



Old Tauntonian Golfing Society

Hon Secretary: Richard Willacy (OTGS)

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Dear OT Golfers,

Happy New Year and I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year.

The minutes of the last AGM, which was held at Reigate Heath GC in May 2024, can be accessed via the OTGS website <https://www.olddauntoniangs.org/golf/> under News/Newsletters.

Firstly, it is with great sadness that we have lost both Wesley Wyatt (06/06/2024) and Barry White (11/12/2024) this year both of whom were staunch supporters of the OTGS. Barry played in the HH and holds the record for most rounds played at 49 over 37 years.

In 2024 most fixtures took place with varying numbers of players, however, unfortunately the Rose Bowl had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. We had another fantastic turnout at Swinley despite being restricted in numbers by Swinley. Swinley was soggy but playable. OT singles winner in the morning was Mark Banham (OT) with 38 points and Ed Bradnock (OT) & Murray Dron (G) in the afternoon with 41 points. Thanks to David Murrell for organising and sponsoring this meeting. Thone Cup and School match at T&PGC – the match against the OTGS was won by OTGS. The GB Johnson Salver was won by young Finlay Pyke with 41 points having shot a magnificent 1 over par playing off 6 handicap. Terry Davidge won the Thone Cup with 38 points, well done President. At Reigate Heath GC in May 14 attended for the AGM, lunch and golf playing for various prizes including the Fairwater Cup and Vets Cup, which was won by Richard Parsons and Andrew Horne respectively.

In the scratch competitions: The year started with a huge 100-year celebratory black-tie dinner of the Halford Hewitt competition at the Grosvenor Ballroom where 700-800 members of the PSGS (Public Schools Golfing Society) attended. In the Brent Knoll Bowl OTGS beat Lloyds Bank 2-1 in the first round and lost 2-1 to the Wigorns in the second round having lost two games at the 19th hole. The Halford Hewitt was set up for the centenary with every school's flag lining the 1st fairway at Deal. OTGS didn't start until the Friday morning, so we played North Foreland on the Thursday for the Scratch Cup which was won by Gary Hector with 31 points. In the HH main competition OTGS lost to Gresham's 3.5-1.5 and lost to Berkhamsted 2-1 in the Plate. In the Cyril Gray, held at Worplesdon GC, OTGS won against Wellingborough (last year's runner up) 2-1 and lost to Liverpool in the second round 2.5-0.5. This year OTGS qualified again for the Grafton Morrish finals in Norfolk. With a bye in the first round Taunton were up against Brentwood in the second round who proved too good for Taunton with their scratch team players. The weather was foul with balls rolling away on the greens and blown off tees, we thought this might be a leveller but was not to be.



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School golf: Liam Dempster school update; *Golf has continued to grow at TS and there are certainly more players at the school playing during the week and in their own time. We have beginners and intermediate players (boys and girls) choosing golf as their main games option throughout the year and receiving tuition at Oake Manor GC. In terms of competitive golf, this season we have again been involved in a league with 5 local private schools and this has provided invaluable experience for some of our mid to high handicap golfers in match play events. We have competed well in these fixtures, and I look forward to using this as a tool to grow the game further at TS. The school entered the West of England Public Schools Competition, ISGA Matchplay competition and managed to completely exceed expectations by reaching the national finals. To do so, our team of 3 beat Plymouth College, Truro School and Sherborne in the regional competition. At the finals event in April, our three players found the strokeplay element very challenging but given their age (two in year 10 and one in year 9) I was very impressed by their resilience and determination to get through the 36 holes and we ended up 16th nationally. This will provide a target to beat in future years.*

School golf simulator update. The simulator officially opened on the 4th October 2024. ‘The Westy’, as it is known, was opened by the Headmaster and the Westwater family with Matthew Pyke saying a few words about Iain Westwater (Westy) and his life and commitment to OTGS. Following the opening several people gave the simulator a go with great success. We watch with expectations that interest in golf at Taunton school will increase. In the Times Newspaper on the 4th January 2025 they wrote ‘Taunton School has unveiled a golf simulator alongside a renovated 20m pool.....’ with a picture showing the inside of the Westy and a pupil playing.

At the AGM in May Richard Norris stepped down as Treasurer and Richard Willacy took on the role as well as secretary. In summary OTGS finances are steady. As in previous years players selected for the scratch competitions have been contributing 50% of the entry fee to help the OTGS finances. There is no compulsory subscription to the OTGS, and we now have around 17 regular donors, but to keep our fixtures going and more to point to help sponsor young OT golfers we need to maintain or increase our subscription income. The default amount is £25 pa but some members pay more or less, this is only 50p a week! If you feel so moved, please send a donation/subscription to the Treasurer Richard Willacy at Wraymead, 158 Croydon Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 0NG or (preferably) by BACS or STANDING ORDER to Old Tauntonian GS sort code 60-10-07, a/c 33210896 with your name as a reference.

Below are the details of this year’s events. Please don’t wait to be asked to take part; we hope that you will enjoy playing in some of them. Just contact the Match Manager, details below. Finally, if you know of OT golfers who are not on the OTGS radar or have just taken up golf please put them in touch with me. Also, checkout the OTGS website, I tried to keep everybody informed and updated using this medium. We have also created a WhatsApp Group that you can join and also be informed about what is happening within the OTGS. Link is below.

Open this link to join my WhatsApp

Group: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/Bh5SfIt1LJy0RiInXPw0Vf>



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EVENTS 2025

Society Meetings (all welcome)

11/3/25	(Tu)	Invitational Meeting	Swinley Forest	David Murrell
27/4/25	(Su)	Thone Cup & OTGS vs TS	Taunton & Pickeridge	Clive Large
25/9/25	(Fr)	AGM & OTGS Scratch/Vet Cup	Reigate Heath GC	Richard Willacy
28/09/25	(Su)	Rose Bowl	Oake Manor GC	Clive Large
13/09/25	(Sa/Su)	OTGS New Meet	St Pierre GC	Pete Whalley/Phil Stickler

Scratch Competitions (Bona fide OTs only)

4-6/04/25	(F-S)	Brent Knoll Bowl (Fri Practice)*	Burnham & Berrow GC	Pete Whalley
08/4-13/4/25	(T-S)	Halford Hewitt (Tues/Weds Practice)*	Deal/Sandwich	Pete Whalley
18/05/25	(Su)	Grafton Morrish Qualifier	Worplesdon	Pete Whalley
24-27/06/25	(T-F)	Cyril Gray (over 50s, Tues Practice)*	Worplesdon	David Morgan
2/9-5/10/25	(TH-S)	Grafton Morrish Finals (Thurs Practice)*	Hunstanton/Brancaster	Pete Whalley

Match Managers

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All the best for 2025 and see you at some of the events.