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GOLF: Club celebrates superb season of success



Alan Golding, Andy MacPhee, Colin Myrtle (club captain), Lorenzo Ercoli, Joanna Lassman and Keith Robinson celebrate at Grim's Dyke

Magnificent seven for Grim's Dyke golfers

GRIM'S DYKE Golf Club in Pinner have been celebrating another trophy-laden season after winning no fewer than seven team titles.

Pride of place must go to the Men's Veterans and the Ladies, who both ended long waits to return to the winner's enclosure.

The Veterans bridged a 24-year wait for silverware by capturing the Felmingham Trophy, under the captaincy of Alan Golding.

Grim's Dyke defeated Finchley 5.5-3.5 in the final at Ealing, after 31 clubs from Middlesex and Hertfordshire entered the 27-year-old knockout competition, and beat two of the favourites Moor Park and The Shire en route.

In inter-club friendly matches, the veterans, led by Dean Cooper, won 16 and halved two of their 21 fixtures.

The Ladies, skippered by Maggie Pinner, landed the Middlesex Pearson Trophy after a 20-year gap.

By PAT MOONEY
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After topping their qualifying group with four wins, Grim's Dyke beat Muswell Hill (4-1) in the semi-final before overcoming Finchley (4-3) in a thrilling final at Stannmore.

With the scores level at 3-3, the final match went down the 18th before Grim's Dyke won the last hole - and the trophy.

In the Inter County Finals at Hindhead GC, Grim's Dyke lost in the semi-final to Surrey champions Roehampton.

The Sabre Tigers just missed out on a repeat of last season's Middlesex treble, again under the captaincy of Lorenzo Ercoli.

They retained their County Sabres (West) Cup before defeating the East champions, Finchley, 2.5-1.5 in the Middlesex League final at North Middlesex.

The trophy was presented by the host club's own European Tour champion, Andrew 'Beef' Johnston.

Grim's Dyke's defence of the Bullivant Bowl was ended by Sudbury in the semi-final. Played on a home and away basis, the contest finished level at 3-3 before Sudbury won the play-off at the first extra hole.

The Foxes were also defending a treble - and like the Sabres just came up short.

Andy MacPhee's men retained their Middlesex League title an impressive 4.5-1.5 play-off victory over local rivals Pinner Hill in the final at Wyke Green.

They again reached the final of the Abrey Cup but lost 5.5-3.5 to The Shire in a hard-fought contest, played in atrocious weather conditions at Sudbury. Two of the matches went to extra holes.

In the Middlesex Championship, Grim's Dyke found host club West Mid-

dlesex too strong and finished third - just one point behind runners-up Pinner.

The Rabbits, skippered by Keith Robinson, completed a second successive trophy double, retaining the Stanley West Memorial Trophy - for the third time in four years - and the Talbot Cup.

In the Stanley West final, Grim's Dyke beat Wyke Green 6-3 in the best of nine singles at Sudbury. The high handicappers also went on to retain the Talbot Cup by eight points from Gerrard's Cross at Temple.

Grim's Dyke club captain Colin Myrtle said: "What another outstanding year for the club with all the sections chipping in this time.

"It was especially great to see the Ladies and the Veterans joining the Sabre Tigers, Foxes and Rabbits in the winner's enclosure. For a small club we continue to punch well above our weight."

Wealdstone boss using time wisely during wait

WEALDSTONE boss Matt Taylor has reflected on the last two weeks as a window of opportunity as he prepares his side for an intense period in their National League campaign, writes Tom Norton. The Stones haven't played since a 3-1 Boxing Day defeat at Maidenhead United due to postponements and the FA Trophy but face Altrincham this weekend looking to recapture the impressive form they showed throughout November.

"It's been a bit of time for the players to have off because our schedule has been relentless," Taylor told the club website. "The (Boston United) game on New Year's Day, we were just unable to get it on. At 11.30am, when I got to the ground, everything was okay. We seemed to then have a deluge, so the game was off.

"We've not played in a while. We're just hopeful the work we've put into the training pitch with the players, which has been a lot, will be enough.

"It gives us an opportunity to get some ideas across to the players. It also gives us, as coaches, and me as the manager, the chance to go out and watch some games because we haven't had the chance to do that really.

"We'll spend a lot of time as a group of staff this week covering the right fixtures because we know even though we haven't had a game in 17 days, the fixtures come thick and fast. It's going to be really important everybody is fit and available and ready to play."

Altrincham welcome Taylor's side in decent form, having lost just one of their last eight in all competitions.

"We have to understand they are a dangerous team. They've got threats. (Regan) Linney - he's the boy that seems to score a lot of the goals, and a lot goes through him," said Taylor.

"Their front four are very dangerous, especially at home, where they have a really good record. We know just how difficult it's going to be. We played them three or four games ago in the league, so we pretty much know there's not a huge amount that's changed.

"It's a game we go into confidently. I'm hopeful we can pick up some points, as it seems an age now since we've played in the league, and we want to get back to trying to get some points because we know just how difficult the second half of the season is going to be."

With the transfer window now open, the Stones boss provided an update on any potential signings after losing several loanees back to their parent clubs.

"We want to bring good players in. It takes time, and we've got a couple of injuries ourselves, so we're low on numbers," he said.

"We're doing everything we can within the means we have to sign the best."