

The Founding Meeting

June 26th - 29th 2024

JBGS members from far and wide arrived in the Highlands of Scotland full of hope, expectation and not to mention a tinge of trepidation of what the forthcoming days would bring.

June 26th 2024 – Fortrose & Rosemarkie Golf Club

As has been the case for a number of years now, the JBGS members returned to Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC for our kick off match of the Highland Tour.

The club had endured a testing winter where due to high tides and strong winds, the coastline over the first few holes had been eroded away and the club had been forced to introduce sea defences to protect the golf course itself from damage.

Fortunately for us, we found the course in good condition and the society looked forward to playing this fine layout on a sunny albeit breezy day.

The society found itself a couple of players short for the match and ended up “borrowing” a couple of players from Fortrose & Rosemarkie to even up the numbers. The matches followed the traditional 2 x tee start, to ensure everyone got round the course in the most efficient manner.

Once again, the Captain of the JBGS had wondered prior to the start of the match whether he would need to hastily rewrite his well-thumbed losing speech, and indeed it proved to be a nerve-wracking afternoon as the society were narrowly edged out 6- 5 by the Fortrose & Rosemarkie team. This was a huge improvement on the 10-1 thumping the society had received the previous year, so a respectable performance whilst maintaining the society tradition of losing!

Following the match, participants enjoyed the company of their respective playing partners over the fine after-match meal.

Speeches followed, and both Captains agreed that the day had been a success and that the JBGS were looking forward to visiting Fortrose & Rosemarkie Golf Club the following year.

Gifts of shot glasses were provided for the members of the Fortrose & Rosemarkie team and the proceeds of the traditional “Bunnett Collection” was presented for the club’s junior section. A James Braid Tankard was also presented to the Club President Douglas Simpson.

Special mention must go to Bruce Armour from the Fortrose & Rosemarkie team who achieved a hole in one on the 5th hole against the Captain and Steve Darlington.

Once again, a great day at Fortrose & Rosemarkie GC with the traditional warm welcome ensuring that the fixture is one which we will look forward to next year.

June 27th 2024 – Royal Dornoch Golf Club

Due to a misunderstanding regarding the week of the match versus Royal Dornoch Golf Club, we were unable to play for the Friendship Trophy over the Championship course but instead played the match over the Struie course.

On arrival at Royal Dornoch Golf Club, we were greeted with warm sunshine and a brisk breeze. The course, although new to most of the JBGS team, was found to be in pristine condition and both teams teed off in anticipation of a good match.

The JBGS match team comprised of 18 of our male members along with Alison Stanbrook and KJ Redman to add some glamour and skill to the occasion!

Conditions on the day were testing and this along with the challenge of the Struie course itself led to a very good battle which everyone reported on as being great fun.

This also reflected in the overall result, whereby despite the society performing gamely, we were narrowly overcome by good golf and local knowledge and the Friendship Trophy remained firmly in the hands of Royal Dornoch Golf Club (6–4).

Once again, a fine meal and superb company was enjoyed following the match, with the Royal Dornoch members being very appreciative of the commemorative shot glasses and the “Bunnett Collection” for the junior section. The Captain Mr. David Bell was presented with a pair of JBGS whisky tumblers.

Kevin McCulloch was also presented with his welcome gift, for making his first appearance with the JBGS.

Both Captain's speeches were reflective of how successful the day had been, and how they both looked forward to repeating the fixture next year.

June 28th 2024 – The Founding Meeting - Brora Golf Club

And so, to the finale of our week. The Founding Meeting competition at Brora.

Prior to play a forum was held in the “Peter Thompson Room” at the Sutherland Inn, Brora. Updates were given to members regarding the continuing relationship with Brora GC, 2025 fixture suggestions, merchandise, website upgrades and memorabilia. Constructive discussion was held, with several suggestions made, that would be followed up on in due course.

And so, to the competition. 18 holes of stableford golf over the magnificent Brora links. 20 entrants, including the Captain of Brora GC, competed for the various prizes on offer, but all hoping to take the principal prize of the “Peter Thompson Memorial Trophy”.

While we had been lucky with the weather to this point, Friday threw us some testing conditions including squally showers and strong winds which touched 40 mph at times.

The course was found, as usual, to be in superb condition, but with such difficult conditions, good scoring was hard to come by. However, this didn't detract from the enjoyment of both the course or the company.

That evening society members met up at Brora Golf Club, where following drinks and an enjoyable meal the captain announced the days winners. These were as follows:

The Peter Thompson Memorial Trophy:

Winner: KJ Redman

Runner up: Alistair Picken

The Captain's Pink Balls:

Winner: Angela Grant

The Curates Egg:

Winner: Steve Darlington (Best score on the odd numbered holes)

The Groovy Uwe Award (Triumph of Style over Substance):

Winner: Duncan Robertson (Hoodie & Shorts Combo)

The captain also presented welcome gifts to new members making their 1st appearance at a meeting:

Robert Arbourne and Steve Darlington (rejoined)

The captain went on to thank the JBGS members for making the week the success it had been and for also enabling him to regain his faith in the society's capabilities following their 2 defeats during the week. The captain had become increasingly concerned following 2 victories at the regional meetings held since we were last in the Highlands.

Whilst the Captain was pleased to see good support for the week's events, he was mindful, that the society had were missing other members who were unable to attend for various reasons and prompted the captain to propose a toast - "To absent friends."

As a way of thank you from the society, a gift was presented to Alison Stanbrook, for her tireless work in organising not only the Founding Meeting, but all the JBGS events.

The captain then handed over to Mr. Roy Pickavance the master of fines, who was deputising for Mr. Len Bunton, who was unable to attend due to a family holiday. Roy, proceeded to ruthlessly hand out penalties for misdemeanours reported to him over the course of the week. These misdemeanours spanned a wide range of topics from dress code violations to downright stupidity. An amnesty was offered to all members, to avoid heavy fines, and the level of guilt amongst the society members must have been high, as £400 was raised for Brora Golf Club Junior Section and was presented to the Club Captain Mr. Graeme Greenhill on the night.

With no other outstanding business, the captain closed the evening with a toast to the man we gathered to honour – "James Braid."

June 29th 2024 – The James Braid Open - Brora Golf Club

Following a change in format to the James Braid Open at Brora Golf Club (reduced from 36 holes to 18 holes) the entry number from the JBGS increased from 3 the previous year to 9 this year.

Although the wind had dropped from the previous day, squally showers and tough pin positions ensured that high scores were going to be a rarity!

While all the JBGS members battled gamely, Steve Darlington emerged as the best JBGS member in the field with a very respectable nett score of 72 and deservedly took the James Braid trophy.

Well done to all of the members who took part. Hopefully, the new format of 18 holes will encourage even more JBGS members to take part next year.

Summary:

Once again, a fantastic week, where it was great to see both old friends and make new! A heartfelt thank you, goes to all the JBGS members who attended.

As always, I would like to give a special thank you to our Members' Secretary Alison Stanbrook, whose coordination of this event was impeccable and ensures the members enjoyment when we meet up. Her time and effort are second to none.

We now move onto the North Wales tour in September. I'm looking forward to seeing another healthy turnout, and to those who can't make it, stay safe and we'll see you all again soon!

Regards,

Barrie.