

## New captains opt for a traditional approach

Costessey Park's new captains, Nigel Drake and Rosemary Taylor (pictured top right), began their year in office with the traditional drive in.

Founder member Nigel spoke of the spirit of optimism that prevailed at the club as it moves into a new era. Rosemary has previously held this role at Wensum Valley and Royal Norwich. Both have pledged to keep the traditions of the club intact in the face of anticipated change as it goes on the market.

■ Barnham Broom's new captains, Denis Walsh and Rosie Fox-Elliott, (below right) have both driven into office and raised funds for Headlines, the charity for craniofacial support. So far this year they have raised over £580.



## Ellis is setting his sights on big year

Professional Ian Ellis gave notice of his season's intentions when he won the latest Norfolk PGA pro-am by two shots.

Ellis, who now represents Weston Park, scored a one-under par 71 at The Norfolk and as PGA captain had the "surreal" experience of presenting himself with his prize!

Accepting first prizes has been a regular part of Ellis's life since he turned pro 10 years ago and went on to become one of the region's top performers. But, last year he was disappointed with his results, both in the PGA East Region and in Norfolk, and now he intends to put matters right.

"I fully plan this year to be in the top two at the end of the East Region calendar. My best golf is ahead of me and I'm looking forward to the challenges ahead," said Ellis.

He's certainly shot to the top in Norfolk with this win and an earlier second place at Gt Yarmouth and Caister. Those results have given him the lead in the order of merit - despite missing one event while away working on the Fred Olsen cruise ships.

"There's a long way to go with the order of merit and I know I'll be in the mix at the end, it just depends how many events I play and how many I miss," said Ellis. "It's nice to be at the top so early in the season having missed one event already."

At The Norfolk Ellis's strength was his accurate driving on a blustery day. He started on the 10th and hit almost every

fairway to set up five birdies, on the 11th, 13th, 15th, 18th and 6th. The early season showed itself with some "sloppy" bogeys but overall Ellis was pleased with his ball striking - and with the swing thought which came to him in his pre-round warm-up on the range. "It seemed to work all day," he remarked.

He plans to play in the next event, the Norfolk PGA's 35th anniversary pro-am at Eaton on Sunday, April 22. One notable absentee will be Paul Mayoh of King's Lynn who will be running in the London Marathon for the Lauren Page Charity and would welcome any sponsorship for a charity that helps in the care of premature babies and their mothers.

**Results, Professionals:** 71 Ian Ellis (Weston Park). 73 Craig Graver (Marriott Sprowston Manor). 74 Gary Potter (unatt), Gary Forder (Sheringham), Peter Bower (Bawburgh).

**Teams:** 131 (13 under) Peter Bower (Bawburgh) with Gareth Woodgate, Andy Bonham and Andy Claxton. 136 Gary Forder (Sheringham) team with James Hudson, James Barnard and Ben Richmond.

**Norfolk PGA order of merit, Latest standings:** Ian Ellis (Weston Park) 21 points, Tony Varney (The Norfolk) 17, Mike Jubb (Sheringham) 13, Neil Lythgoe (Royal Norwich) 13, Lee Patterson (Royal Cromer) 12, Gary Potter (unatt) 12, Gary Forder (Sheringham) 12 and Peter Bower (Bawburgh) 11 points.

## Useful warm-up for Norfolk

Norfolk's first team squad emerged as the winners of the Clymer Bowl at the end of a tournament contested by 30 players at Bawburgh.

Event captain Kevin Pratt said: "It was another good warm-up event with lots of new pairings tried out. All the reports were of good golf out there and hopefully this will be a good season."

The first team squad won the day with 14½ points, ahead of a president's select side with 8½ points. The second team squad amassed seven points.

The president's select, who received shots, included the unbeatable pairing of former county captain Gary Stangoe (Weston Park) and former county champion Mark Sperrin (Gt Yarmouth & Caister) who collected the maximum four points.

Results (First team names, then second team, then president's select), Morning: Joe Conway & Martin O'Brien beat James

Ollington & Stephen Chick 3/1 and lost to Gary Stangoe & Mark Sperrin 3/2. Ollington & Chick lost to Stangoe & Sperrin 4/3.

Craig Butler & Austin Brydon halved with Alex Beckett & James Palmer and beat James Ong & Joe Burrows 3/2. Beckett & Palmer beat Ong & Burrows 2/1. Danny Chapman & Simon Clark beat Nick Paling & Simon Locke 2/1 and beat David Horsburgh & Bernie Peet 3/2. Paling & Locke lost to Horsburgh & Peet 2 down.

Kevin Pratt & Stuart Tough lost to Bruce McQuade & Calum Slowther 2/1 and beat John Watson & Steve Howlett 3/2. McQuade & Slowther beat Watson & Howlett 5/4.

Dave Marshall & Chase Davis beat Steve Tidy & Mark Eglinton 3/2 and beat Gary Davis & Peter Johns 2/1. Davis & Johns beat Tidy and Eglinton 2 up.

Afternoon: Davis & Clark lost to Ollington & Chick 1 down and to Stangoe & Sperrin 2 down. Ollington & Chick lost to Stangoe & Sperrin 2/1.

Butler & Conway beat Beckett & Locke 2/1 and beat Ong & Burrows 4/3. Beckett & Locke beat Ong & Burrows 4/3.

Brydon & Chapman beat Palmer & Paling 6/4 and Horsburgh & Peet 5/4. Horsburgh & Peet beat Palmer & Paling 1 up.

Pratt & Marshall beat Eglinton & Tidy 5/4 and Howlett & Jeff Duncan 5/4. Eglinton & Tidy bt Howlett & Duncan 3/2.

Tough & O'Brien beat Slowther & McQuade 4/3 and lost to Davis & Johns 1 down. Slowther & McQuade halved with David & Johns.

# Perfect timing as Kevin takes over

By LYNDSEY HEWISON

Costessey Park's Kevin Pratt will lead the Norfolk men's first team as the new county captain.

He took over from Dan Henderson, the county amateur champion from Royal Norwich, at this week's annual meeting of the Norfolk golf union.

Pratt, who plays off two, has been county second team captain for the past three years and has seen a number of his players go on to establish themselves in the first team.

"I'm really looking forward to this and it's a brilliant time to take over," he said. "A lot of work has been put in over the last few years to build up a good quality squad and a big one. What I want to do is try to keep a settled side without too many changes."

Pratt has played for the county second team for five years and was a member of the side which won their division of the Anglian League.

He has also taken part in the Eastern Counties Foursomes at Seacroft and in Norfolk's six-man team for the regional qualifier for the English counties' championship.

His place as second team captain will be taken by James Ollington, who is also a Costessey Park member.

Ollington, 24, first represented Norfolk at U14 level when he was 13 and has played continuously for the county since then.



**MEN IN CHARGE:** New Norfolk first team captain Kevin Pratt (right) with his successor as second team skipper James Ollington.

Picture: SUBMITTED

He has been a member of the second team since he was 17 and is keen to take charge.

"It's something I want to do," said the four handicapper.

He helped run the Norfolk amateur order of merit last season and is keen to encourage players who want to break into the county scene to take part in these events and show what they can do.

"It's not a closed shop. The more

people there are to choose from the harder it will be - but it's a good problem to have," he said.

■ The championship meeting in the Gt Yarmouth & Caister winter am-am series is an individual stableford and takes place on Wednesday, April 11. There are still some places available and the entry fee is £25 for non members, including a meal. Further details from the pro shop on 01493 720421.

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