

The Cornwall Tour

May 14th/16th 2024

May 14th 2024 – St. Austell Golf Club

A respectable turnout of 9 JBGS members arrived at St. Austell Golf Club on Tuesday morning and were greeted by the St. Austell GC Senior Team Captain Mr. Martin Roseby and the Ladies Captain Mrs. Sue Pascoe.

The society team was bolstered by an additional volunteer, seconded to the team from the host club to enable the match to be 5 pairs a side.

The society gathered in the club's lounge and took the opportunity to catch up with fellow member's and receive feedback on the societies recent visit to Pinehurst Country Club in North Carolina.

The St. Austell GC course was laid out in 1911, but soon found it needed a bigger course.

Fifty acres were leased from the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe and while there was disagreement initially regarding the way forward, James Braid, who was in the area laying out the Perranporth course in November 1926 was approached regarding John Baragwanth King's layout.

The Cornish Guardian of 12th November 1926 reported:

"In general Braid approved of the plan, but planned a few holes in which still more use will be made of these sporting adjuncts of the course. At present the course possesses six holes where a careless or fozzled shot from the tee means disaster to a medal or bogey round, but in the new layout by Braid, three additional holes bear his warm approval, in which the natural hazards are utilised.

In addition, the celebrated golfer suggests improvements for other holes. Every feature of the land, the inclination of the course, even the prevailing wind, has been considered by Braid, and although many of his suggestions will need time to be effectively carried out, these, when done will greatly improve the course"

The necessary finance to implement all the changes was not available until 1935.

More land was acquired in 1977 when a past JBGS member Peter Alliss and his partner Dave Thomas added four holes. One of Braid's feature holes still exist (the 91-yard 16th) to a punchbowl green surrounded by mine waste, gorse, heather, and bunkers. Most of Braids other holes also survive.

Regarding the golf, the format for the day was 4 ball / better ball Matchplay. The course itself was in good condition despite coming out of a very wet winter and conditions on the day were not spring like as the golfers battled through strong winds and a few squally showers.

Following an unexpected win at the Golf House Elie in September, the Captain, fully expected the society members to revert to its normal level of performance and deliver the expected defeat. However, there was an inexplicable breakdown in communication and the society ran out 3.5 – 1.5 victors, with only the captain and his partner Leighton Smith fully grasping the ethos of the society.

Following the match, the JBGS enjoyed the hospitality of their hosts, and the JBGS Captain thanked everyone who had made the visit, such a pleasant and memorable occasion. Everyone commented on their enjoyment of the course and the company of their hosts.

However, the captain was left to apologise profusely to the host club on the society, win and warned his fellow members that this must not happen again!

As a mark of our appreciation of the event the St. Austell members, each received a shot glass, while the Seniors Captain Mr. Martin Roseby was presented with a JBGS tankard, and Ladies Captain Sue Pascoe a pair of wine glasses along with the proceeds of the traditional bunnet collection for the club's junior section.

May 15th 2024 – Truro Golf Club

For the 2nd day of the Cornwall Tour, we made our way across to Truro Golf Club.

Truro Golf Course was opened on Saturday 29th May 1937, and was laid out by Colt, Alison, and Morrison. The course opened as a 9-hole layout, and it was not until the end of the year that the full 18-hole layout as per the plan was realised.

It was not until a number of years later, that it was realised that James Braid, was involved in the layout. John Stutt a course constructor who worked with both Colt and Braid confirmed that James Braid was at St. Enodoc in 1937 designing two new holes, and it is understood he came to Truro and advised on the bunkering on the new layout.

On arrival at the club, we were welcomed with a fine and sunny day and a course which was in pristine condition.

Prior to a 1:00pm start, the society met in the clubhouse for coffee and were introduced to each other as the relevant playing groups.

We once again had 9 participants for the day, so Truro kindly lent us a player to enable us to play 5 pairs per side in a better ball Matchplay format.

The society members agreed that the course was both fun and challenging to play and that it was a good choice as part of the tour.

As to the match itself, following the previous days win and the subsequent scolding from the captain, the team took on board his words and reversed the previous day's result, with a fine 3.5 – 1.5 defeat.

Following the golf, the society members dined with the members at Truro Golf Club and enjoyed lively conversation over a very enjoyable meal.

The captain wrapped up the evening by providing the Truro members a background and history of the James Braid Golfing Society before congratulating the Truro membership on a fine win.

As a mark of appreciation for accepting our visit, the Truro members were presented with their traditional tot glasses while the captain Mark Dawes was presented with a pair of JBGS whisky tumblers, along with the proceeds from the bunnet collection for their junior section.

May 16th 2024 – Perranporth Golf Club

For the final day of the Cornwall Tour, we travelled across to Perranporth Golf Club for a high noon tee time.

Perranporth golf course was laid out in 1927, following a visit on the 10th November 1926 by James Braid.

Braid gave a detailed oral report at a special meeting held at the Perranporth Hotel prior to normal written report which was sent when he was back home.

While improvements have been made over the years, the original design has stood the test of time particularly the greens which are as Braid laid them out.

Perhaps the biggest change in the course occurred in the 1980's when the course was renumbered and the back nine became the front nine and therefore closer to the sea.

The course is said to be a great examination possibly even to its creator.

Our numbers for the day were down to 8, and we were filled with trepidation as we looked out onto a scenic but challenging golf course. The level of trepidation was increased when our hosts requested the format to be better ball stableford, with the team aggregate score to decide the winner.

The weather for the final day was glorious as we teed off (sunny with a light breeze). The course was found to be in excellent condition, and a stern test due to blind tee shots and 2nd shots that were frequently played to elevated greens.

Everyone was agreed with the opinion that the course was excellent and the company of our hosts was second to none.

On completion of each match, the participants enjoyed lively conversation in the clubhouse, before sitting down to enjoy a tasty 2 course meal.

Perranporth Golf Club's Immediate Past Ladies Captain Nicola Oddy welcomed the society to Perranporth Golf Club and requested that we visit again in the future.

The Society Captain responded by thanking the club for agreeing to the fixture and congratulating Perranporth Golf Club on a 163 – 150 points victory. The captain also thanked the club to allow the society to experience defeat in a different format!

The day concluded with the presentation to the Perranporth members of tot glasses and a society golf ball, while Perranporth reciprocated by presenting the society members with a Perranporth ball marker each. The club was also presented with the proceeds from the bunnet collection for their junior section.

Summary:

A successful trip and once again a heartfelt thank you goes to all the JBGS members who attended.

Special mention must go to Max and KJ Redman who made the long journey from St. Andrews, while Peter and Alison Stanbrook travelled from Surrey and the Welsh contingent of Paul Melding, Leighton Smith, Steve Jones, and our new member Robert Arbourne travelled from South Wales.

Once again, our Members' Secretary Alison Stanbrook, has pulled everything together, to ensure we the members had a great few days in Cornwall.

Thank you everyone, without your support the society would cease to exist!

We now move on to the Highlands and the Founding Meeting. I look forward to seeing everyone soon.

Regards,

Barrie