

North West Tour - May 03rd/05th 2023

May 03rd 2023 – Clitheroe Golf Club

A respectable turnout of 10 JBGS members arrived at Clitheroe Golf Club on Wednesday lunchtime and were greeted by former JBGS members John (acting Captain) and Jean Holt.

The society gathered in the club's "Braid Room" and took the opportunity to catch up with fellow member's along with meeting our opponents over drinks and sandwiches.

Once again, our members had shown terrific commitment to the society by travelling to the North West from all over the U.K. and with a warm and sunny day outside, everyone looked forward to the day's golf with anticipation

Clitheroe Golf Club was laid out by James Braid following a visit in 1930. He was asked to design sixteen holes alongside the 2nd and 18th holes which had been designed by the club staff. John Stutt was entrusted with these plans and nine holes were ready for play by March 1932.

Regarding the golf, the format for the day was 4 ball / better ball matchplay. The JBGS Captain, was given the opportunity to hit a James Braid hickory shafted driver off the 1st tee and to his surprise the ball travelled a reasonable distance and in the general direction he aimed. This led the captain to reflect that maybe he had been born 100 years too late?

Unfortunately, the host club had a few late drop outs which meant in two of the matches Clitheroe Golf Club pitched one of their members (with a suitably increased handicap) against a JBGS pairing. This proposal worked very well for the home club, as in these two matches the home team achieved a win and a half to put the society on the back foot. Despite a fine win by.

Bill Stephens and Roy Pickavance, the society lost its 1st match of the season 3 ½ - 1 ½.

The course itself was in fine condition for the time of year, with the club's stature as a regular venue for county events and previously hosting Open Championship regional qualifying course abundantly clear.

Following the golf, John Holt kindly took the time to show several JBGS members around the club's boardroom where a timeline of the club's history could be found. This was very interesting and refreshing to see that the club valued its history so much. The society thanked John for this opportunity.

May 04th 2023 – Burnley Golf Club

For the 2nd day of the North West Tour, we made our way across to Burnley Golf Club, where we were welcomed with another fine day albeit with a very strong wind which was sure to test the members' golfing prowess.

Burnley Golf Club, was visited by James Braid in 1929 and he introduced three new holes, over thirty bunkers and several new tee beds and mounds. The course is situated above the town of Burnley and gives panoramic views of both the town and surrounding countryside.

Prior to a 1:00pm start, the society met in the clubhouse for soup and enough sandwiches to feed an Army!

We had 9 participants for the day, and the competition was a team of 3 format, with the two best scores counting on each hole and all the 3 scores counting on the last par 3 hole.

The course, albeit short when referencing the scorecard played much longer when the wind and elevation changes were factored in. That said each of the society members agreed that the course had not only been tricky and challenging, but great fun to play.

As to the competition itself, despite the conditions, a very respectable winning score of 71 points was posted by the team of Angela Grant, Peter Stanbrook and David Grounds.

To emphasise how credible this score was, runners up were Alison Stanbrook, Tony Gill and Paul Melding, with a score of 62 points and trailing a further point back were Barbara Grounds, Roy Pickavance and the captain.

Following the golf, the society members dined together at Burnley Golf Club and enjoyed a lively conversation over a very enjoyable meal. The captain wrapped up the evening by reviewing the previous day's golf at Clitheroe along with results from that day's golf at Burnley. He also gave a heartfelt thanks to all the members for making the effort to attend the tour and that they were the true stalwarts of the JBGS.

May 05th 2023 – Lancaster Golf Club

For the final day of the North West Tour, we travelled a little north to Lancaster Golf Club for a morning competition.

Lancaster Golf Club was designed by James Braid in 1932 and has the reputation as one of the finest courses in Lancashire. Braid's achievement was to construct a course in harmony with the existing landscape, that did not prevent him from introducing spectacular touches of theatre. The signature hole is the 18th, where its green lies under the clubhouse windows of the historic and stunning Ashton Hall.

Our numbers were boosted to 11 participants for the final day's competition which was a society stableford.

Bill Stephens returned for the final day's play, while we were also joined by a prospective new member Steve Lawson, who had travelled up from Nantwich for the day to meet with the society members. Steve is a member of Hawkstone Park Golf Club.

The weather for the day was glorious as we teed off. The course was very enjoyable and generally in good condition, though the greens were probably still a few weeks away from being at their best. There were some very scenic and pretty holes on the golf course, but this did not detract from what was a very good, but fair, test of golf. We were hit by a 10-minute period of heavy rain during the round, but this quickly passed over and could not dampen the mood of the society on what everyone agreed was an enjoyable day.

Soup and sandwiches followed in the clubhouse along with the announcement that the runner up in the stableford was Roy Pickavance with 33 points and to the surprise of himself and his playing partners, it was announced that the winner was the captain himself, who had managed a total of 34 points.

Following his round with Tony Gill, David Grounds and the Captain, Steve Lawson was invited to be a member of the JBGS and was presented with a society tie, a copy of James Braid and his 400 courses and a JBGS 150-year anniversary coaster.

The captain, once again reiterated his words from the previous evening and thanked everyone for their support of a very successful week in the North West, wished everyone a safe trip home and looked forward to seeing everyone in the Highlands in June.

Summary:

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

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

Regards,

Barrie.