

NARPO GOLF DAY 2018 by Phil Hopkins

The sixth annual Dyfed Powys branch golf day was held recently at Builth Wells Golf Club.

Three members of the assembled throng (including yours truly) had attempted to steal a march on the rest of the competitors by trying out the current state of the course the previous Thursday. However, their dastardly plan backfired when the day turned out to be the wettest by far of the year. All three agreed that they had never been as wet during the whole of their police service – although it is questionable how much time that one of the three, a retired Superintendent, had spent outside in the rain during his time in the job!

The day of the competition however, proved to be much improved and we were blessed with almost wall to wall sunshine. There were several unavoidable absences due to holidays, golf competitions elsewhere and work commitments, but there was still an excellent turnout of fifteen competitors. There were a couple of firsts this year – the first time that a female has entered (Jane Ingram) and the first time that a serving police officer has played (Gareth Wheatman). This was perfectly within the rules, as Gareth has recently joined NARPO at a pre-retirement course, planning for his retirement next year. It was also very encouraging that there were a record six members making their debut at the golf day – as well as Gareth and Jane, it was also the first time that Robin Wilson, Paul Jones, Des Parkinson and Mark Edwards had participated.

The day got off to a good start with the usual coffee and bacon bap and concluded with a superb two course meal provided by the catering staff, who as usual could not do enough to help. In between was the small matter of the golf! There was another first here. In the previous five competitions, we have had a different winner each year. On this occasion however, last year's winner, Gary Evans retained his title, scoring a very creditable 38 points – four more than he scored last year. It was just as well that Gary won the competition, as this prevented a possible embarrassing situation, as he had forgotten to bring the winner's trophy with him, despite ensuring that it was freshly polished! He must have had a premonition!



Gary Evans holding the trophy that he left at home!!

Alan Jones took second place with 36 points and Phil Hopkins took third place with 34 points. Mention should be made here of Jane Ingram, who narrowly missed out on the prizes by one point, scoring 33 points. This despite suffering a nasty fall in Saundersfoot the previous week, necessitating several stitches in a head wound. This was followed by a visit to the doctor's in Carmarthen on the morning of the

competition to have the stitches removed and rushing up to Builth, making it just in time for tee off.

Bearing in mind the rule that a main prize-winner can only win one prize, the other winners were as follows:

Lowest gross score – Gareth Wheatman, nearest the pin – Phil Small, longest drive Des Parkinson, lowest points total – Mark Edwards, hidden holes – Colin Finch and Mike Benbow.

Thanks must be given to Simon Edwards and his staff at Builth Golf Club. If you had seen the amount of running water on the course the previous week, you wouldn't have believed that it could recover so quickly to the immaculate condition that it was. Finally, a huge thank you to branch member and competitor David Jones, who sponsored the event for the fourth consecutive year which makes my job of organising the event so much easier.

Following a discussion among this year's players, next year's event has already been booked. It will again be held at Builth Wells Golf Club on **Tuesday, 24th September 2019.**