible, umbrellas' were not required and conditions in the main, remained dry and good for golf. The course, still baring scars from the scorching summer temperatures, played well and once again everyone appeared to enjoy what the course had to offer.

This club has a long history which was definitely reflected in the small bar's décor and furniture which was traditional in style, A large old wooden spoon hung above the bar, a reminder of what could await anyone returning with the lowest score card. The men's changing room had definitely stood still in time, regimentally lined with dark wooden antique lockers, each complimenting the character of the 17th Century building, previously a barn.

Bazz Bdzola stood in for President Skalsky who "**had**" to go on holiday, and whilst Roman S. was being escorted to his holiday destination by his good lady wife, kicking and screaming along the way, in his place, Bazz was offering a warm welcome to everyone.

Tongue in cheek, Bazz announced the rules for marker placements and minor prizes but he omitted to tell John Pasicznyk (JP) the rules of pre-tournament practice. Whilst everyone was on the practice putting green and driving nets, JP was busily chipping onto the 18th green, totally unaware of his actions, his sub-conscience secretly mapping the contours of that hole. 😊 This provided a light humoured atmosphere to get the tournament underway.

15 members (9 x Division 1 & 6 x Division 2) and 1 guest made up the days competitors, this nicely equated to 4 x 4 balls. With 5 winners of the past 6 events being present, the smaller than usual field wasn't short of quality and strength. Steve Holmes was hoping to continue where he left off, winning the Weekend Trophy a month earlier, he was clearly one of the hot favourites.

The course ahead offered a complete variation of holes, with true greens it was a fine test for the more accomplished golfers in our group, whilst being fair and rewarding for all other members. This was certainly true for our senior tour member "Roman Luczyn" he produced one of his finest rounds of the year and was it not for the odd missed putt, he would have won the event. Instead he returned with a creditable score of 70 points and overall joint second placement.

Generally scores on this Par 71, 6101 yard course were good, the leading pack of 6 members all finished within 5 points of each other. In Division Two, Geoff Gillies was 3rd with 74 points, 2nd was Roman Luczyn 70 points and winner of that division was Steve Holmes who came in 2 under par, 69 points. In the top flight Graham Meggitt was 3rd with 73 points, 2nd Miike Bartkiw 71 points, winner was Andy Bendzak, one under par 70 points.

In the absence of President Skalsky, Mick Rewilak made his inaugural announcement of final placings, which was well received. After which Bazz awarded the winner of this years' Stoke Play Championship "Steve Holmes" with the impressive trophy.

Minor prizes went to the following:-

Steve (8 iron) Holmes NP (hole 8), Zenon Sydor NP (hole 14), Mike Bartkiw NP2 (18) and Mick (the predator) Borys LD. There were 7 Birdies on the day, 2 for Zenon Sydor and Mick Borys respectively and 1 each for Andy Bendzak, Steve Holmes and Mike Bartkiw.

Surprisingly there were no cash prize for young Stef Boris, so the monthly direct debit serving his account was temporarily cancelled.... 😊

Next months' event will be held at the prestigious Rudding Hall Golf Club, Harrogate on Sunday 16th September. Full details for this event will be emailed by Graham Meggitt, please send all replies directly to him. We look forward to seeing you there.

Rudding Park GC, Rudding Park, Follifoot Harrogate, HG3 1JH 16th September 2018

Today was our second visit of the year to the county of Yorkshire, this time our travels brought us to North Yorkshire and the beautiful setting of Rudding Park Golf Club. Set in extensive parkland on the outskirts of Harrogate.

Our hosts offered a warm welcome and upon arrival issued everyone with a small Rudding Park resort pack, consisting of tee pegs, pencil and a golf discount voucher. We were also presented with some pre-printed score cards complete with names and handicaps of each player. Incidentally this was our lowest turn-out of the season with only 9 members and 1 guest, several of our regular playing members were holidaying overseas.

To get the day underway, 8 of our members decided to take advantage of the 6 hole, 660 yard, par 3 course. They split equally into two teams, creating a Yorkshire v Lancashire mini competition. The Repton short course offered a 1 hour warm up round, which was fun and testing. Its signature hole, based on the world-famous 17th at Sawgrass, Florida, was particularly challenging. Playing the same yardage (137 yards) the daunting tee shot saw several of our members splash their initial attempts into the water which wrapped around the Island green. This battle of the roses comp was won by team Lancashire (M. Bdzola, P. Killoran, R. Skalsky and R. Gregory). Bazz took the individual prize with the best gross score, an amazing 19 shots.

Rain had been forecast earlier in the week but thankfully it was incorrect and although blustery at times, the weather remained dry and extremely mild for the time of year. Indeed it proved to be great golfing conditions for the "Bendzak Memorial Trophy".

The 18 hole, 6297 yard, Hawtree course was very well presented with open fairways and undulating greens which generally were very difficult to read. With just 2 teams of 3 and 1 team of 4, it was fair to say that everyone started the round with expectations of being in the prizes at the end of the round. Generally scores were very good with only player returning with less than 30 points.

Putt of the day went to Zenon Sydor who made easy work of the Par 3, 161 yard, hole 11. Following his tee shot, Zenon's ball came to rest on the fringe of the green, some 30 feet from the pin. After taking a little time to analyse the contours of the green, he executed a masterful birdie putt, the ball lightly striking the pin before coming to rest in the hole.

One hole with a more demanding green was the signature 14th (163 yards), named Rhododendron Glade. One could only imagine the billowing masses of this colourful shrub when walking uphill towards the undulating green, guarded by bunkers, making no par easy to score. I guess the true beauty of this hole can only be fully appreciated during late spring, when the Augusta like shrubs will be in full bloom.

Achievement of the day certainly went to Mike Bartkiw, who for the first time in UGAGB history, won all 4 of the minor prizes. This was some triumph which may never be seen again. Mike won Nearest Pin (hole 5 & 8), Nearest Pin in 2 (Hole13), Longest Drive (Hole18).

Back in the cabin like clubhouse, a tasty plateful of steak pie was served, followed by a delicious helping of sticky toffee pudding, after which the main prizes of the day were presented.

Division Two Winner with a fabulous score of 39points was President Skalsky, Mick Rewilak was placed second with 36 points and Paul Killoran came in third with 33 points.

Division One winner was Zenon Sydor with 36points, followed closely by runner up Graham Meggitt 35 points, Dave Brown was third with 31 Points.

This year's crowned champion of the Bendzak memorial Trophy was Roman Skalsky who with 39 points was the clear winner on the day. In the absence of last year's champion Steve Holmes, Bazz presented Roman with the title.

The final event for this season is to be held at Ruddington Grange Golf Club, Nottingham on Sunday 14th October 2019. It is here where the Order of Merit will be decided. Currently we have 3 joint leaders; Zenon Sydor, Mick Rewilak and Graham Meggitt all currently on 167 points. Bazz Bdzola is on their tails with 166 points followed by Roman Skalsky, 161 points. Other members who have only registered 4 scores to date could also find themselves challenging for top spot, if they register a credible score on the final day.

**Ruddington Grange Golf Club,
Wilford Road, Ruddington, Nottingham
14th October 2018**

The final event of the season took us to Ruddington Grange Golf Club, Nottingham. The course which was opened in 1988 was quite a challenging venue. Added to the challenge of the course, was the poor weather conditions which delivered constant and torrential rain. It was certainly the worst playing conditions we had experienced this season.

Thankfully the torrid weather forecast didn't dampen our member's spirits and the last event saw a good attendance of 18 playing members and 2 guests (Anton Sydor & Ashley Saunders). It was also very nice to welcome back Trevor Johnson who, after recovering from a heart attack earlier in the year, looked fit and well. Understandably Trevor made a sensible decision not to play but he was clearly happy to see everyone and we all hope to see Trevor back on the course next season. Another non-playing attendee was our past president and honorable guest, Slawko Bdzola.

After donning on an array of waterproofs and with brollies at the ready our 5 playing groups of 4 made their way outside, ready to take part in the "Open" challenge and their final chance to gain further points in the "Order of Merit". Incidentally, at the start of play, Zenon Sydor, Mick Rewilak and Graham Meggitt were all order of merit joint leaders. There were also a handful of members, who with a solid round, stood a realistic chance of winning.

Although this parkland course was home to over 5000 trees, there was little shelter from the elements which proved too much for Pete Wolociuha, who after the first hole decided to call it a day. He retired from the round and made a quick return to the club house. A wise choice some may say.

Those left on the course worked their way around the attractive setting. Each hole provided a different challenge which undoubtedly added to the interest. The fairways were in relatively good condition and although there was clearly less run on the balls, the drainage on the course held up well. Some of the greens were a little saturated but apart from the bunkers, remarkably there was little flooding to be seen around the course. Steve Holmes battled his way round the first 9 hole but like Pete Wolociuha, Steve also decided to call it a day and waddled his way back to a dry and warm clubhouse.

There were 4 par 3 holes on the course, all had been chosen for the nearest the pin competition. Unlike last month when Mike Bartkiw swept up all NP prizes, this time there were only 2 winners. Graham Meggitt and Andy Bendzak claimed best shots on hole 3 and 8 respectively, however hole 12 (174yards) and hole 15(180yards) proved too testing, with not 1 of the remaining 18 competitors managing to hit the greens.

With everyone back in the clubhouse all scorecards were handed into the committee, this after most players had replaced their soaking scorecards for new drier cards.

Meal of the Season

Before the final presentation, we were directed into the dining room where we were to experience one of the highlights of the day. The day's meal was a carvery which was plentiful, followed by a choice of well presented, desserts. This was by far, one of the best meals we had been served all season.

And so onto the minor prizes, culminating with the main presentations, the Open and the prestigious Order of Merit. There were several birdies and even one eagle. Cash prizes for birdies went to Anton Sydor (3) Mike Bartkiw (1) Roman Skalsky (1) and Zenon Sydor (1) and Andy Bendzak was also in the money by producing a fine eagle.

Division 1

3rd Stef Boris 32 points
2nd Graham Meggitt 34 points
1st Mike Bartkiw 34 points (on count back)

Division 2

3rd Mick Rewilak 30 points
2nd Mick Gillies 30 points (on count back)
1st Mike Bdzola 39 points

Open Champion

With an amazing 39 points Mike Bdzola (Bazz) certainly left one of his best performances till the end. As a result, Bazz was crowned Open champion 2018. The weather certainly didn't affect his game, in fact for Bazz, the most difficult part of playing in the rain, was "Keeping Dry"!

Order of Merit – 2018

Bazz's remarkable round gained him a further 10 points which was added to his points for the best 5 rounds of the season. With a grand total of 176 points, 5 points clear of his nearest rival, Bazz topped the group and was announced winner of the Order of Merit 2018. He proudly collected his second major trophy of the day which was presented to him by last year's champion, Stef Boris.

They say things come in three's, which was certainly true for Bazz. Following a short AGM meeting, it was announced that Bazz was approaching his 70th birthday and in fine tradition the UGAGB male voice choir gave him a sincere rendition of Mnohaya Lita.

Our season could not have ended in a more fitting way and before leaving, everyone traded their best wishes with a few Happy Christmas and New Year greetings thrown in. Our next event will be in March 2019, date to be announced, until then very best wishes to all, stay healthy and safe.