**GFW storms Mallorca!**

*November 09, 2017*



It’s amazing how statistics can point you so far in the wrong direction when you add alcohol and late nights to the equation; particularly so in the case of THUGS members apparently.

Going into the 2017 Mallorca tour, there was serious money going on Pete Ashworth taking an unprecedented third Pink Jacket in a row, bearing in mind his previous winning margins, and only slight adjustment in his handicap. Whilst the winning margin was once again a comfortable one, instead it was in the less-fancied shape of Graham Wilson this year, leading from the start and never looking back.

Of course, the previous nights’ shenanigans will always be a factor in how people play, and nobody would argue that Ashey was severely handicapped by the effects of the best part of a bottle of Jagermeister as we took the first swings of our drivers at Son Quint on the opening day. We had been fortunate to even be there at all, managing to arrive on the island on possibly the last flight before Monarch Airline’s collapse – perhaps this, coupled with attending Alex’s bar’s closing night was the catalyst for Ashey’s over-enthusiastic start to the trip – if so, it affected his chances of victory from the onset, as he failed to compete against Graham’s winning score of 30 points.

In fact, only Ken Shadford’s runner up score of 27 came anywhere near a challenge, on a day affected in equal measure by sun, rain, wind and hangovers. Whilst Son Quint was in fine condition as always, there were more than a few comments suggesting the excessively long first cut of rough also reflected some of the slightly poor scores on the day.

With no birdies recorded on the day, and nobody managing to remain on the fairway to win the longest drive, there were however two minor honours to celebrate, with nearest the pin prizes going to both Graham and Alan ‘Big Dave’ Burgess.

With Monday night’s uncharacteristically average meal at Zen and a few less beers than the previous evening behind us, we embarked on Tuesday’s tough test of golf at Maioris, where we found the course in reasonable condition, but showing the signs of a course that is well used.

With the added difficulty of a heavy downpour through the last few holes, Maioris was always going to be a challenge for some. The scores bore testament to the difficulty, with the winning score being Quent Cartwright’s 27. However, there was more to it than just a winning score, as Adie Cartwright forced the issue into a card play-off with a similar 27. As the final nine holes’ countback was conducted, the scores again remained identical, and the rules dictate the scores should be separated by the tally from each players’ final six holes. Again, this was found to be identical, and so the final three holes became the focus, with Quent edging Adie out by the narrowest of margins.

With no birdies achieved for a second day running, Nearest The Pin awards were given to Quent, Ashey and Jim Wilson, with Ashey also taking the Longest Drive accolade.

A superb meal at El Ceibo on Tuesday night was followed the next morning by a trip to Son Muntaner, which was as always in excellent condition, and was fresh from its recent redesign of a few holes. The weather remained perfect throughout, and though the conditions were good, such is the difficulty of the course (And more pertinently the level of ability of the group!) the scores were not particularly high, however Jimmy Elliott mustered a very impressive 32 points to push Ken into second place, two points behind.

Again, a lack of birdies meant that the only prizes to pay out were for Quent and Jimmy’s Nearest The Pins, and Adie’s Longest Drive.

A fabulous night round Palma on Wednesday night included an excellent meal at Diecisiete Grados and a few drinks round the Santa Catalina area. This was followed the next morning by the short trip over to Santa Ponsa for a course which has always been seen as long, but unpredictable in both condition and welcome. Fortunately, both condition and welcome were excellent, which helped the time pass enjoyably.

Ronan O’Brien amassed a very impressive 35 points on a course he has never played before, with Ken taking another second place spot four points behind. Ashey and Graham took the Nearest The Pin honours, and Graham also benefited from his Longest Drive win. Amazingly, there were still no birdies to record.

At this point we had seen four different winners, and only Ken showing on the radar as being regularly challenging, however Graham had been quietly putting steady rounds in, and had by now stretched out a reasonable but not unassailable lead in the Pink Jacket stakes, whilst Ashey had shown he wouldn’t be likely to make it three Championships in a row. There were just two more rounds left for the front runners to make their move on Graham’s lead should he falter.

Bistro 49 at Port Adriano always produces tremendous food, and Thursday night’s visit was no exception. We followed our visit with another crawl around the bars of Magalluf, and prepared ourselves for the following day’s round at Son Vida.

As one of our longest standing favourites, pretty much the only gripe we ever have with Son Vida is that you just don’t know what to expect. Sometimes the course is a little wet, but they continue to water it, sometimes it is in fantastic condition which compliments its superb layout, and sometimes the management seem to go all out to spoil your day. Perplexing really, when you consider how helpful, and friendly the staff are at both its sister courses.

Forcing us to start on the 10th, and insistent on splitting our groupings up so they could squeeze a couple of Germans into our team wasn’t entirely unexpected, knowing the Courses’ penchant for wringing every last Euro out of their green fee slots. However, we stood our ground, insisted we play in the teams we had booked, and finally got away some considerable time later. Again, it was a little boggy in places, but on the whole the course itself was in reasonable order.

Alan Burgess ran out winner on the day – his 32 points squeezing Adie into another bridesmaid’s dress two points further back, Adie also winning two of the four Nearest The Pins, with Quent and Graham taking the others. Quent also took the Longest Drive prize.

Back to Palma on Friday night, we were all thrilled with the wonderful meal at Chez Camille, and enjoyed a great night out around the city before heading back for a nightcap at Felipe’s. The following morning we travelled to our furthest destination, Son Antem, anticipating a track in questionable condition, as we have experienced on other visits there. In actual fact, the East course was in the worst condition that most of us have ever experienced anywhere before.

So bad was the course that our longest drive hole had to be changed during the round when it became clear that it would be impossible to differentiate between the fairway and the rough – both being an area of dried uneven mud with enormous cracks capable of swallowing balls. A truly awful course that seems to get worse with every visit, Son Antem offered us little in the way of encouraging decent golf, and seven of our group of nine scored 20 points or less. In the end Adie Cartwright took the honours with a surprising 29 points, leaving Ken Shadford to pick up his third runner-up place of the week with 26 points.

Quent took another Longest Drive prize, Whilst Alan and Adie profited from Nearest The Pin awards. The likelihood of birdies on such a course was slim, and ultimately proved unsuccessful, which for the first time in the twenty year history of our Mallorca trips, meant that not a single birdie had been achieved all week – a surprising statistic considering last year’s tour produced seven plus an eagle hole in one. The main prize decided on the final day, however, is the Pink Jacket, and with Graham extending his lead on an almost daily basis, he managed to take the title of 2017 Winner by a 19 point margin from Quent and Ken who were tied in second place.

All that was left was our final night, where we enjoyed a very tasty Indian meal, followed by a last beer crawl, culminating in our regular chill out at Felipe’s. Much of the chat inevitably turned to our issue of how we would get home after our planned Airline had ceased trading. We needn’t have worried however, as the British Government’s repatriation plan ensured we had a huge Airbus on hand to ship just sixty people back to Manchester.

The 2017 Mallorca tour was, if we are being honest a slightly more sedate affair than usual, particularly in the evening social time aspect - Is this down to us getting older and mentally mature maybe? Or are we just not enjoying the trip anymore?

The simple answer is that it’s neither of those. The trip is still thoroughly enjoyable, and we continue to have lots of fun, but we need to adapt to the changes in the resort. The bars are now busier in the early part of the evening in Magalluf, and we now understand we should adjust our habits to suit, bringing forward our tee times, and consequently our evening meal times to allow us to be part of a better atmosphere in busier bars.

Our routines will change, and possibly even our resort too if we are to make our 20th anniversary the occasion it should be next year. That’s not to say we must unravel all we have done over the past two decades in finding the best restaurants and nightcap bars such as Felipe’s. Instead we are all agreed that we need to introduce a touch more variety into our bar crawls, and make sure that whatever our plans are for 2018, we are full of energy and ready to fulfil them, even if it means dropping a day’s golf to recharge.

Hopefully we will have Neil back with us next year. His ability to get us all either laughing with him or at him is a huge plus on nights where we are all generally tired out, and his absence this year was definitely felt.

**The latest news and plans for Mallorca 2017**

*August 22, 2017*

Further to the news item of 11/8/2017, TRH Magaluf have now confirmed a reduced price of €97 per person for the week (Around £88 at today's rate). I will endeavour to persuade Luciano to give us our favourite rooms.

We still need to organise the Airport Lounge - this should be completed in the next couple of weeks, and then it is down to you all making sure you have enough tees, balls and boozing practice to endure the week.



Quent has now compiled the week's itinerary which has been sent out to members, and can also be viewed via the Excel file button at the bottom of this article.

As always, we may be forced to make the odd small change depending on the weather etc. Please have a think about what sort of meal you'd prefer for the last night, as it has been left open to a majority decision.

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Edit:  Unfortunately we have been unsuccessful in booking into the Airport Lounge this year. Both lounges are unusually full, and have been booked up for some time apparently.  I am not entirely sure that I believe Aspire, who led me to believe for over a week that all was ok, and only when I called them again after they failed to contact me as promised did they tell me they were full.

Escape Lounge seemed much more helpful, but only had room from 3pm, which would have given us just half an hour. We will now have to find ourselves a corner of the bar downstairs, where we can at least be as raucous as we like for a change...

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Further Edit:  As you are now aware, Neil has had to take the decision to miss the trip in order to take care of Paula, who is currently undergoing treatment which we all hope will have her soon feeling fit and well again. Neil will be sorely missed, but it is a decision which is completely understood and fully endorsed by THUGS members.

Another disappointment, though not on the same scale, is that sadly Ruby Tuesdays, our meeting point for a number of years has closed its' doors for the foreseeable future.

In brighter news, Quent and Jim have secured us a place in the airport lounge. We will not be able to arrive there in tour shirts, but that is a small price to pay for a huge part of our trip.



**Mowgli 18.8.2017**

*August 20, 2017*



Another great night out was had by all at Mowgli Manchester to celebrate Graham's birthday.

After a short wait for our table, and initial confusion over what to order we were a little apprehensive. However the food that was served was absolutely delicious and plentiful (So much so that we'd certainly order less next time).

This was billed as Indian street food, and was certainly unlike any normal Indian restaurant, with amazing and varied flavours served in authentic tiffins.

Everyone agreed it was a resounding success, and more than a few pints were subsequently consumed in Manchester and Oldham.

***[website](http://www.mowglistreetfood.com/" \t "_blank)***

**Mallorca 2017 Update**

*August 11, 2017*



As we hit the 50-day countdown to Mallorca 2017, here's a quick update regarding the bookings:

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All flights, courses and cars are booked and confirmed. As always the hotel is last to be confirmed as we wait for TRH Hoteles to issue their late deals. Luciano has responded to our request for a price, and quoted 1100 Euros (Approx £100 per person including breakfast).

I've asked him to have another look at the price, as I believe we can knock 100 Euros off the price if we go through the TRH Hotel website, and hope he can reduce the cost further (Last year's opening gambit of 120 Euros was reduced to around 90 Euros.per person if I recall correctly).

We have seen steady increases in the cost of staying at TRH, however as it has only increased by around 30 Euros over the last seven years it still represents good value at £14 per night including breakfast (And a surreptitious lunch!).

We still need to organise how we can get all of us into the airport lounge again, and I suggest that is something we discuss at our next birthday get-together on August 18th (See the Calendar). An initial email has not seen any response, as happened last year.

On the flights front, please remember we now have 23kgs luggage allowance per person, which should be plenty of room for extra balls, backrub and spare shorts (No names spring to mind...). We can also take some comfort in the fact that Monarch Airlines now boast better punctuality figures on our route than EasyJet, Thomson, Jet2, RyanAir and Thomas Cook, with an average take-off delay of just 14 minutes.

**Neil Takes The June Cup 2017 Honours**

*July 13, 2017*



Neil Butterworth maintained his recent run of form to take the 2017 June Cup at a beautifully maintained Wigan GC. Earning himself his second title in the event, and third Major with THUGS, he carded an impressive 36 points to push Derek Ashford into the Runner-Up spot two points adrift.

The sunny weather we had missed for the last couple of June Cups returned, with just a couple of very light and very short showers failing to make an impact. The hospitality offered by the club was as good as we could have received anywhere, and we have Steward Ian and his team to thank for making us extremely welcome, laying on some fantastic food, and making sure there was enough beer to satisfy our post round needs.

Out on the course, Dave Whittingham carded the best Gross Score, with a tidy 86 on a track he has played just once previously, with his score also including a Minor award winning longest drive.

Also in the Minor honours were Quent Cartwright and Adie Cartwright with a birdie apiece, and Leo Stuchbury who took the Nearest The Pin prize.

Thanks as always to those who attended, especially those involved in the organisation of another hugely successful and enjoyable day, and thanks to Alan "Big Dave" Burgess for allowing us to carry on the night at the Royal Oak, and store our kit there overnight.

Next stop Mallorca 2017!

**2017 June Cup Update**

*June 15, 2017*



The 2017 June Cup will be contested as previously advised at Arley Hall Wigan GC on Friday 30th June. The anticipated schedule will be:

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10:45 Coach leaves Werneth Golf Club for journey to Wigan Golf Club  
11:30 Estimated arrival time at Wigan Golf Club  
11:45 Bacon rolls & coffee/tea served  
13:00 Tee off time  
18:30 Evening dinner and presentation  
21:45 Return journey to Werneth Golf Club

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**Evening dinner** will consist of Steak & Onion Pie with Chips & Garden Peas followed by a choice from the Desserts of the Day

**Dress Code** - On the course is as you would expect but I have attached a diagram supplied by Wigan Golf Club for clarity. Post golf in the clubhouse you must wear trousers, collared shirt (tucked in) and shoes, no denim, t shirts, trainers etc.Click [Here](https://f5658b41-45d1-4d40-afb1-280275d857f4.filesusr.com/ugd/0aef76_3f47f0243c7a40a3a59dcfbdf77e3db4.pdf) for the attachment

**Cost** - £35 per person, plus travel (where applicable) and £5 per person prize fund.

**Buggies** - Just Alan & Graham will be sharing a buggy.

**Shirts** - 2017 T.H.U.G.S. shirts have been embroidered allowing us to wear them at the June Cup. Quent will make arrangements to distribute them. For those who have not ordered one, the shirts are white which is an easy colour for matching purposes if so desired.

For those making their own way, there are location details on the Contact page of the course website at [www.wigangolfclub.co.uk/](http://www.wigangolfclub.co.uk/)

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**2017 THUGS shirts - Your sizes needed!**

*May 08, 2017*



Quent is currently sourcing the 2017 Tour Shirts. Can those who require one please contact him as soon as possible with your size (Remember you're only lying to yourself if you order a size smaller, and everyone will laugh even more at your belly!).

This year's colour will be white - a colour that we have used on only two previous occasions- and is likely to be one of the lightweight Dunlop range. Shirts will hopefully be embroidered in time for use at the June Cup.

**The Secret about Neil Is Out...**

*April 03, 2017*



No - not *that*secret! The secret we've all managed to hang on to is now out - Neil will be joining us this year after Paula kindly insisted it was her only chance of a week off from him, and paid for his trip as part of his 50th Birthday present.

Obviously you are now asked to completely ignore all the niceties written about him in the news article below, as he is now officially a 2017 attendee, and is subject to the usual banter and abuse that inclusion on the tour brings.

We can now look forward to his wit, charm and interesting anecdotes, as we do every year without actually witnessing any of it.

Thanks Paula - we really would have missed him.

**Mallorca 2017 Update....**

*February 25, 2017*



The big news this year of course, is the fact that both Neil and Dave W cannot join us. Neil has a busy few months planned in his 50th Birthday year, including celebratory holidays and also his daughter's wedding, which means unfortunately the THUGS trip needs to take a back seat. Dave has his wife's birthday to attend during our time in Mallorca, and understandably cannot miss it.

Both will be missed, particularly so in Neil's case due to the long length of time he has been coming on the trip.

In better news, Ronan O'Brien will be achieving 'Full Member' status by joining the Mallorca tour this year. A veteran of many June Cups and social activities, Ronan is known by all, and will be a welcome addition to the tour, and will no doubt thoroughly enjoy himself.

We now have a member making his first THUGS trip to Mallorca, four courses that are new to another member, and the possibility of finding a new restaurant to add to the fantastic ones we've discovered over the past twenty years.

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All the courses have confirmed our reservations, with Son Muntaner, Santa Ponca, Maioris and Son Antem East replacing Andratx, Son Termens, Puntiro and Bendinat as per our rotation agreement. Dates and times are on the [Competitions](https://www.thugsgolf.co.uk/competitions) page.

We also have our flight details. We have struggled this year to find suitable times, and have reluctantly put our faith in Monarch once more.

Many of our members will recall the horrendous way we were treated during severe delays in 2009 and 2012, and cannot forgive the company. However we were forced to use Monarch for our return flight last year, which proceeded without incident, and the recent cash injection and board reshuffle at the Airline has by all accounts improved services, hopefully meaning their terrible reputation is a thing of the past.

The flight details are as follows:

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**Sunday 1st Oct 2017**

Flight ZB534 Departs MAN 16.00 arriving at PMI 19.45.

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**Sunday 8th Oct 2017**

Flight ZB535 Departs PMI 20.35 arriving at MAN 22.20.

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We have been allocated 23Kgs of Hold Luggage per person, plus one item of Hand Luggage to a maximum of 10Kgs (Usual size restrictions apply).

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