



ADVENTURES IN GOLF

Autumn 2005

News Update

Tiger is back! With yet another win at the Masters, Woods silenced his doubters.

Mind you, anyone who makes 142 consecutive cuts can hardly be said to be struggling for form. At the US Open, it was Woods again who always seemed to be the man to beat. Ernie was never in it and Phil faded after the first two rounds. Singh appeared to be a threat but the tournament seemed his for the taking for two-time winner Retief Goosen.

You have to feel sorry for anyone failing to break 80 in the final round of a major when victory is in sight, but also you cannot but admire the dignified way in which Goosen accepted the golfing fates. Sneaking up on the rails, of course, was New Zealander Michael

Campbell. His talent has never been in doubt, only his ability to sustain a challenge over four rounds when the heat is on. **And, with Tiger breathing fire down your neck,**

esting statistics during Majors. One that caught our eye at Pinehurst was the number of top five finishes, in the majors, by the leading pros. **With 55 top five finishes, Nicklaus**

has more than twice as many as anyone else. People remember how many times he won; they sometimes forget just how many times he was in contention!



Another interesting observation at Pinehurst was just how many holes were clearly influenced by Donald Ross's upbringing at Dornoch. The 15th,

you would certainly have felt some pressure had you been in Campbell's position. He never wavered though, and thoroughly deserved his win.

for example, is a short hole of around 200 yards played to a green tilted towards the tee, protected on either side by deep bunkers and falling away steeply to both sides and the rear. Just like the 2nd at Royal

Announcers always provide inter-



In This Issue...

The Year In Review	1	James Braid Society – Summer Meeting	7
Open Championship 2006 – Royal Liverpool ...	2	People and Places	10
Ryder Cup - 2006	5	About Us	12
Tour Operators Cup at Turnberry	7		



Dornoch. At least at Pinehurst, the great man was kind enough to let you get well into the round before confronting you with such a severe challenge.

The Open returned to St Andrews this year and record crowds basked in warm, sunny weather. Opening with a 66, Tiger led from start to finish, and though both Montgomerie and Olazabal got within one shot, by the turn on the final day there was an air of inevitability about the outcome. In the end, Woods' five shot margin of victory was a fair reflection of his superiority over the field.

It was an emotional occasion for Jack Nicklaus, cheered to an echo on every tee, fairway and green as he waved farewell to competitive golf. Appropriately paired with Tom Watson, the great man signed off with a round of level par. Commentators, spectators and other players were choking with emotion;



Watson himself could not stem the tears and yet Jack did what he always does. He composed himself, focused and ripped a drive just short of the Valley of Sin. With spectators packing the stands, and onlookers

craning their necks from every balcony and window, he then ran a lovely approach putt up on to the green to 12 feet from the pin. As his wife and family looked down from the Royal & Ancient balcony, he then summoned one last effort of concentration and holed the putt for birdie.

Magnanimous in victory, gracious in defeat, dignified in retirement – **the greatest legacy Nicklaus leaves behind is his example of sportsmanship and etiquette on and off the course.** He has been an inspiration for two generations of players, not just on the circuit but throughout the game; and fitting tributes were paid by every golfer interviewed during the tournament, not least by Tiger Woods who clearly strives to emulate Nicklaus as a player and as a man.

With the Walker Cup coming soon, two young Scottish Amateurs signaled bright futures with strong finishes in The Open. Lloyd Saltman took the Silver Medal with a 5 under par total of 283. Just one shot behind was Eric Ramsay, who closed with a fine 68 to match his opening round

Royal Aberdeen was the venue for the Seniors' British Open – Greg



Norman making his Seniors' debut. The course looked a picture, with Donald Steel's revisions to the greens and back nine receiving universal approval. The course played very tough, as the cut at 14 over par amply demonstrated. Tom Watson's round of 64 was titanic given the conditions, and his play-off triumph over Des Smyth of Ireland meant his final round charge would not be in vain. When playing the links the following week, our caddies told us that, even in the heat of battle, Tom still found time to chat with the crowds and to thank them for finding his ball in the tigerish rough! There's little wonder why he is such a popular champion.

Breaking with the Turnberry tradition, this year's Links Cup visits Gleneagles for the first time, with James Braid's Kings and Queens courses providing scenic and challenging golf for all participants. We look forward to meeting old and new friends.

Royal Liverpool – Open Championship 2006

In May 1869 a meeting took place in the old Royal Hotel on the edge



of “the Warren”, a sandy, rabbit-infested wasteland on the shore of the Dee estuary near Liverpool. James Muir Dowie, a Scot then living in Liverpool, and his father-in-law, Robert Chambers, were the prime movers, and a month later the Liverpool Golf club was formed with Dowie as Captain. Old Tom’s brother, George Morris, laid out the first 9 hole course and his son, Jack, became the club’s first professional.

Jack was to remain at Hoylake for over sixty years!

For seven years, the links were shared with the Liverpool Hunt Club, which had a racecourse on the land. Now, just two reminders of that era remain: two ornamental pineapples from the old paddock gates adorn the putting green posts, and the old saddling bell now hangs in the clubhouse and is used as a dinner gong.

Over the next few years the course was extended to 12 and then to 18 holes, and a splendid clubhouse was built. Royal patronage had been bestowed as early as 1872 by HRH the Duke of Connaught, but it was not until 1885 that Royal Liverpool hosted its first major event, the Amateur Championship.

Other club ‘firsts’ include the inaugural Home Internationals (initially between Scotland and England) in 1902, the first match

between Britain and the United States (forerunner of the Walker Cup) in 1921, and the first English Close Championship in 1925. Numerous championships have been held here since, including ten Open Championships and eighteen Amateur Championships.

Three local golfers dominated amateur golf in Britain for a genera-



tion: John Ball, Harold Hilton and Jack Graham. Only nine years old when the club was formed, young John grew up with the Club. His amateur record is unparalleled: he won the Amateur Championship eight times between 1888 and 1912, his last victory at the age of fifty. He was also one of only three amateurs to win the Open Championship, the others being Harold Hilton and Bobby Jones, as well as the first – in the 1890 Open at Prestwick.

Harold Hilton was nine years younger than Ball, but his first Open victory came at Muirfield in 1892 at

the age of 23. He won again, at Hoylake in 1897, and triumphed for the first time in the Amateur Championship in 1900. His swing also proved to be durable, as in 1911, at the age of 42, he won the Amateur, the US Amateur, and in the Open at Royal St George’s, missed a tie for first place by only one stroke.

Jack Graham was the only one of the trio not to win a major amateur or professional event. But twenty-five gold medals and fourteen silvers in Club competitions tell a story, which is embellished by five semi-final appearances in the Amateur Championship and a decade of international matches for Scotland during which he lost only twice. Death in action in Flanders (1915) tragically cut short a career, which was far from over.

Hoylake has always enjoyed a tradition of style and friendship. It is claimed that the presentation by Kenneth Stoker, then Captain, of his red jacket to Bobby Jones in 1929 to mark his Grand Slam, was the inspiration for the Green Jacket at Augusta. The clubhouse exudes warmth and style, without ever feeling stuffy or pretentious. Dinner in the Club Room is rather like the officers’ mess of a leading

Guards' Regiment: lofty ceilings, oak paneling, portraits of past Captains, and elegant silverware.

Outside, the course initially disappoints: the view across the first fairway looks out over a rectangular practice area, which threatens out-of-bounds for the 1st, 15th, and 16th holes. Indeed, Hoylake has more opportunities to cross those feared white posts than any other championship course in England. But, negotiate the 1st, which requires a long drive and a medium iron, and a different perspective is swiftly gained. The course is not flat, as it first appears, but full of subtle contours and undulations so that a level stance and flat lie are the exception rather than the rule.

With housing to the left on the first few holes, the course has a slightly suburban feel. That impression subsides as you approach the turn, however, as the land becomes more undulating, and impressive views of the Dee estuary and distant Welsh hills suggest a wildness far removed from the townscape left behind. Challenging short holes and classic par 4's are the order of the day, before a suitably testing finish. Extending for championships to over 7200 yards, and with new greens at the 3rd, 17th and 18th, Hoylake will produce a deserving champion in 2006.

We have an exceptional program for the Championship in 2006, restricted to just four couples. Travel will be by executive coach with air-conditioned leather interior. Entry tickets to all four days of the championship are

included, as are executive rooms at the fabulous Chester Grosvenor Hotel and Old Course-facing rooms at the St Andrews Old Course Hotel, for a post-trip experience at the 2005 Open venue.

Sunday 16 July

Depart USA
for Manchester, England

Monday 17 July

Arrive Manchester Airport.
Met by driver and executive coach for transfer to the **Chester Grosvenor Hotel**. The afternoon allows an opportunity to stroll around the historic city centre with its Roman history, chic boutiques and Tudor buildings.
Overnight at Chester Grosvenor

Tuesday 18 July

Play the excellent Tom Morris-designed links course of **Wallasey**. Founded in 1891 and 6607 yards long, **Wallasey overlooks Liverpool Bay and benefits from similar soils and duneland to Royal Liverpool**. Over time, Morris' original design has been up-dated by Alec Herd, James Braid, and Harold Hilton to create additional length and hazards. And one prominent club member, Dr Frank Stableford, invented the points scoring system which has been adopted for competitions the world over.
Overnight at Chester Grosvenor.

Wednesday 19 July

Today **Royal Birkdale** is our venue. Rated the best course in Britain over the last few years by some surveys, this Open venue is a classic links from which, unusually, you never see

the sea. It lies inland from the coast road below Southport in a glorious stretch of golfing terrain, which includes Southport & Ainsdale, West Lancashire, Formby, and Hillside. Designed by Fred Hawtree and J H Taylor, the modern links were established in 1922, although the club had been founded in 1889. **The Club has hosted many major tournaments: Walker Cups, Ryder Cups, Opens, Curtis Cups, and Ladies Opens, as well as a PGA Match Play championship and numerous amateur events.** The 6703 yards, from the medal tees, is extended for Open Championships, but is quite long enough to test the best amateur players.
Overnight at Chester Grosvenor.

Thursday 20 July

The opening round of the Open Championship. This will be an emotional day for **Royal Liverpool**. **1967 was the last time the Open came here, when Roberto de Vincenzo won a popular victory.** Recent changes to the course master-minded by Donald Steel and refurbishment of the clubhouse have prepared Hoylake, as the locals call it, for another Open visit. To paraphrase Bernard Darwin, if the mighty winds blow, a mighty champion will be created!
Overnight at Chester Grosvenor.

Friday 21 July

Round Two of the Open, when the big names often reel in the early leaders, and the whole field aims not just to beat the cut, but to gain position for the weekend.
Overnight at Chester Grosvenor.

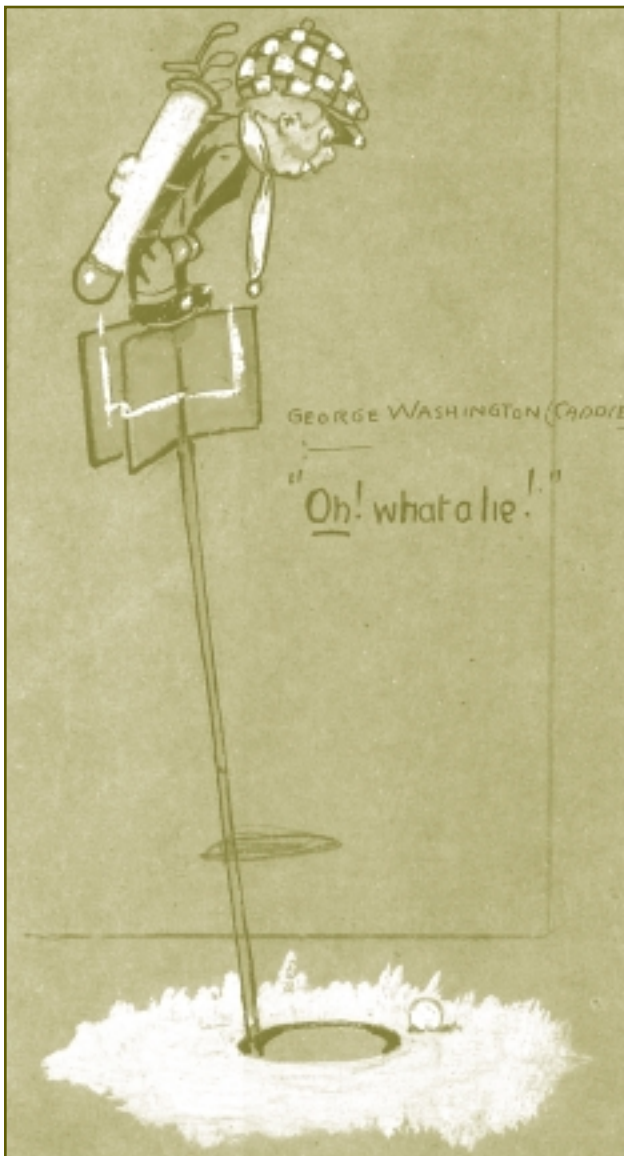


Saturday 22 July

The crowd swells as weekend visitors join the throng. **Weather plays a vital role on all links courses**, and the members will be hoping the wind really does blow so that they can see how the top players contend with the sort of windy conditions, which the locals experience on a weekly basis.
Overnight at Chester Grosvenor.

Sunday 23 July

The final day! **Will it be Tiger or Ernie? Can Phil or Vijay add the Open to their trophy cabinets? Or**



will a local boy come through? Ian Poulter has the wardrobe for all occasions, but has he got the game? Be there on Sunday afternoon to find out!
Overnight at Chester Grosvenor.

Monday 24 July

A leisurely transfer to St Andrews, with a scenic drive through the Scottish Borders. **Our destination is the famous Old Course Hotel**, which looks out over the fairway of the legendary Road Hole. Every big name has trodden these links, and what a thrill it is to face the same shots as those of our golfing heroes on the world's most famous course.
Overnight at Old Course Hotel

Tuesday 25 July

Kingsbarns has rightly leapt to prominence in every informed listing of the great courses. **Kyle Phillips could retire tomorrow and his place in history would be assured, thanks to the creation of this wonderful links just east of St Andrews.** Every hole has spectacular sea views, the bunkering is stupendous, course presentation is immaculate and the greens are sensational.
Overnight at Old Course Hotel.

Wednesday 26 July

A day in St Andrews for the **Old Course** with an optional round on the

New. However many times you play the Old Course, you discover something new – the subtlety of the design, the grandeur of the greens, the sense of history heightening the experience. No wonder **Alister Mackenzie contended that the Old Course should be the yardstick by which all other courses might be judged.** Overnight at Old Course Hotel

Thursday 27 July

Carnoustie lies just across the Tay Bridge from St Andrews and is truly a demanding links. **One of the hardest of the Open courses**, it requires good ball striking and strategic thinking, **particularly during the tough finishing holes, where the Barry Burn can wreck a score in a matter of minutes** – just ask Jean van de Velde!
Overnight at Old Course Hotel

Friday 28 July

Morning transfer to Glasgow Airport for departure to United States.

Note: tee times are subject to confirmation from the clubs by 1 January 2006.

Ryder Cup

The K Club, Straffan, Ireland 22 – 24 September 2006

This may well be **the only Ryder Cup to take place in Ireland during our lifetime!!** And if anyone thinks the Irish will settle for anything less than a landmark event, then they should think again. With **Padraig Harrington, Darren Clarke, and Paul McGinley** all likely to be in the European team, the Irish will be well-represented and

the home crowd will create a marvelous atmosphere. American supporters will also be over in their thousands, so the occasion promises to be one of the finest events the series has so far witnessed.

All tickets for the event are issued by the Ryder Cup office, which insists on a **minimum 5 night stay in Dublin** for the better hotels. **Every package has now been sold for these hotels** – mainly to corporate groups and tour operators. All the top courses in Ireland will be heavily booked either side of the event, too, so if you plan to attend you need to make a commitment now. Please note that all packages are subject to rigorous payment schedules drawn up by the Ryder Cup office and September 2005 is the deadline for initial deposits. ***So act now to avoid disappointment.***

Our basic 5 night package includes:

- **Accommodation:** Crowne Plaza Hotel or Chief O’Neill’s in Dublin City
- **Transport:** Regular coach transfers to and from The K Club
- **Room** (double or single occupancy) with full Irish breakfast daily
- **Celebration Dinner** on the final night with souvenir gift.

Better still though, take our special tour which includes pre-booked golf before the event.

South West Ireland (pre-tournament) & The Ryder Cup 2006
Wednesday 13 September

Depart USA for Shannon, Ireland

Thursday 14 September

Arrive Shannon. Met by driver and executive coach for transfer to **Moy House** at Lahinch. A spin along the Cliffs of Moher will sharpen the appetite for a fine dinner and a restful night.

Overnight at Moy House.

Friday 15 September

Play **Lahinch, one of the great links courses of Ireland**, with fabulous views of the Atlantic coast and wonderful green, springy turf. Overnight at Moy House.

Saturday 16 September

Today visit **Doonbeg, Greg Norman’s exquisite creation below Spanish Point**. Some of the finest links land in Ireland has been put to imaginative use to create a course which will test the best and linger in the memory. After golf, continue around the Shannon estuary to Limerick and then down to Killarney, one of Ireland’s most famous towns, where the lively nightlife gives even the weariest golfer his second wind!

Overnight at the four-star Killarney Royal Hotel.

Sunday 17 September

Driving the Ring of Kerry is one of those scenic spectacles that everyone remembers. Finding a gem like **Waterville** half way round is an added bonus. **Jim Mulcahy’s vision, added to Eddie Hackett’s design and recent enhancements courtesy of Tom Fazio**, has produced a scenic monster which bears comparison with any links in the world. Overnight at Killarney Royal Hotel.

Monday 18 September

Ryan’s Daughter was filmed on the beach below the course. **“I designed the first nine, but surely God designed the back nine” remarked Arnold Palmer.** “I am happy that we have one of the world’s great links here.” Many would go even further as they regard **Tralee** as their favorite course based on its dramatic coastal views and challenging design. Overnight at Killarney Royal Hotel.

Tuesday 19 September

Today, another scenic wonder is revealed. **Old Head** occupies the headland below Kinsale, which is accessed via a narrow causeway. **This may well be the world’s most dramatic course with coastal views that defy description.** Overnight at Killarney Royal Hotel.

Wednesday 20 September

A leisurely drive across Ireland from Killarney, punctuated by a pub lunch and arrival at your hotel in good time for dinner. Overnight at Crown Plaza Hotel or Chief O’Neill’s.

Thursday 21 September

Final practice day – a chance to familiarize yourself with the course (Palmer’s original design) and see how the players cope with the challenge. Regular coach transfers allow you to come and go as you please. **Witness the opening ceremony at The K Club.** After the ceremony, return to town. Overnight at Crown Plaza Hotel or Chief O’Neill’s.

Friday 22 September

Day One – **Foursomes and Fourballs** – the excitement begins! A good start will be important for the confidence of both teams. Overnight at Crown Plaza Hotel or Chief O’Neill’s.

Saturday 23 September

Day Two – **Foursomes and Fourballs** again. In the past, the European team believed a good lead after two days was mandatory going into the final day’s play, as the US team’s greater strength in depth traditionally proved crucial in the singles. Last time that did not materialize. Overnight at Crown Plaza Hotel or Chief O’Neill’s.

Sunday 24 September

Day Three – with excitement reaching fever pitch, **the Singles matches inevitably decide the result.** Twenty four of the world’s top golfers going head to head produces sporting drama of the highest quality. Overnight at Crown Plaza Hotel or Chief O’Neill’s **with celebration dinner and souvenir gift.** Toast the victors and look forward to the next time!

Monday 25 September

Depart from Dublin Airport

**Note: Tee times are subject to confirmation from the golf clubs.*

Due to limited availability on these programs we strongly recommend that you register your interest now.

Turnberry Hosts Inaugural Tour Operators’ Cup

The management at **Turnberry** has a healthy regard for all those involved in the travel industry, **recognizing that a successful business requires pro-active marketing to capitalize on great visitor attractions. Of course, there’s no better way to get to know a golf course than to play it,** so this occasion provided an opportunity for a round on the Ailsa, as well as a chance to renew acquaintance with the wider facilities of the resort.

golf was enlivened by a long driving competition on the 18th for which all players had to use a hickory club (a 1920’s George Nicol replica). **A big-hitting American achieved the longest drive with a monster of 280 yards,** and, to the chagrin of the local Scots, a Sassenach from down south walked off with the Stableford prize. (His handicap will be closely scrutinized next year).

Our thanks go to **Stewart Selbie** and his team for their generous hospitality and fine trophy.



The James Braid Golfing Society

Brunch on arrival hit the spot for those needing to stretch from a long car journey and tee times were allocated between noon and 2pm. That meant all 40 players got round in time to change for dinner (black tie in honor of the occasion), while the private room set aside for the evening ensured a clubby atmosphere at the table.

As founder members of this society, we rub shoulders with some famous names – **Ben Crenshaw, Peter Alliss, and Peter Thomson (the Society’s President),** to name but a few. For various reasons however, time has not permitted our full participation in the Society’s activities, which include annual matches against **Walton Heath and the Golf House Club of Elie,** as well as inter-

Companies from five different countries were represented and the





national clashes with the Shivas Irons Society of California and clubs in Mauritius and New York.

Club competitions like the Curate's Egg and Pink Balls are best left to the imagination, although the St Andrews Stableford is more comprehensible to the uninitiated. Suffice to say, however, that the highlight of the **Society's golfing year is the Summer Meeting in Brora, where the James Braid Open is played over the great man's design, which to this day remains faithful to its creator.** As in Braid's day, the rough is still kept down to a playable level by grazing sheep and cattle, with small electric fences protecting the fast and undulating greens. Views of the Northern Highlands compete for attention with majestic coastal vistas, and the natural, rolling fairways provide a perfect illustration of the intrinsic suitability of linksland for golfing purposes. Brora is essentially a holiday course, with length rarely a problem and hazards neither unfairly placed nor unduly penal. However, **the**

contours on and around the greens will test anyone's short game and the finish is challenging to say the least. The 15th and 16th are two stout par 4's, the latter of which requires a canny approach to a green perched high on a hillside. The 17th then demands two very long shots to get anywhere near home, before the

par 3, 18th calls for a wood or long iron up a narrow valley to a raised green set below the clubhouse. Members sitting in the bar see few tee shots come to rest on the putting surface, so those who achieve the feat may enter with distinction.

This year, the summer meeting featured a match against Royal Dornoch. Played in four ball better ball format with sixteen players in each team, it proved to be a very social occasion. Paired with **Robert Powell** (vice-president of the Braid Society and co-owner of the Royal Marine Hotel in Brora), I was relieved to hear my partner had won the Curate's Egg the day before. A man in form – just what I need in a partner, I reflected, as I repaired to the

practice putting area to clear my overnight hangover. The previous evening's dinner had been held at the Royal Marine, and despite arriving too late to join in the day's competition, I had played my full part in the evening session.

A few gentle chips to the putting surface were, I decided, the ideal preparation for the Big Match. As I addressed my first ball I felt a pat on the shoulder. "Have we met?" asked a kindly face. I assured the speaker that indeed we had, mouthed pleasantries about how nice it was to see him again and addressed my ball. "Of course, you know this is the finest golf course in the world, don't you?" he said over my shoulder. I nodded and duffed a chip just as he launched into a description of the course. Excusing myself, I went to find Robert who was busy phoning two Irish gentlemen who had not yet turned up. They were just crossing the bridge over the Dornoch Firth, so the team would be complete and we could go back to a little pre-match practice.

I dropped a couple of balls, took out



my 9 iron and prepared to chip. Once again, I was interrupted by a tap on the shoulder. "Of course, you know this is the finest course in the world?" I motioned to my Royal Dornoch member's bag tag, nodded and fluffed another chip. The group was gathering and the match was about to start. **Our Society Captain, journalist Malcolm Campbell, and his partner David Skinner led the way against Roly Bluck (Captain of RDGC) and his partner.** Despite a stiff breeze blowing directly into their faces, they all hit impressive drives down the middle. Three more groups

irritatingly long and straight. A couple of hacks up the left side rough got me to the green in sight of a bogey, and my partner, God love him, made the only four to put us one up!

No one hit the green at the 2nd, made especially difficult from the back tee into a strong breeze. **Gordon Lawson, vice-captain of RDGC** and one of our opponents, made an unlikely four by holing a long putt after taking two shots to extricate himself from an impossible lie in the left front bunker. Embarrassingly, that was good

perfectly placed, but neither shot had the momentum to run through the semi-rough and down onto the fairway. With awkward downhill lies we both found bunkers with our second shots and suddenly we were three down.

On the long 9th, Robert was bunkered with his second shot once again. Mike and I halved in par and we moved on to the par 3, 10th. The flag was on the front of the green and the hole was playing downwind. Gordon's ball landed on the green and ran right through, a fate which must befall many players in these conditions. My ball hopped onto the front edge courtesy of a lucky bounce on the shoulder of one of the front bunkers and we got back to two down, which became one when we took the 11th as well.

Foolishly, I mentioned to Robert that we would now at worst lose 4 & 3, so he carved his third shot into a greenside bunker on the 12th, and, although on for three, I could not match Mike's two-putt, also from at least 100 feet. His birdie on the short 13th added insult to injury and, when they also won the 14th (Foxy), we were four down. Gordon holed a monster on the 15th to match our par so we played the 16th and repaired to the bar.

The match result was thankfully announced during the dinner as "lost in the mist". It is a feature of Braid Society matches that the result is less important than the camaraderie, a tradition which is gratefully embraced by all golfers of my standard. As is the way at these meetings, we came bearing



followed with similar results before it was our turn. Given the honor by my partner, I pulled out my 3 wood (Jack admits to taking his on these occasions) and started towards the tee.

"Of course you know this is the finest..." I stopped him in his tracks this time with a severe glance and a firm tap on the bag tag and proceeded to pull my drive into the first patch of rough on the left side of the fairway. The other three were

enough. Everyone bogeyed the 3rd and the 4th was halved, when Mike Thomas, Gordon's partner, and I both holed long putts for par. My first contribution; Robert visibly sighed with relief.

Some outrageous putting by both Gordon and Mike left us two down after seven holes, but Robert and I had the better of the drives at the 8th, both getting over the ridge, smack in the middle of the fairway. From the tee, they had looked to be

gifts for the home Captain (Roly) and Secretary, the admirable John Duncan. Short speeches and toasts followed, and a couple of people told amusing jokes, which were carefully selected so as not to embarrass the ladies who were present.

The next morning, from my bedroom window in Robert's apartment overlooking the Brora links, I could see golfers going out in threes from before 6.45am. The James Braid Open was underway! The early starters were teeing it up again from about 11.30am and the last ones out finished around 8.30pm, which allowed the presentation to take place at 9.00pm. Of course, in Brora during high summer, broad daylight lasts from 2.30am until 11.30pm, with the bit in-between merely a subdued twilight.

There were 102 entries for the competition and less than a handful of last-minute drop-outs. The winner of the gross was Inverness golfer **Mike McIntosh**, who carded a pair of 68's in benign conditions to register the two under par total of 136. **Malcolm Murray** finished just one stroke behind and a small posse of chasing players included **Trevor Matheson** on 140. But this competition is for everyone of reasonable club golf standard: a local government officer from Inverness played with a policeman from Fife and a

solicitor from Northampton. Overseas visitors from Switzerland and Sweden rubbed shoulders with Irishmen and Scots. A large contingent of English players included both visitors and white settlers, and a small number of Americans again comprised those with local residences along with golfing tourists.

efficient service, and all the while a glorious view of the links from the picture windows of the clubhouse. The bar, too, did a roaring trade, with the "serious" golfers noticeably ordering soft drinks at lunchtime, while their less ambitious comrades typically took succor in something stronger.

There were hardly any spectators on the course, if you exclude the sheep and cattle. In this part of the world, everyone simply plays the game. Golf as it should be!

People and Places

Joanne Mitchell and Karen McKechnie have been appointed by Murcar GC near Aberdeen as Co-Secretary. The course, adjacent to Royal Aberdeen GC, recently hosted qualifying for the British Senior Open.

Although owned by the exclusive Loch Lomond Golf Club, the **Dundonald course near Troon is open to non-member play. Designed by Kyle Phillips – the architect of the renowned Kingsbarns Golf**

Links near St Andrews – the course is already being suggested as a future venue for the Scottish Open. With greens and bunkering reminiscent in places of Muirfield and Carnoustie the course is an excellent test, and a welcome addition to the other fine courses in the immediate area.



The kitchen staff worked at full tilt all day long and well into the evening. Coffee and bacon rolls for those with the time before play; a lunchtime menu with everything from fish and chips to toasted sandwiches; and a steak dinner as the highlight of the evening fare. No fuss, no formality – just friendly and

The venerable clubhouse at **Portmarnock GC** in Dublin has recently undergone a multi-million **Euro refurbishment, whilst retaining its classic charm.**

Spacious new rooms, plenty of natural light and better use of course views from the clubhouse have made a tremendous difference to the facilities on offer. The changes have been well received by members and visitors alike.

The old clubhouse at Elie GC (or the Golf House Club to give its proper title) has been thoroughly refurbished over the past 12 months, providing first-class new locker and dining facilities for members and guests, male and female. Only 20 minutes from St Andrews, golf is thought to have been played on the Elie links as far back as the 15th century. Unusual in having no par 5's and only two par 3's, the course is still an enjoyable challenge with many holes looking out across the Firth of Forth. Uniquely, a submarine periscope salvaged from HMS Excalibur is located at the first tee, enabling the Starter to see over the hill and ensure players ahead are safely out of range!

Work on the St Andrews Links Trust's No 7 Course is making consistent progress. Stretching from 5000-7000 yards, this new public course on the south-eastern edge of the town is being created to ease pressure on the existing Links courses. **Designed by Scotsman**

David McLay Kidd, who also laid out the celebrated **Bandon Dunes** in Oregon, the new course is expected to open in 2007.

The PGA National Ireland course at Palmerstown House near Dublin, a relatively new development, is now open for business. Located on what was once a world-famous stud farm, the course is part of an 800 acres estate of prime countryside, mature woodlands, lakes and streams. The PGA of Great Britain has decided to make Palmerstown House its headquarters in Ireland, joining its corresponding bases at Gleneagles in Scotland and The Belfry in England.

The Marine Hotel at North Berwick, near Muirfield, is currently being modernised from top-to-bottom in one of the biggest hotel projects in Scotland for many years.

Originally built in Victorian times, the hotel – although enjoying a superb location overlooking North Berwick's championship West Links – had grown tired and shabby in recent years. Serious investment in bedrooms and suites, many with stunning sea views, together with brand-new leisure facilities promises to bring the hotel back to its position as a premier place to stay.

A new, exclusive golf development has opened next door to Muirfield. **The Archerfield Golf Club, with two 18-hole courses, is located on 500 secluded acres between Gullane and North Berwick.** Archerfield House, a Grade I listed building, has been completely renovated to provide sumptuous accommodations, and three 2 & 4-bedroomed lodges are also available to visiting parties. Play is open to members and guests staying in the house, with some limited availability for non-residents.

Rufflets Country House Hotel near St Andrews has opened Kinness Lodge, designed especially for golfers who like their own space. The lodge is set in a quiet corner of the grounds, with separate access and parking, just a short pitch from the main hotel. Styling is smart and contemporary and the facilities include three double/twin rooms (zip-link beds) and one double, all with en-suite bathrooms. The large sitting room boasts satellite TV & DVD, wireless broadband access and a gas flame fire, if the evening turns chilly.



ADVENTURES IN GOLF



Since the late 1970's, AIG has customized golfing itineraries for thousands of parties, large and small, with each program carefully designed to maximize the enjoyment of a vacation – to Britain, Ireland or other destinations.

Our experienced travel advisors offer peerless service and in-depth knowledge of the countries and their golf courses. You state your objectives; we ensure they are met. And, from initial inquiry to confirmed itinerary, the entire process may take as little as 24 hours.

This formula has produced an ever-increasing list of satisfied customers, as commendations in Passport, Forbes, Sky and Connoisseur Magazines bear testimony.

And, as a premier travel partner of Andrew Harper Travel, we extend our service to a still wider audience.

For further details write or call:

Adventures In Golf

USA

Ken Hamill or
Carl Johnson
22 Greeley Street, Suite 7
Merrimack, NH 03054
Toll Free: 1-877-424-7320
Fax: 603-424-8320
info@aig.mv.com

ENGLAND

David & Siobhan Patterson
Hazon House
Acklington
Northumberland NE65 9AT
Tel: 01665 575629
Fax: 01665 575407
davidai@f2s.com

SCOTLAND

Jamie Gardner
129a South Street
St. Andrews
Fife KY16 9UH
Tel: 01334 479500
Fax: 01334 473851
jamie@aigscotland.sol.co.uk

www.adventures-in-golf.com

