The 30th Bad Etiquette Classic Prologue

Some might suggest that a certain lack of imagination was deployed when it came to organisation of the 30th BEC Prologue .... and they might have a point. Yes, perhaps following a successful BEC Prologue event at Hadley Wood GC in May '18 with an identical event in May '23 did lack imagination. Perhaps the organiser would have got away with it had he varied some of the details, but alas he did not. A coffee & bacon roll on arrival, BEC merchandise goody bags, a 3-ball Stableford format, blue skies, the chefs choice of roasts for main and seasonal fruit crumble for dessert. Even the practice ground was out of use as disappointingly as it had been 5 years earlier.

The only things that differed were our number (12 not 15), the cost of a pint (now £5.90), the absence of Pete Solomon (tired of distributing BEC pencils) and a smoked haddock remoulade in place of a poached salmon starter.

Whilst we numbered only twelve, there was no doubting the quality of the field. This wasn't just any twelve. This was twelve with 168 BECs, 15,459 holes and 5.3m yards and 23 Tour victories between them. And amidst the gathering of BEC legends, one new face. James Powderham. The BEC's first Next Gen. participant kindly stepping in as a last minute replacement for Martin who was out with a dodgy back story. And while we're at it, one other notable absentee, Richard R, unable to join us due to prior commitments on his lucrative, alternative Saudi-backed Tour.

Just as it was 5 years before, Hadley Wood GC was in fabulous condition with carpet-like fairways and immaculate greens. But beneath the beauty, a serious test of golf awaited us. When later the last putts had been holed, the beers poured and the scores checked, it became clear that the course had been more than a match for any of us. No one made 30 points and our average was just 21.

The winner: Julian with 28 points, followed closely by Steve and Dave G on 26 points and the others wondering how different things might have been had it not been for those wayward drives and missed putts.

Congratulations Julian !

And the winning team: Julian, Dave G and Peter B. Wow! When was the last time you heard 'winning team', Julian and Dave G in the same sentence? In fact, not so long ago. Ferndown, 2020.

Julian Malton - winner of the 30th BEC Prologue

Many thanks to Richard P for photography and general support on the day, to Julian for organising the branded 'merch', to Mark for his unimaginative organisation, and to the Founder Members plus Dave G for their generous sponsorship of goody bags and prizes.

Records set at the 30th BEC Prologue

- First Next Gen. participant - James Powderham
- First Stableford card without a single '2 pointer' - Geoff's card has three 3s, plenty of ones & zeros, but no twos
- Net Albatross - Pete J records the BEC's fifth NA at the 14th (500yds, par 5)

Group 1 - Pete J, Paul & Andy

Group credentials

BEC's completed	46
Yards played:	1,490,684
Tour victories:	8
Tour earnings:	£748

- Just as Steve did, 5 years ago, Pete makes birdie net albatross for five points at the 500yds 14th ... the 5th net albatross recorded on Tour
- With Andy and Paul playing the 14th well too, the hole contributes 20% of their total points for the entire round
- Score-keeping in the group is somewhat erratic with Paul awarded 10 points on his card instead of the 12 he was due (as if the round wasn't already hard enough!) and Andy's card marked with a strange mix of gross and net scores

Results

Group Stableford:	52 points
Individual placings:	6th, 7th, 12th
Positive extras:	None

Group 2 - Geoff, Mark & Mel

Group credentials

BEC's completed	35
Yards played:	1,085,642
Tour victories:	7
Tour earnings:	£580

- Geoff's drive at the 1st is a beauty, but he's outdriven by the final group
- Mark misses 10 of 14 fairways and all four par 3s. He rues the fact that his 4-iron is 2ft short of the dance floor at the 10th where no one makes NP
- Mel starts strongly, plays the steadiest golf of the three and contributes the most points to the group
- With 6 consecutive 7s from the 8th to the 13th, Geoff appears to be going for some sort of record, but he spoils things with an 8 at the 14th
- Mark encourages Geoff to raise his game over the closing holes and Geoff duly obliges with a tidy 4 at the 16th and a chip & putt for 3 at the 17th

Results

Group Stableford:	55 points
Individual placings:	9th, 10th, 5th
Positive extras:	None

Group 3 - Dave, Peter & Julian

Group credentials

BEC's completed	57
Yards played:	1,783,573
Tour victories:	5
Tour losses:	(£762)

- After an 11 year intermission, it's good to see Peter B (Chart Hills, 2012) back in action on the Tour
- He's joined by Julian and Dave G with 284 rounds, 5 Tea Pots and 10 Scarisbrick Titles between them
- Julian starts slowly with just 4 points after five holes, but NBs at the 6th, 7th and 11th steady the ship
- Dave matches Julian's 14 points on the front 9 and finishes strongly for 26 points and 3rd place
- Peter B finds the going tough, but contributes an important 20 points and bags himself an LD at the 14th
- Julian secures victory with a creditable (if not record breaking) 28 points
- As well as the individual prize, he wins the team prize, Nearest the Pin at the 7th and Longest Drive at the 8th

Results

Group Stableford:	74 points
Individual placings:	3rd, 8th, 1st
Positive extras:	1 NP, 2 LDs

Group 4 - Steve, James & David

Group credentials

BEC's completed	30
Yards played:	960,821
Tour victories:	3
Tour losses:	(£304)

- James knocks his opening drive 220yds straight down the middle to pip Geoff for LD ...
- … and at the 2nd he makes a handy par 4 for four points to get his round off to a flying start

Results

Group Stableford:	64 points
Individual placings:	2nd, 4th, 11th
Positive extras:	2 NPs, 2 LDs

- Steve claims a Nearest Pin at the 193yds third, a fine par at the 428yds 12th and Longest Drive (apparently topped) at the 13th on his way to 26 points and 2nd place
- James finishes strongly with a Nearest Pin, par 3 at the 159yds 17th and a tidy 5 at the last for 23 points and 4th place
- David has a little less fun than his team mates. As they fill their boots with NPs, LDs, NBs and NEs, his own boots have only one Stableford point after 5 holes and 15 points after eighteen

See you at the 30th Bad Etiquette Classic in Somerset !