



2023 Captain's Review for the Chronicle

September 2023

With the Walker Cup taking place in St Andrews next week I thought it was apt to reflect on one of the founders of the Edinburgh Academical Golf Club, 123 years ago, Allan Macfie, who won the first Amateur Golf Championships in 1885 at Hoylake and our first EAGC Captain, Leslie Balfour-Melville who won the 1895 Amateur Championships at St Andrews.

Also with the war still raging in Ukraine, it occurred to me how tragic the short life of Accie golfer Freddie Tait was (1870-1900). Lieutenant Freddie Tait (Black Watch) won two Amateur Championships (1896 & 1898), also finishing 3rd twice in The Open (1896 & 1897) before being killed in the 2nd Boer War in 1900 (aged just 30), just ten months before 28 Academicals met at 18 George Street to constitute the EAGC and vote in their first club Captain.

Turning to 2023 Academical golf news, the year started with Angus Loudon & Tom Duff defeating Bob & Donald Snodgrass in the final of the winter foursomes. See full results on our website and Twitter / X feed.

We have a mix of elite scratch golf and social events in our calendar, designed to appeal to Academical golfers of all abilities. Many of the early season events though focus on preparing for the scratch foursomes matchplay Halford Hewitt Cup (where 64 school 10-a-side FP teams meet on the Kent coast in April). The first of which was the annual match vs Merchistonians at Muirfield in February where the contest came down to the last of the 4 afternoon games. Accies were 3 up with 4 holes to play (no names here!) so we looked good for the winning point only for the Merchistonian pair to turn on the burners and finish birdie, birdie, birdie, par to snatch the victory.

The next event each year is the 8-a-side Scottish Wayfarers (EA, Fettes, Loretto, Glenalmond, Merchiston & Strathallan) scratch foursomes weekend at Elie in March where we play 72 holes in an intense weekend of competitive golf, with a lot of emphasis on catching up with friends. For the second year in a row we finished an agonisingly



close 2nd place. Tied with Glenalmond on 4 wins, their 4th game against Fettes on the Sunday afternoon holed from off the green at the 18th to beat us on 'points difference'. See photo of the Sunday team below. LtoR: Brian Hay-Smith, Paul Loudon, Colin McClung, Calum Sneddon, Matt Nimbley, Mike Dougal, Stephen Lindsey & James Godfrey.



At the Halford Hewitt Cup David Simson (1985) made his 37th consecutive appearance for Accies in the event, with 3 more rounds this year taking his total matches to 86; signing off this year, alongside partner Douglas Zuill, with a win on the 18th hole vs Eton (photo right).



James Godfrey (1990) made his first appearance in the team winning his first match alongside Mike Walker (1984) - see photo left. Nick Peoples & Paul Loudon won their first two matches as did our youngest pairing of Angus Rintoul & Jamie Simpson (see photo right).





In the 2nd round match vs Malborough with the match poised at 2-2 our final pairing of Steve Malcolm & Scott Bell (left) came back from 1 down with 3 holes to play to win on the 18th and take us into the 3rd round to play Eton. Full details on our website and Twitter/X.

The Spring outing at Muirfield was marred by an east coast haar that came down as we approached the clubhouse, so much so that we couldn't even see the green at 17 or 18 when hitting approach shots. James Godrey won the Gold Medal with the lowest gross score and Murray Innes the Silver Medal with a fine net 71.

The Summer outing (at Bruntsfield Links GS) net Jubilee Rosebowl was won by Iain Lamond (left side of photo) with a fine 39 points. Angus Rintoul won the scratch Jubilee Vase prize (photo right).



Angus is also defending his maiden Club Championship victory in the 2023 semi-finals against James Lowe. The other semi-final is between your Captain and Iain Lamond. (Captain's note: Angus went on to defeat Iain Lamond in the final).

It took us until August this year, and Jason Parrott's leadership, to record our first team victory. The annual 'social' match against Loretto, first played for in 1902, is played each summer at Luffness New GC. Loretto may be dominating scratch FP golf in recent years but Jason's team showed that Accies can still compete when lunch is part of the mix. Loretto's Captain was Christian Bruce.





Our club dinner (Friday 24th November) will take a new twist this year. Not only will it be the first at 'The Place', in an effort to match EA's changing demographics, we will host a mixed dinner. We know that there aren't many girls / ladies yet playing Academical golf but we also can see the need to reduce all possible barriers to welcome the talented female golfers that will inevitably graduate from the excellent EA golf programme run by Rick Valentine in the coming decades.

Finally, Captains come and go whilst the hard working committee members continue to run the clubs affairs, so a big thank you to the unsung heroes, specifically: Richard Summers (Hon Club Secretary & Treasurer), Jamie Simpson (Hon Match Secretary), Jamie Dalrymple (Website & membership data), Iain Lamond (Dinner Convenor), Nick Peoples (Under 35s rep), Jason Parrott (Social matches), Doug Zuill (Seniors Captain) and to the out-going members of our committee who've given up their spare time in recent years: David Marshall, Chris Paterson-Brown and James Bryce and not to forget the recent past Captains Johnny McGlynn and Brian Hay-Smith.

Colin McClung

EAGC Captain 2023

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