



Match Report

Kent v Essex, Faversham, May 4th. 2023

A slightly larger (not in stature but in numbers) Kent team took to the course at Faversham - 12 pairs as opposed to the normal 10- in an attempt to regain the trophy. Essex had held a firm grip for a good number of years but having been charged by Captain Lynn Mercer in his speech at the Annual dinner to 'bring home the bacon' the team were left in no doubt what their target was. Following a light lunch and a call to arms, the first pairing of Captain Lynn



and President Peter Skipper took on their counterparts from our neighbours north of the Thames. Four steady drives later and the match was up and running. An hour and a half later all 12 matches were out on the course. Judging by the pointed banter within certain groupings at the first tee the tension was high among 'old' friends and rivals.

Once all groupings were safely on the course and in true Ryder Cup fashion, the Essex Manager Peter Freeman and I traversed the course in the team buggy picking up on the state of play in each match, whilst offering our own brands of support and encouragement. Most of the matches were seemingly neck and neck in the early exchanges;

several were swinging back and forth between the teams by a slender one-hole margin; but you could feel the tension levels growing. From the seat of the buggy there appeared to be some good golf being played but with the rising tension there was also the occasional poor choice of shot and execution. Bunkers were found, greens were not being found and hole-winning putts were being missed by millimetres. It was all making for an exciting few hours.

By late afternoon, with the teams spread over the course it became clear that certain matches would be finished before the 18th. But overall, it looked a very close-run thing and could well go down to the wire. Essex established an early lead in the clubhouse only to be pulled back and overtaken by the spirited Kent middle order groups. As the results filtered in and with 9 of the groups safely back in the clubhouse Kent were leading 6-3. Essex managed to win a further game several holes from home and the match was evenly poised at 6-4. However, the last two matches were being tightly fought over the final four holes.

Further reporting from the course ceased for a while as Peter Freeman and I opted to take the opportunity to get changed and wait anxiously in the clubhouse for news of the final 2 matches. The balcony of the clubhouse was filled with interested players from both sides looking at proceedings unfold as the final groupings plotted their way to the final green. High drama indeed. The 11th. game saw a narrow victory for Essex on the final hole. 6-5. Even higher drama! A win for Essex in the final fourball would see the trophy retained; a win or a half for the home side would be enough for Kent to regain the trophy.

The final pairing of Mike Standen and Keith Hopson had been battling toe to toe with the Essex tailenders since their opening drives several hours earlier. As they had approached the Clubhouse to the 14th. tee the Kent pair had gone into a slender one-hole lead, courtesy of a win at the tricky 13th. However, it transpired that Essex had levelled the match somewhere between holes 14 and 17. All to play for going down the last. The tension was almost unbearable. With players safely on the green following decent drives and approach shots and with the hunger for victory surpassed by the hunger for a decent evening meal it was a handshake from both sides and a half was agreed. The trophy was won and coming home to adorn Lynn's mantelpiece for a month or so.



It was a very enjoyable day all round. There was some excellent golf from both sides, all played in good spirits and mostly with a smile on everyone's face. Essex were great opposition. My thanks go to Faversham for looking after us so well for the day. The course was in good nick, the food was excellent and the service was also extremely good. My own personal thanks to Paul Smith the Club Manager and his team, especially Kevin the Chef and his team, the bar staff and the Faversham captain Nick Sage. After a very pleasant meal, the trophy was duly presented by the Captain of Essex to Lynn who accepted it with great humility. Lastly, a huge thank you to my team and two reserves for such a fantastic effort and a great result.

Dave Collen
Team Manager



Ealing G.C.

2023 Match v London 30th May.

A report from Match manager Mick Streatfield.

First of all, I'd like to thank Harry Dunk for stepping in at such short notice. My second thanks are to all Kent team members who made the long journey to Ealing GC and paying by the bacs system it made my day so much easier. It was the first time we have tried it for the county matches and it worked very well.

The course was in excellent condition with the greens apparently over 12 on the stimp meter, which helped give the London Captains home advantage, but we overcame that hurdle. The result was a well-earned draw 5 games each Well done everyone! The hospitality from the host club and the food was extremely good with BBQ well received and tasty. All in all a very enjoyable day!

2023 Match v Surrey

At Mid Kent Golf Club, 13th June, a report from Harry Dunk.



Glorious sunshine welcomed the teams at Mid Kent Golf Club, Gravesend on 13th June for our annual 'battle' against Surrey. The match to be settled by two teams of 20 players, playing four-ball better ball.

Before the joust, the teams enjoyed hearty stories of past matches, won and lost, before enjoying sustenance of sandwiches and chips and the odd alcoholic beverage. The Mid Kent Club Captain, David Grant, welcomed the congregation; he explained a few of the local rules and some of the potential difficulties that players may face. He apparently missed some of the potential course ambushes but they were quickly pointed out by some of the local lady members who were present in the bar at the time. They were duly thanked.

After the rather nice lunch, the match began with our Captain, David Skinner playing with the Mid Kent Captain against the Surrey Captain, John Ledgard and his partner, Duncan Ponikwer.

Our Captain lead from the front, winning his match in style. Our Vice Captain, Mike Stephens playing with Keith Hopson, had a similarly triumphant match to keep Kent in the hunt.

Regrettably, apart from a wonderful rear-guard action from our Treasurer, Robert Dicketts and partner, Eric Sneddon the heat of the day sapped the strength of all our other contenders.

In the final analysis, Surrey won 7 to 3.

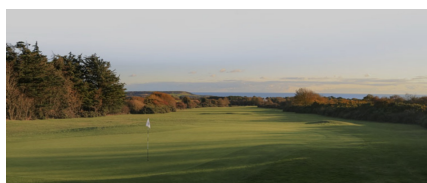
We all retired to the Clubhouse to enjoy an excellent dinner; 'if only' we said, 'the putts had dropped' and 'if luck had been on our side'. The reality was that Surrey had a great win and we shall look forward to next year to exact some revenge.

New friends were made and old acquaintances renewed; how lucky are we to be able to be part of these matches!

Finally, it would be inexcusable not to make mention of the club – Mid Kent. The entire course was in superb condition and the greens were especially fast and true. The Head Greenkeeper and his staff provided a wonderful course for us to play.

Additionally, the food at lunch and, especially, at dinner was delicious and our grateful thanks go to the catering staff for their hard work.

Match Manager. Harry Dunk.



3 Corner Match, Diamond Jubilee Trophy.

A competition to celebrate the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee. Played for annually by the committees of Kent, London & Sussex

This year, Sussex hosted at Seaford GC 29th June 2023

1st Sussex

2nd Kent

3rd London

2023 Match Report

Hampshire vs Kent, Petersfield, 6th July

The morning of the 6th July dawned and the 16 strong team from Kent set out from across the county to meet up at Petersfield in Hampshire for the 43rd annual golf match between the counties. Hampshire had originally thought the date of the fixture was the 30th June, the resultant confusion meaning a slightly different format for the day, but no matter, we coped with sandwiches and chips after.



Upon arrival, discussion among the Kent team was largely about the weather conditions endured earlier in the week at Littlestone. Fortunately the winds had abated and, despite an early threat of rain, the weather turned out to be much more conducive to playing the sport of golf. Following a hearty full English breakfast our Captain, David Skinner, and his partner, Harry Dunk, led the team off. A couple of good tee shots from the Kent duo and the battle was well and truly on.

And a battle it most certainly was! Captain David and partner Harry led from the front with an impressive 4&3 victory. Unfortunately, the lead was short lived as Hampshire came out on top in the second match. The next five matches all went to the 18th hole and after stories of terrific fight backs, putts missed and holed it transpired that Hampshire won two of the five with three halves. So, despite a final pair victory for Kent, the final reckoning of a very close and keenly contested match the overall score was Hampshire 4.5 Kent 3.5. So Hampshire retain the bragging rights, but not the trophy, since, as I discovered, there isn't one for this particular match.

After the main event some sandwiches and chips followed by speeches from the two Captains. Each spoke eloquently thanking the greens and catering staff, quite rightly emphasised the camaraderie between the counties and naturally made reference to the closeness of the match.

So there we have it. Old rivalries have been renewed with new chapters written, new friendships made with rivalries just started and a thoroughly enjoyable day had by all. It simply remains for me to say a personal and very sincere thank you to all the players from Kent who travelled to Hampshire and put up such a strong showing.

2023 Match V Cambs.

Kent managed an away win versus **Cambridge**, away on the 10th July at Brampton park 6.5 to 1.5 Big thank you to **Jeff Barnes (Eltham Warren)** for stepping in the night before.



Brad Smith, Match Manager.

Silver Jubilee Trophy.

A report from Match Manager, Brad Smith.

This year's event was hosted by **Oxfordshire** at Tadmarton Golf Club.

A nice venue while over 150 miles away, but with a committed team most played a practice round and stopped over.

The practice round was played in bright sunshine but the competition day was played in the rain, and it was that type of rain which soaked right through.

Sadly our team finished 5th out of 7 Counties, with 173 points (best 6 from 8) with **Oxfordshire winning with 187 points.**



Peter Freeman from Essex presented the Prizes and a well earned bottle to Chris Thomas.

However Kent did have a winner in the team with Chris Thomas from St Augustines Golf Club, who won the individual prize with 37 points playing off 7 handicap.

Well played Chris, bringing some glory home to Kent!

A big thank you to the team, for all their efforts and to Captain David, President Lynn and Secretary Peter for their support.



Match Manager Paul Roberts.

Match v Sussex.

Sussex vs Kent 17th August 2023 Cooden Beach G C

On a fine warm day the Kent team turned up at Cooden Beach. Following a good 7.5 to 2.5 victory last year we were attempting to repeat that win. We received a great welcome from the Club, who couldn't do enough for us. The teams were welcomed by both the **Sussex Captain Ian Potter** and the **current Captain of Cooden Beach, Tony Hunt**

Fortified by coffee and a very good lunch, our team was led out by **Captain David** and **President Lynn**. Their match proved to be a titanic struggle with David and Lynn unfortunately losing on the last. This setback was soon forgotten as **Peter Morris** and **Vice Captain Mike Stephens** came in with a great 5&4 victory. We were now on the right track, and our star pair **Richard Lamb** and **Craig Hendleman** gained revenge for their 2022 loss, by beating Richard's brother Andy and his partner, by 2&1.

Overall we had a very successful day and Captain David basked in the glory of beating Sussex 7 to

3. With a very good meal and plenty of wine a good evening was had by all.

My thanks go to all who turned out for the Kent team, many of which had travelled a long way to represent the society.

Paul Roberts



2023 Match v Buckinghamshire.

Kent v Bucks at Dartford on the 7th September saw Kent winning 4.5 to 3.5 with a big thank you to **Graham Sutherland (Ashford)** for stepping in the night before.

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