



Blind Golf Scotland

The driving force behind blind golf in Scotland since 1982

Meet John

A BGS member since 2000. Winner of both Matchplay and Strokeplay Championships.



“It was a great thrill and honour to represent Scotland in the Internationals and experience the pressure of the first tee and the closing holes of a team match”.

John

John was 26 when the centre vision in his left eye became obscured – the same had happened to his right eye previously – and he was registered blind.

He had a reasonable amount of peripheral vision but could not make out detail nor read eyesight test cards. With care, he could walk around on his own using peripheral vision. No longer able to drive and, as an addictive reader and English teacher, John was also now unable to read for pleasure. In the last few years audio books have become a great pleasure and he shares this interest with other Blind Golf members.

John was teaching secondary school English and, after a month or so of greatly supported adjustment, was able to continue teaching. The school and education authority were great and, above all, his wife was a source of strength. John’s mother read aloud and recorded on tape whole novels that John was teaching and, in time, he evolved a teaching style that worked for him and made students more involved and more effective in their own learning. Determined to continue his career in education, John was able to progress his role at several secondary schools.

Having started golf as a boy and become a successful club golfer, John gave up golf when his sight deteriorated and he could no longer play as he wanted. Instead, he took up dinghy sailing (which can be a matter of balance and feel) and qualified as an

RYA instructor. He only took up golf again when a colleague fancied trying it and John realised that, with a bit of help spotting the ball, he could manage a game.

The golf bug struck again, albeit with a different approach, and John joined a golf club and sold the boat. He became involved with the golf club up to the role of Captain. The members were incredibly helpful and they always watched the ball for John in any competition. A considerable circle of friendship has come with golf.

John became aware of BGS (then known as SBGS) in the 1990s but could only play a few events a year because of work. Upon retirement, he was able to play in many more events, qualifying for the international team and experiencing the pleasures and pressures of the Auld Enemies Cup matches with England and Wales. The golfers get to know each other (and themselves) very well, especially when they are announced on the first tee and have to hit shots or hole puts in front of spectators, and when it comes down to winning or saving a match.

“Lasting friendships are formed, and blind golf offers a wide network of friendship and support. This is borne out in my thoughts on the reasons I have enjoyed golf so much over the years. The reasons are as follows:

- 1. The people I have met through golf and the friendships that have developed*
- 2. The wonderful places it has taken me*
- 3. The occasional physical pleasure of hitting a good shot*
- 4. The chance, with the help of the handicap system, to enjoy real competition”.*

John