

## **2024 Spring Tour Report**

The Captains choice for the 2024 Overseas Spring Tour saw us return to the popular resort of Belek in Turkey, at the newly refurbished Gloria Serenity hotel. It is difficult to find a destination that can offer good weather, excellent golf and a truly unbeatable all-inclusive package to rival Bellek. We travelled with twenty-seven members and their wives/partners plus a welcome return of a tour stalwart Michael Odd.

Unfortunately, we were missing two couples due to the untimely passing of Steve Weeks (Dartford) an old friend of the tour and Roger Hills (Eltham Warren) a first-time traveller. Also absent were regulars Bob & Christina Harris (Dartford) due to ill health. Our thoughts and wishes go out to Maggie Weeks and Sue Hills for their loss and wishing a speedy recovery to Christina and Bob much missed this year.

Overall, we enjoyed glorious weather with just one impressive storm on the morning of the last day of competition, a hotel that offered us excellent service, superb food, an array of quality a la carte restaurants, an incredible all-inclusive package, and staff that were attentive and helpful. The standard of the refurbishment was exceptional providing luxurious accommodation. In this instance you really did get what you paid for and more.

We were able to run a full programme of competitions this year, The Ron Kuness Salver, Ladies Overseas Tour Trophy, and The Secretaries Plate

Twenty-one players contested the Ron Kuness Salver, it should have been twenty-two, but David Collen injured himself prior to our departure and was unable to play. However, this did not stop him enjoying himself. After two rounds of the Ron Kuness Salver the leader board had a familiar look about it with defending champion Brad Smith (Sittingbourne) heading the field with 71 points 8 points clear of nearest rival Mike Stephens (Bexleyheath) 63, followed by Geoff Payne (Dartford) 62 with Jim Baynes (Eltham Warren), Reg Grace (Wrotham Heath) & Peter Skipper (St Augustines) all on 61.

Seventeen ladies contested the Ladies Overseas Competition. After two rounds the field was headed Karen Hubbard 76 points, Maggie Collen 74, first time traveller Sue Charnley 70 and Shelia Fullager 66.

The Secretaries Plate was contested by five players, defending champion Jeff Last (Faversham), Michael Odd (Dartford), Richard Henderson (Dartford), Jim Johnson

(Shortlands) and making a welcomed return to the tour David Alldread (Sundridge Park). After two rounds the leaderboard was headed by Michael Odd (Dartford) 70 points followed by Jeff Last (Faversham) 66.

On the morning of the tour competitions final days play we were treated to a storm of biblical proportions which lasted until midday. This created some difficulties as the lady's competition was due to tee off at 11:36! After much discussion half of the field of the ladies competition decided that they could not play in the conditions due to safety concerns and withdrew to the sanctuary of the hotel. With a bit of shuffling around the lady's competition final round commenced at 12:03 in bright sunshine and blue skies. After a hard-fought final of **The Ladies Overseas Trophy** Sue Charnley prevailed with an impressive final score of 103, closely followed by the overnight leader Karen Hubbard 101 and Maggie Collen 99.

The final round of **The Ron Kunes Salver** saw Brad Smith eventually draw clear of the field finishing on an impressive total of 107 after three rounds. Runner up was Reg Grace (Wrotham Heath) 95, Peter Skipper (St Augustines) 94, and Geoff Payne (Dartford) 93.

**The Secretaries Plate** was contested by a reduced field as David Alldread decided to sit out of the final having made herculean strides to complete the practice round and two rounds of competition. The Plate competition was eventually won by defending champion Jeff Last with a score of 101.

The tour officially ended with the Gala dinner and the presentation of prizes.

I have often heard mention that the tour is a family holiday, albeit a rather large and extended family. It is hard to appreciate this concept unless you have been on the tour. Please look out for the 2025 Spring Tour offer later this year, if you are interested in joining us please contact me at [secretary@kentgolfcaptains.org](mailto:secretary@kentgolfcaptains.org)