



United Kingdom Golf Tour

16 June 2019 - 4 July 2019





Front: Graham Ebedes, Doug Aitken, Dave Horak, Ross Grainger, Chris Hart, Brian McDonald, Pat Cronin.
Back: Gordon Odgers, Victor Ross, Peter Bailey, Bill Urmson, David Rigby.

TOUR PARTICIPANTS

Bill Urmson

Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club

Brian McDonald

Steenberg Golf Club

Chris Hart

Erinvale Golf Club

Dave Horak

Randfontein Golf Club

David Rigby

Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club

Doug Aitken

Mt Edgecombe Country Club

Gordon Odgers (Tour Captain)

Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club

Graham Ebedes

Plettenberg Bay Country Club

Pat Cronin

The Country Club Johannesburg

Peter Bailey

Goose Valley Golf Club

Ross Grainger

Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club

Victor Ross

East London Golf Club

Touring Wives

Julie Rigby Lynda Grainger Rosie Aitken Vivian Horak

Hellen Low

The Country Club Johannesburg

Jenny McDonald

Steenberg Golf Club

Jetske Kingma

The Country Club Johannesburg

Magda Bailey

Princes Grant Golf Club

Nancy Brown

Plettenberg Bay Country Club

Noelene Ross

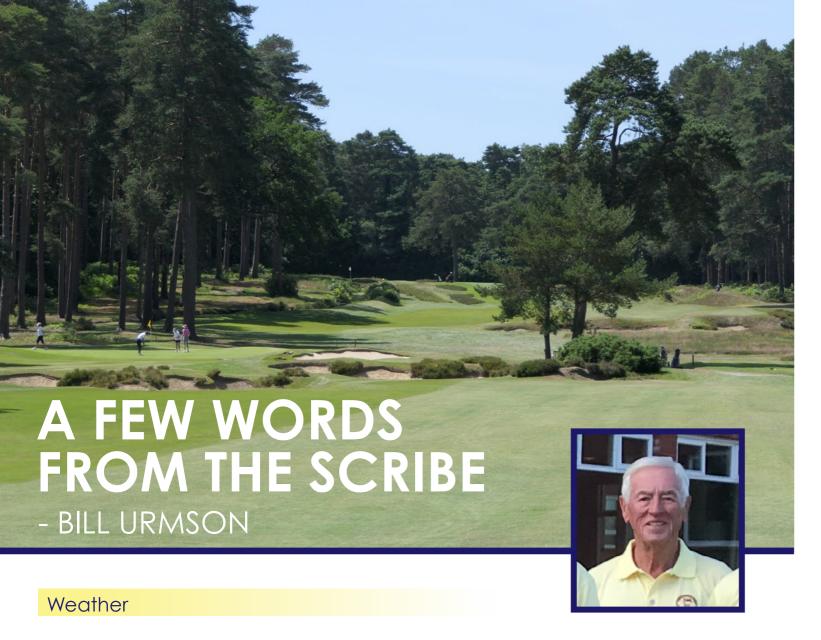
East London Golf Club

Penny Cronin

The Country Club Johannesburg

Ruth Hart

Erinvale Golf Club



"Bring jerseys and waterproofs, summer hasn't got to the UK yet and floods are forecast". The heads-up from family and friends the week before we left South Africa. In the event, the jerseys only came out for the first couple of days in the North West and the waterproofs never saw the light of day.

Sunscreen was in demand once we got to Surrey and we were pleased that we had a "Rest Day" on the 29th

June when the temperature went over 30°c. After the first couple of days of fairly light winds, we were spared the challenge of this element. Ideal golfing weather.

Accommodation

You can hardly ever win when you try to select hotels for a group of twenty-four South Africans of mature age. For some, the rooms may be too small/large, the beds too small, porterage/no porterage etc, noisy...Too far from town or over the top.

The critical aspects from the tour enjoyment point of view were that we were (a) all in the same hotel and (b) we only had one, unavoidable, change of hotel. It was a pleasure to be able to unpack and to travel to and back from each venue by coach.

In Southport we stayed at The Bold Hotel which was in the main street in town and close to a variety of restaurants and in easy walking distance of the railway station. An old hotel that had been upgraded recently, it had not been able to install double glazing or air conditioning because of regulations relating to historic buildings. We appreciated the staff's offer of doing some washing for us, which really helped.

In Surrey we were all housed in the Gorse Hill Hotel which is some ½ hour walk from the nearest village, St Johns, which sports a pub, a co-op, a good Italian restaurant and a Laundromat. Most of the touring party took this walk across Woking Golf Course, several times during our stay for one reason or another. The hotel stands in its own grounds in a leafy area with residential properties on large stands.

Gorse Hill Hotel specialises in weddings and conferences and the accommodation is primarily designed for a one or two night stay but once we had got our luggage to our various rooms up a narrow flight or flights of stairs, we did fine. We particularly appreciated being able to get bar meals in the late evenings when we had not been fed at the golf club of the day. What we appreciated the most was that we only stayed in two hotels and that there were no long drives to and from the golf courses. This was particularly a well designed feature.

Travel

What a pleasure to be bussed around in a clean, spacious coach and be free to enjoy our after-golf social time without regard to drink and drive or other regulations.

From Southport, we were primarily well looked after and safely driven by Lawrence who took the trouble to give us information on the places of interest that we passed through on our trips. In Surrey we met up with owner/driver Gareth. Gareth became more like a fellow tourist than our driver. He constantly initiated ideas for slight changes to our programme to enhance it and never seemed phased by our delay in leaving venues.

Golf

In the North West, we played four magnificent links courses each with its own unique character but same common features:

If you don't drive well you are in serious trouble. If your are short you may not make the fairway, if you are badly off line you may find your ball in the dunes rough but hitting it any distance in the right direction is unlikely and if you are too greedy with your drive you may end up in a serious fairway bunker. Although the rough looks wispy in many areas it had been a damp Spring and the grass is strong and will probably grab the hosel of your club with dramatic results. Bunkers are serious trouble. You make a mistake and you have to pay the penalty and maybe several penalties! Areas around bunkers tend to slope towards the bunker and your ball is very unlikely to run through a links course bunker.

Fairways are firm and give you more distance but not necessarily in the right direction. As a rule of thumb, if your are playing well you get favourable bounces, if your are playing poorly, your rare good shots tend to be unkindly nudged sideways.

Many of us in South Africa do not have a full appreciation of the severity of the drought in the UK in the summer of 2018 and the damage it caused to golf courses across the country. We heard several stories of our hosts courses having to take dramatic steps to limit the damage, such as requiring players to play off mats that they carried with them when on the fairway. Thankfully there was little evidence of what had passed in the state of the courses that we played.

After the wide open and treeless links courses of the North West, the parkland courses in the South were a dramatic contrast. Tall trees of fairly uniform height formed the outer boundary of many holes. There was the colour of the heaths and heathers that replaced the dunes rough and there was greater height and depth to the courses. Often playing a hole you had no sight of anybody else on the course. You could say that the courses are prettier than the links courses but are they a more enjoyable golfing experience? Every golfer will have their own personal view.

DAY 1

Brief History



The Senior Golfers Union of South Africa (SGUSA) is a national umbrella organisation that has nine senior provincial golfers' societies as its affiliates and a distinguished history that exhibits a steadfast commitment to the game of golf enjoyed by gentlemen who have reached, or exceeded, the age of 55. In keeping with corresponding associations elsewhere in the world, SGUSA sanctions the critical characteristics that must be evident in all candidates who are proposed for membership of senior golfers' societies: "He is a gentleman, fun to be with, during and after golf; he enjoys and respects the game of golf and its traditions."

These fundamental membership criteria are unanimously endorsed by SGUSA's nine affiliated societies which are: Gauteng, Kwazulu Natal, Western Province, Border, Eastern Province, Free State, Northern Cape, Southern Cape and Northern Gauteng. The nine societies are independent entities with their own constitutions but all are committed to the common purpose of playing friendly matches and competitions together or against other senior teams. The history of senior golf in South Africa is closely linked to initiatives that took place in the United States, Canada, and particularly the United Kingdom, in the early years of the 20th century. First reliably recorded accounts tell us that a visionary American, Henry Hotchkiss, pursued a dream in 1905 to stage a golf tournament exclusively for older men. Although met with some scepticism, Mr Hotchkiss accomplished his mission and the event became the catalyst for the establishment of the United States Senior Golf Association in 1917. Similar associations were subsequently formed in Canada, in 1918, and Great Britain in 1926.

Actively encouraged by a Colonel Francis Popham, the Secretary of the British Seniors, a Senior Golfers' Society of the Transvaal (now Gauteng) was formed in 1935. Following a tour of the country by the British Seniors in 1936, four additional provincial societies were brought into being and a year later, 1937, the South African Senior Golfers Union was established in East London. In 1942, the name was changed to the Senior Golfers Union of South Africa (SGUSA). Shortly after SGUSA was invited to become a member of the World Senior Golfers Federation in 1976, a Governing Body was formed to deal with national issues and to provide direction to the provincial societies on the maintenance of consistently agreeable golfing conventions. The Governing Body gave responsibility for its financial and administrative activities to a permanent Standing Committee which subsequently became the Management Committee (MANCOM). A major function of MANCOM is the arrangement of competitions and particularly the annual, four-day National Tournament which rotates between societies. In recent time with the increased popularity of the national competition, it has been confined to societies who are able to make available two courses for the exclusive use of participants over the duration of the event.

Another of MANCOM's major duties shortly after its inception was a project to reconstruct the image of SGUSA. This was an exercise that comprehensively rebranded the national body with the introduction, among other interventions, of a new logo, a national Seniors flag, and golf shirts and blazer badges embroidered with the new logo. To the dismay of many conservative Senior golfers, the overwhelmingly popular new dress trend of short socks with short pants was approved.

The indomitable spirit and commitment to affable companionship that are so indelibly ingrained in the South African senior golfers' movement are effectively captured in words penned by John Hare, a prominent member of the Gauteng Senior Golfers' Society and a former Chairman of MANCOM. In the book Senior Moments by Talbot Cox, John wrote: "The primary quality shared by seniors is the ability to enjoy the game of golf and socialise with colleagues who share common values and appreciate the finer things of life." - **Peter Bunkell - Gauteng Seniors**



Arrived from all over during the day on Sunday 16 June 2019 into the Bold Hotel in Southport for a welcoming cocktail and ready for a unforgettable Golf Tour.







Captain: Ross Grainger

We started with an informal practice at Southport & Ainsdale Golf Club to shake off the travelling stiffness. Clever warm up! We were welcomed by Christopher Walker as our host and then followed by a few fascinating facts and history about the Golf Club by our Captain of the day - Ross Grainger. We were kindly chaperoned by the Club Captain as we played a Betterball Stableford within the tour group. Chris Hart holed from off the green at the 18th for 4 points so that on 46 points he and Bill Urmson edged past Ross Grainger and Graham Ebedes. Golf was followed by drinks at Lord Street Hotel before fish and chips at the Swan, next door to the hotel.











A James Braid masterpiece nestled amongst rolling links land. The club has hosted two Ryder Cup matches in 1933 and 1937 and a number of other prestigious championships including The British Ladies' Open and The British Amateur. It remains a final qualifying course for The Open Championship and it has been voted by one golf magazine as among the top 50 courses in Great Britain.





Captain: Dave Horak

A one hour drive to the south side of the Mersey, Hoylake had celebrated its 150th Anniversary the previous week but the weather had not co-operated and it had rained very heavily throughout. A very wet marquee was being taken down as we teed off. It probably took our mind off the "Out of Bounds" that loomed close up on the right of this dog-leg hole.

We played a full team from the host club and apparently won 4/3 but this was announced at the end of an excellent dinner and the presentation by Dave Horak of a Silver Tray to recognise their special anniversary and was of little importance to those involved. Drinks and sandwiches in their club room with incredible history and memorabilia. Open venue, fantastic links course. Chris White was our gentleman host for the day.

Magnificent dinner in clubroom on first floor. Dave Horak, our Captain for the day, spoke eloquently and presented the Club with a 150th year anniversary silver tray from SGUSA. Hoylake, the custodian of the golf rules until handing over to the R and A, is also the originator of the Masters Green Jacket. Bobby Jones saw the red jackets that the Captains wear (from the hunting days) and influenced the Augusta Board to adopt a winners jacket.



Captain: Gordon Odgers

Hosted by Mike Burns who was the Captain who handed the Claret jug to Jordan Speith. Upon arrival we were spoilt with soup and sandwiches. A wonderful day on a very special golf course so rich in history. There was no formal match against the host club but both the Men's and Ladies' Captains played with us and a member was with each match to make sure that we didn't get lost!

They were able to point out where Jordon Spieth managed to make his miraculous recovery in the Open and the plaque marking the spot from which Arnold Palmer played from a bush in an earlier 'Open'. We were superbly fed and watered at the dinner that followed. The Royal Birkdale Captain Peter Busby spoke eloquently and Gordon Odgers thanked our hosts for a very memorable day that will sure stay in our minds forever.







Did you know

Royal Birkdale has held more Championship and International events since World War 2 than any other course in the world. Open Championships, Ryder Cups, Women's British Opens, Senior Opens, Amateur Championships, Walker Cups and Curtis Cups. Royal Birkdale Golf Club has been voted the number one golf club in England, one of the top five clubs in the UK and amongst the top 35 in the world.



10



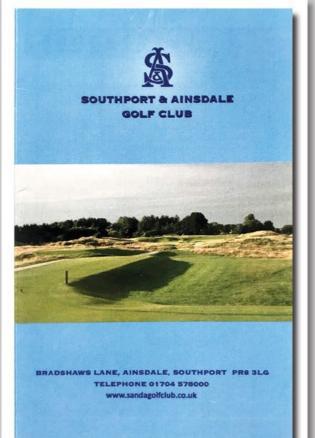
Captain: David Rigby

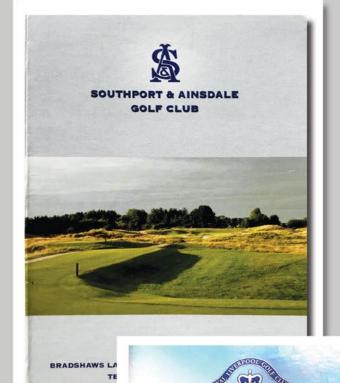
Home of David Rigby's amateur success by winning the Hare trophy. A premium event that counts for amateur rankings. The match Captain was David Appleton. An interesting Club that has 2 courses and two clubhouses. One for the men and one for the ladies.

All happy but the R and A have taken the Club off the competition rosters due to the two club situation. David Rigby acted as the Captain of the day and thanked our hosts for a wonderful day and dinner. Interesting hearing that Jurgen Klopp stays in Formby, walks his dog to the local pub and plays darts with the locals. They love him.

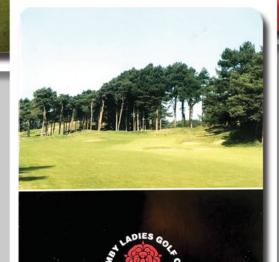














LORD'S

THE HOME OF CRICKET



Travel Day

- 22 June 2019



Gorse Hill Hotel
Hook Heath Road, Woking, Surrey

We travelled to Woking in our lovely bus, a fairly easy 5 hours run by UK standard (M6-M40-M25), through the countryside. The Gorse Hill Hotel is a half hour walk through the Woking Golf Course to the village of St Johns. We had plenty of time to settle in at Gorse Hill and smarten up for the Welcome Cocktail Party at Worplesdon Golf Club. We were greeted by the Club Captain, Senior Officers from UK Seniors and several members of the Seniors' Tour of South Africa four or five years ago. The evening moved onto an excellent cold buffet, which was much enjoyed.





19 of the 24 tourists were privileged to go to Lords to watch South Africa play Pakistan in the World Cup. We were very fortunate to have wonderful grand stand seats. Wonderful history, wonderful day, very disappointing cricket.



4

15







Captain: Graham Ebedes

Match Captain and host Simon Dyson. Our Captain was Graham Ebedes who studied the Club's history in much detail. Interesting that the Club is only 6 miles from Hyde Park. Our hosts put out a full team against us in this morning game but did allow us to play Betterball rather than Foursomes, which they normally prefer. They beat us (men only) 3½ / 2½ but more than compensated by providing us with a magnificent 4 course lunch which went on for some time. Unfortunately, the ladies did not get the chance to play this beautiful course. Lovely dinner with lovely stories.





Did you know -

Berkshire Golf Clubhouse was the UK headquarters for General Dwight D. Eisenhower during the 2nd World War.

Captain: Brian McDonald —

Wonderful heather and pine inland links course. We played the red course. Hosted superbly by Will Bailey who had to leave to officiate in Spain on a European Tour event. Brian Macdonald acted as our Captain of the day and thanked the Club for being wonderful hosts. A mixed match which for the first time for most of us included very well managed dogs. Legendary dinner very well attended by senior members of the Club, the Lady Captain and other executives of the Club. Dave Horak and Pat Cronin took the opportunity to play the green course after dinner. Needless to say enjoyed the course immensely but got lost between the courses as they were on their own. Well done anyway. The Berkshire is one of the top Surrey courses and is in great demand.





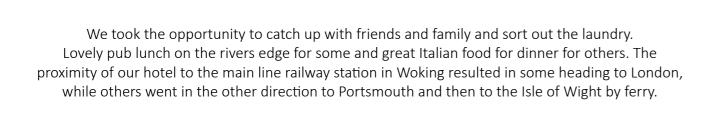




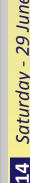
Captain: Pat Cronin -

We played the old course of Sunningdale. The weather was glorious and showed off a beautiful course at its best. Elite, top-end experience had by all. Hosted by Roddy Gamble.

Sunningdale spoilt us with an enormous three course buffet lunch, which sadly most of us did not do justice to and the ladies could not join as they had to tee off at the front of the field. Again a wonderful example of a heather and pine inland links course. The host of the Senior Open amongst many prestigious events. Sunningdale put out a full team and we halved 3/3.















Captain: Chris Hart

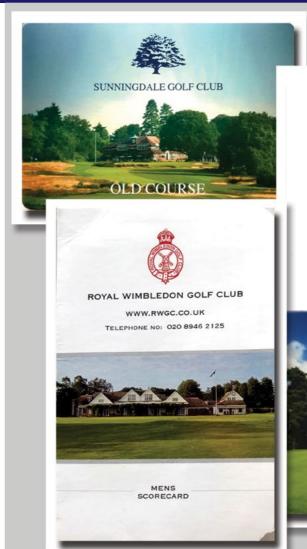
Played Hayling Island with the very friendly and proud members of the Club. Matt Williams, the Captain was a wonderful host. A casual lunch was enjoyed by all and then a very interesting game followed. Really needed to be guided around the gorse, links course by our guests. This was a relaxed, more casual day at the seaside with no need for jacket and tie and it came at the right moment of the Tour. Over drinks after the game, a former Captain of the Club presented members of the Tour Party with a book that he had produced with photographs of the course and its history. On the way to the course Gareth, our coach driver, undertook to find us a good fish and chip shop to stop at on the way home. He found 'Mother Kelly's' for Cod or Haddock and Chips. The mood was now right for Brian McDonald to lead us in 'The Wild Rover' and for Gareth to introduce us to the 'Muck Spreader'.

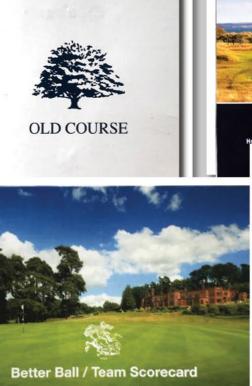




Did you know

Bobby Locke held the course record for many years and every Christmas sent the Club a Christmas card addressed to his friends.









Played Worplesdon Golf Course on the Sunday afternoon. Our gracious and warm hosts were John Ballinger the Captain and Vickie Macdonald the Lady Captain. Joined by Richard Excell, the President of the UK Seniors and Richard Venables, the Secretary, honoured us with their presence. Both played against us, as did their wives Carolyn and Veronica. We appreciated their participation and company. This match was a mixed event but the sides adopted different strategies. The hosts split their family couples whilst we kept them together. Perhaps because of superior strategy, the hosts prevailed 5½ /4½. Many seniors and Worplesdon Executives attended the day. The most friendly hosts of the tour. Having been greeted with sandwiches before the game, we enjoyed a satisfying braai afterwards.



Captain: Victor Ross



Did you know

Vickie Macdonald the Lady Captains' husband Greg caddied for Dennis Hutchinson for many years.

Captain: Bill Urmson

Privileged to play St George's Hill, hosted by Richard Stock and many seniors from the Club. St George's Hill Golf Club is set within a very large elite estate with over 400 houses/mansions and has three ninehole courses (Red, Blue and Green). We played in company with a local member on the Red and Blue courses. Somewhat hillier than many of the Surrey courses, it was shown off to its best by another beautiful sunny day. Perhaps because we are South Africans, security at the entrance gate called up a blue-light vehicle when we arrived, presumably to see that we didn't detour on our way to the golf course – a first for most of us.

Dinner was based around a 3 course Indian Curry and enjoyed with Clive Edgington, the incoming Captain (Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews) and a member of St George's Hill.



Did you know -

Jenson Button and President Putin's granddaughter live on the estate.









2019





Over 100 years of Golf at Hankley Common

Captain: Doug Aitken —

Played Hankley Common after a beautiful ride through the countryside. Wonderful country heather and pine inland links. Day Captain was Billy Mitchell, our Captain being Doug Aiken. A return to a flatter course and winning ways 4% /1%, with the ladies playing separately. The Club is due to host the English boys Championship later this year and should produce a worthy champion.

Lovely people who we enjoyed a lovely classic dinner with. Interesting history from World War 2 being the practice shooting range of the Canadians for D-Day. This was also the location of a James Bond movie.







West Hill Golf Club

HANKLEY COMMON
GOLF CLUB

ST. GEORGE'S HILL GOLF CLUB

Scorecard

Scorecard

We had a cocktail party in the evening as this was last time we would be together without hosts. Gordon thanked everyone for pitching up, listening, playing, discipline, fun, stayed healthy, right passports, right visas, constructive suggestions as we went along, co-operation. Brian said budget was still in tact as budget revision with many additional dinners, lunches, etc as the clubs luckily charged us less. Awaiting final figures but hopefully no chip in. All thanks to Brian and Gordon. The team gave Jetske and Gordon a present each, as a token of thanks.



West Hill is truly one of Surrey's oldest gems. Consistently featured in the top 100 golf course listings, this stunning heathland course, designed in 1907, is lined with towering Scots pines. The brook of Brookwood meanders its way through the course, coming into play on six different holes. Strategic play is required from every tee, making the course play considerably longer than its 6,380 yards. The greens have some of the most challenging natural undulations you will ever play and contribute to the wonderful test of golf at West Hill.

Captain: Peter Bailey —

This was a late morning game and we were welcomed with sandwiches. Local members mixed in with our group but there were not sufficient for a match. It was very good of Richard Excell to drop in and wish us well when he passed through halfway house. He had just returned from a Senior's function in Norwich and had to fly at 6.30am from Heathrow the next day to play at Prestwick later that day. Third of the W's courses and the most difficult and beautiful. Our host was Alastair Lawson, our Captain was Peter Bailey who reluctantly left too soon after golf to get ready for the closing dinner.





- Worplesdon Golf Club

Back in our formal gear we returned again to Worplesdon on a beautiful evening to say farewell to our hosts. Richard Venables made a gracious speech on behalf of the UK Seniors to which Gordon Odgers replied. In doing so, he made particular mention of the debt we owed Guy Bewick and the contribution that Richard had made in stepping into the breach left by Guy's untimely death.

He closed by presenting a silver salver to the Seniors in recognition of our Tour, a coffee table book to Richard for his support, and flowers to Sally-Ann, Guy's partner, who had joined us for the evening. This evening ended with a brief speech by Brian McDonald in his role as incoming President of SGUSA in which he looked forward to welcoming the next tour party from the UK.









This was an honor and privilege to head this amazing tour this year.

Thank you to the Seniors Golf Union of South Africa for the opportunity. Thank you to the team, who made this great tour possible.

Thank you to all the daily Captains for taking the trouble to go into the history of the clubs. Thanks to Pat and Noelene for capturing the tour, Ross for organising the matches, Bill and Peter for organising the social events and Bill for being scribe. Brian thanks for sitting on my shoulder on all matters in the best interest of the tour and being the proactive treasurer. Thanks for being in within budget.

Thanks to the ladies, both the golfers and the non golfers. Julie get better, you were great. Lynda, Rosie and Viv for adding so much to our tour. Thanks to Jetske for all the advice and background work. Thanks to Rob Wassenaar and John Brownrigg from SGUSA for their advice and support.

A special thanks to Richard Venables who went way beyond the extra mile to make this tour extra special.

Hope you all enjoyed the tour. Great golf, great memories.

Cheers, Gordon Odgers and Jetske Kingma

Match Results

	Southport & Ainsdale Golf Club	Royal Liverpool Golf Club	Royal Birkdale Golf Club	Formby Golf Club	Royal Wimbledon Golf Club	Berkshire Golf Club	Sunningdale Golf Club	Hayling Island Golf Club	Worplesdon Golf Club	St George's Hill Golf Club	Hankley Common Golf Club	West Hill Golf Club
Victor Ross	1	0		0	0	0	2	0	2		2	0
David Rigby	1	2		2	2	0	2	2	0		2	0
Dave Horak	0	1		2	2	2	2	1	0		2	0
Bill Urmson	3	1		0	0	0	2	1	0		2	2
Pat Cronin	2	1		2	0	0	0	1	2		0	2
Ross Grainger	1	1		2	2	2	0	2	0		2	2
Gordon Odgers	1	2		2	2	2	2	1	2		1	2
Doug Aitken	0	0		0	0	0	0	2	0		2	2
Peter Bailey	2	0		1	1	0		0	1		1	0
Graham Ebedes	1	2		1	0	0	2	0	0		2	2
Chris Hart	3	2		0	1	0	0	1	2		2	0
Brian McDonald	1	0		2	0	2	0	1	0		0	0
		W42		W3½ 2½	L2½ 3½	L 3:9	D3:3	D3:3	L4½7½		W4½1½	



