



Society of Hertfordshire Golf Captains

Captain: Doug Barson 2026-27

Hon Secretary: John Annison

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Stop Press:

If you require any clothing for this or early for next season then please contact Kaz Donald on, kaz@munsterhall.com

The 'sohgc@yahoo.com' account is closing by Sunday 14th June.

Beyond this date the email will not be active.

Please use

'sohgchs@yahoo.com'

Message from Hon Secretary

The 2025 season ended with a brilliant Captains Day hosted by Captain Nick Brookes.

Since then, new 2026 Captain, Doug Barson has been hit with one event after the other during a 4-week period starting with his attendance at the Herts Salver and subsequent fixtures and matches being Saunders Salver, Mixed match vs Norfolk, match vs London, match vs Buckinghamshire and the Triangular match due in a week's time.

It would be great if you could support Doug and President Bob Howell going forward by participating in the Presidents Cup on 1st July at Brookmans Park.

Have a fun 2026 season and thank you for your support.

John (Fizz) Annison, Honorary Secretary



Annual Dinner

Thursday 5th March saw the Annual Black Tie Dinner for the SOHGC being held at Aldwickbury Park Golf Club for the third consecutive year and this time under the stewardship of Captain Nick Brookes from Letchworth.

Although the numbers were slightly down this year those who attended had a great evening with good friends and the wine flowed as we all enjoyed a very decent 3-course meal. The challenge for all these events is a careful balance between cost and the benefit the members see for these occasions.

For a change this year we asked local ex-professional footballer, manager and every other position possible at Luton Town FC, Mick Harford to address the membership about his trials and tribulations as a professional sportsman and his recent battle with prostate cancer. This led to some inciteful moments and a few great stories during his playing career.

The evening appeared to be a success with the committee deciding to hold next year's event at the same venue, with always a few lessons learnt but also look to elevate the after-dinner speaker.

So, as things stand we can all look forward to hearing from another sportsman who has arrived on the after-dinner circuit as a speaker, ex professional rugby league player Lea Roberts who has gained notable success in the industry.



Mick Harford

Guest Speaker



Alan Walsh

Making Proposal to the Society



Captain Nick Brookes

Responding on behalf of the Society



Guest Speaker Mick Hartford

Captains Day/AGM

The pinnacle event for all Captains was hosted by 2025 Captain Nick Brookes at Letchworth GC on Friday 24th April 2026.

Played in cool conditions the 1966 Cup singles event saw some good scoring on a Letchworth course recovering from the changeable weather conditions. This event also contributes to the R&A Quaich which is competed by members and is the addition of both score for the 1966 Cup and the Presidents Cup (held on 1 July this year).

Captain Nick and wife Sarah put on a good halfway house considering the actual halfway house had been demolished in readiness for a new build. Thanks Nick and Sarah!

Prior to play Letchworth catering led by manager Ruby had managed to provide a stunning array of brioche rolls filled with various meats.

The results were as follows: -

1. Gary Rees, West Herts GC 41pts
2. Ian Swinburn, Letchworth GC 39 pts
3. Kaz Donald, Arkley GC 37 pts (21 countback)
4. Ray Sammons, Royston 37 pts (20)
5. Martin Pyrke, 37 pts (18)

NTP – 2nd Simon Best, 14th Ian Swinburn, 17th Jeremy Dickens

After the competition Chef Louis and Manager Gareth delivered and orchestrated a brilliant dinner of Chicken & Ham Pie followed by Sticky Toffee Pudding.

Captain Nick delivered a heartfelt speech and thanked Rob Groves, Head Green keeper and staff for a well-maintained course, Gareth, Louis and Ruby for the catering and bar and the management team of Jim and Kelly for the organisation

The event concluded and the AGM was convened. The minutes of the 2025 AGM and all the reports were approved by the attendees.

The election of the new officers was also approved as follows:-

Captain of the Society for one year – Mr Doug Barson

Vice-Captain of the Society for one year – Mr Eric Diment

President of the Society for one year – Mr Bob Howell

Treasurer of the Society – Mr Barry Dutnall

Honorary Secretary of the Society – Mr John Annison

Officers of the society for one year – Mr Tony Bedford and Mr Phil Swan

At conclusion the Captain Nick Brookes thanked Eric Diment for his 9 years' of dedicated service as Honorary Secretary and presented him with a gift of malt whiskey to loud applause.





New Captain



New Secretary



New President

Herts Salver

This fixture which is always played at the current SOHGC Captain's club, is sponsored by your Society.

It is a Herts County open event to determine the best gross score players (top 17) to qualify for entry into the Men's County Championship which will take place at Ashridge GC between 29th to 31st May 2026.

On a good scoring day there was a tussle for the trophy as 2 players finished with gross 70 score causing a play off starting on the 18th hole. Ethan Akpan, Letchworth GC winning out over John Ambridge, Moor Park GC on the 18th hole. Ethan won this competition last year and is the first player to win back-to-back Herts Salver's

Captain Doug Barson was in attendance to watch the tee off early in the morning and then presented the Herts Salver to winner Ethan at conclusion of the event.

Next year's Herts Salver will be held at Aldwickbury Park.

Ethan Akpan Winner



Herts Captain, Doug Barson, Herts Salver Winner Ethan Akpan and County Secretary Louis Matamala

Saunders Salver

The season opener is the Saunders Salver and was held on Wednesday 6th May at Hadley Wood GC. This trophy has subsumed the Inter Club Trophy and is in recognition of the service Mr John Saunders has given to our society both in terms of his position of Honorary Secretary between 2008 and 2016, instigator of this event and support and promotion of the Society as a whole – thank you John.

The better ball stableford format competition is open to all member clubs and played by 22 teams of 4 players with the best 2 scores to count. Upon arrival the teams were offered a superb ploughman's lunch.

The competition was played in acceptable weather conditions on an excellent course with greens that really needed reading for accuracy.

Upon completion of the event the players were provided with a very tasty 3 course dinner consisting of: -

- Starter: Poached Salmon, Chive Oil and Cucumber
- Main: 2 Meat Carvery
- Dessert: Vanilla Cheesecake and Mixed berries

Dinner was followed by the presentation of the 2nd to 5th prizes and the NTP prizes Andrew Stapleton, Brickendon Grange 4th, Steve Clarke, Verulam GC, 7th, Ben Booth Hadley Wood, 15th, Jeremy Dickens, Letchworth, 16th by Captain Doug Barson who also voiced his praise for the Hadley wood management, course and catering staff.

Finally, and to much acclaim Mr John Saunders presented the Saunders Salver to the winning Arkley team and gave a short presentation as to the history and his involvement in the development of the Society



Winners Arkley with John Saunders, Doug Barson and John Annison



2nd Shendish Manor



3rd Brickendon Grange



4th Knebworth



5th West Herts

Mixed Match v Norfolk Captain's

Monday 11th May saw the society at East Herts GC to play the opening match of the season against Norfolk Captains for the 'Hertfordshire and Norfolk Mixed Trophy', a fixture that is quite new having been in existence for 6 years.

As seems the norm for English weather these days it was blustery with occasional rain and forever changing golf gear. This did not detract from a match played in great spirit on a course in superb condition.

Teams consisted of 12 pairs a side played from a 2-tee start. A special thank you to David Ross for playing in place of a late withdrawal from the Norfolk team.

The dinner after the match was a lovely Beef Bourguignon followed by Raspberry and white chocolate creme brulee.

Both the Captain's made good speeches praising the event management, greens staff, catering and the match organisers. As the away Captain Richard Brown also announced the result. Over the last 6 years the trophy has been won by the home team and this was no different with Herts 7.5 to Norfolk 2.5.

So, a brilliant first win for Captain Doug. We look forward to the away match, potentially at Kings Lynn GC (a very good test of golf) in 2027.

Finally, Captain Doug presented nearest the pin winners John Simpson & Diane Naylor (Norfolk) and Eric Diment & Di Tass (Herts) with their prizes.



Match v London Captain's

Wednesday 13th May saw the society at Grims Dyke GC to play the second match of the season against London Captains, a fixture that has been going since our inception in 1966 and therefore our oldest match.

Over the years we have been very unfortunate with the weather for this match and this year proved no different in that fury can be unleashed from the skies and indeed they certainly did. Apart from driving rain, sleet and hailstones we were called off the course due to lightening mid-way through the round.

We managed 10 pairs a side played from a 2 tee start to speed up the day.

Before play we enjoyed sandwiches and chips.

As is always in this fixture many of the matches were close, and no halves. After a decent Carvery meal, the Captain's (actually Vice Captain Ian Wright for London) made their usual complementary speeches. As the away Captain our own Doug Barson was left to announce the result, a home win for London 7 to 3. This was disappointing and revenge will surely be ours in 2027.

So, a stumble for Captain Doug after a brilliant win in the previous match versus Norfolk.

We are looking forward to meeting up again next year to renew our friendly rivalry so please keep an eye out for the 2027 fixture list.



Match v Buckinghamshire Captain's

On a fine Wednesday 20th May we took on Buckinghamshire Captains at Whipsnade Park GC for The Harleyford Trophy in the 3rd match of the season.

The course was in pristine condition and the weather very well received after all the months of uncertainty we have had recently.

The event is 4BBB match play and sincere thanks to Doug Root who as reserve deputised for one of the Bucks players who was unable to play. Not only that but his wife put on a superb halfway house and her cakes were to die for! Thank you Doug and Mrs Root.

Before play we were provided with sandwiches and chips which were quickly consumed and probably meant a couple of us went short.

We managed 8 pairs a side played from a 2 tee start

A friendly but competitive match ensued

Dinner was a great two meat (beef and turkey) carvery, with salted caramel apple pie with custard for dessert.

Captain Doug Barson thanked the professional, green keeping, catering and management staff and asked the Herts team to raise a toast to the Bucks team.

The Bucks Captain, Gordon McMurdo thanked Captain Doug and was pleased that he hadn't lost his game by a big score even though he played without a partner. He then revealed the score which was a win for Herts of 5.5 to 2.5 and presented The Harleyford Trophy to Captain Doug before finally asking his team to raise a glass to the Herts team.



