

Picture: SUBMITTED

Green is the colour at Eaton

Eaton has scored a success with the environmentalists – thanks to the club's efforts to create an attractive habitat for wildlife and to encourage wild flowers and grasses.

The club was the first in Norfolk to receive the English Golf Environment Award and head greenkeeper Mick Lathrope is pictured, right, receiving the certificate from county president John Watson.

Peter Johns, chairman of the club's green committee, remarked: "Mick and his staff are very environmentally conscious and the 108 acres of Eaton Golf Club are teeming with wild life due largely to the minimal use of fungicide, herbicide and fertilizers.

"Whilst we are a golf course first and foremost, much work goes into protecting the habitat of the thousands of creatures and plants that call the golf club their home.

"Areas that do not (or should not) come into play are left to grow and cut down at the end of the summer when they have finished flowering and seeding, when butterflies have finished feeding on nettles and the vegetation is generally dying back.

"We are following a regeneration programme which has started in one area where all the old and dying trees and vegetation were removed.

"The area was taken right back to the soil, 4,000 plugs

of 23 different varieties of wild flowers were planted and the area overseeded with meadow grass.

"The varieties were chosen to encourage a variety of moths and butterflies as well as providing cover for small mammals and producing an array of different colours from April to October."

The award is sponsored by the English Golf Union, English Nature and the Sports Turf research Institute.

■ Have you got a golf story to tell? Contact Lyndsey Hewison by telephone or fax on 01603 507416 or email her at lyndsey.hewison@tiscali.co.uk



Magpies facing a big test

HOCKEY

Harleston Magpies Ladies return to English League Division One action tomorrow with a home game against high-flying Barnes Hounslow & Ealing (12.30pm).

Magpies won their opening two league games against Poynton and Sunderland, but defeat against Trojans saw them slip back to mid table.

Hounslow, on the other hand, have beaten Firebrands 5-0, Horsham 5-0 and drawn 2-2 at Trojans. With that sort of form they are second in the table, just behind Birmingham University, and Magpies know they will have a tough game on their hands.

Last season Magpies beat Hounslow both home and away but the impression is that they are a much stronger outfit this season.

"We are expecting a hard physical encounter," said manager Nick McAllen.

"But if we intend to progress in the League these are the kind of home matches we need to win."

Despite a league defeat last time out at least Magpies were able to progress in the Cup when they beat Wisbech 7-0 and the reward for that win is a trip to Manchester to play Poynton on Sunday week.

This weekend sees Laura Parker out injured from a shoulder injury sustained two weeks ago, while Ellie Blake returns to the squad. Jess Bloom also returns after missing the last two League games.

Squad: Donna Causton (capt), Lucy Hayman, Frances Sumner, Louisa Greenacre, Hannah Coulson, Debbie McAllen, Becky Wheeler, Charlotte Harrison, Ellie Blake, Jess Bloom, Artemis Clark, Anna Truman, Naomi Hull and Angie Wheelhouse.

GOLF: Ellis and Lythgoe can't be separated at Royal Norwich

Order of Merit battle hots up

By LYNDSEY HEWISON

Royal Norwich's Ian Ellis and Neil Lythgoe continued their battle to top Norfolk's order of merit when they tied for first place in the latest counting event.

Both players carded three-under-par 69s around their home course to beat the field in the Norfolk PGA pro-am by three shots.

The result keeps them neck and neck at the top of the table – with Lythgoe holding a narrow advantage of seven points – with four events to go.

Lythgoe would have widened the gap had it not been for Ellis's finishing flourish in the pro-am. He signed off with an eagle three on his last hole, the 10th, where he reduced the par five to a drive, five-iron and a 12ft putt.

It was his first outing on the course in six months – after a busy season playing away – and he enjoyed the experience.

"The course was brilliant. I've been up there early in the mornings to practice but I haven't played the course since April.

"People who haven't played it a lot thought it was difficult, but I have played it in all conditions and although it was blowy, the wind wasn't from the worst direction. It was tricky rather than difficult."

Ellis dropped just two shots in his round and had birdies on the 13th, 14th and seventh as well as his eagle.

"It's nice to win, it keeps me



ALL SMILES: Dunston Hall junior golf team and officials with the prestigious Bass Trophy they won at Thetford earlier this month.

up there," said Ellis, who is enjoying consistent form and looking forward to the run-in to the end of the season.

"There's a lot to play for and I'm going to make the most of any chances I get."

Lythgoe, meanwhile, felt he scored better than he played – and took satisfaction from that.

"That's what you have to be able to do. When you're not playing quite so well you need to be able to shoot this sort of score instead of going round in two or three over.

"It's more of an achievement than shooting four or five under when you are playing well."

He underlined the point by referring to his performance the day before when he had played well in the first of

Thetford's new winter pro-am series – and scored 71 around the forest lay-out.

"I shot one under playing really well at Thetford and struggled at Royal Norwich where I shot three under."

However, Lythgoe – who is backed by the Norwich-based Saab dealership, Thurlow Nunn – is in generally good form.

"I'm 12 under par for my last four rounds of golf, which is what I feel I should be doing," he said.

His most recent round included birdies on Royal Norwich's three par fives and another on the downhill par-four 13th.

Weston Park's Michael Few is lying third in the order of merit table, but was unable to add any points at Royal

Norwich when a back injury forced him to retire during his round.

Results, professionals: 69 Neil Lythgoe (Royal Norwich), Ian Ellis (Royal Norwich); 72 Gary Potter (unatt); 75 Lee Patterson (Royal Cromer), Ryan Pudney (Royal Cromer). Best trainee: Ryan Pudney.

Teams: 135 (nine-under) Gary Potter (unatt) with Chris Aulert, Brew Craig, Brian Lythgoe; 137 Dan Frost (Wensum valley), with Joe Lippett, Nick Traube, Mark Reynolds; Ian Ellis (Royal Norwich) with Craig Butler, Neil Ferguson, Trevor Smith; Guy Ireson (Sproston Manor) with Terry Smith, Rebecca Shubbrook, Julian Watson.

Nearest pin on 1st: Julian Watson. **Longest drive on 18th:** Roger Marson. **Norfolk PGA Order of Merit, latest leading standings:** Neil Lythgoe (Royal Norwich) 137, Ian Ellis (Royal Norwich) 130, Michael Few (Weston Park) 116, Lee Patterson (Royal Cromer) 90, Mark Allen (Eaton) 85, Ryan Pudney (Royal Cromer) 85, Paul Mayoh (King's Lynn) 77, Dean Futter (Wensum Valley) 76.

Dereham issue 'not for sale' statement

By IAN CLARKE

Dereham Golf Club has issued a "we're definitely not for sale" message after increasing rumours which were circulating in the county.

The club held a special general meeting earlier this week to discuss a range of issues, including putting out a statement to quash rumours about its future at the Quebec Road course, where the club has been for more than 70 years.

Secretary Dudley Mears said a number of members had heard rumours that the club was for sale as they played competitions at other courses and spoke to other people involved in golf.

A statement released after the meeting said: "Members of Dereham Golf Club wish it to be known that despite whatever rumours that abound throughout the county Dereham Golf Club is definitely not for sale.

"The club has re-iterated its total commitment to providing continuous services and facilities both now and in the future."

Mears said there was "absolutely no truth in rumours" and added: "We want the people of Norfolk to know that."

Dereham has 430 members and is the home club of European Tour player Andrew Marshall.

■ Eaton men's charity swindle is on target to raise £1000 again this year for local causes following their last major event of the season – the annual match against the lady swindlers. The men won the contest by five matches to three.

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