



CEO Report 2025

Club Support

As the year ends, I'd like to reflect on what BB&O Golf have worked on and achieved over the last twelve months.

At our AGM in March, we committed to continue supporting grass roots junior golf with our surplus funds. England Golf informed us that they were soon to launch a Junior Organisers Guide and develop England Golf Junior Hubs that clubs could sign up for. Whilst not entirely clear what this would look like, we promised to support the launch and help clubs who showed a desire to become a Hub Centre.

It wouldn't be until July that England Golf launched the program, but we wrote to all of our club's Junior Organisers and arranged for England Golf to present the "Junior Pathway" in person at Gerrards Golf Club on 15th September. We followed this up by pledging a £1,000 grant to any BB&O club that started the sign-up process. We paid our first grant to Badgemore Park in November and I'm hoping to have at least 15 BB&O clubs signed up before the start of our 2026 season.

We continued to support Golf Sixes and paid £600 to the 13 BB&O Clubs that entered a team. Both this and the England Golf Hub initiative demonstrate our desire to help clubs who have a mechanism within them to arrange junior teams and events. Whilst we understand that junior participation at clubs need much more work and oversight than adult golf, the clubs who have volunteers assigned to promote junior membership activities are best positioned to grow the game at junior level and we are happy to support that "big picture thinking".

We also financed five other junior grass roots coaching programs, supported individual junior club requests, paid for the Oxfordshire Junior League Finals and sponsored the trophies for the Bert Yates and Welham West junior prizes.

In 2026 we will re-double our efforts to support clubs who try to increase junior participation. Junior membership within BB&O has grown by 59% in the three years that we've been supporting junior initiatives but participation at club level by these young golfers is still underwhelming. All too often I hear of high junior membership numbers but low engagement with competitive golf. I strongly believe that we must find a format of engagement that excites young golfers, especially those who just play for fun. Matchplay events against other clubs, or simply between different teams within their own club may well be the answer and we are ready to support any initiative that works to bring young people together on the golf course.

With the ever-growing complexity of the World Handicapping System, we continue to help clubs with queries, training and everyday support. Our office deals with hundreds of questions via email and telephone and we continue to visit clubs whenever they request one-on-one training sessions. In February we invited all of our clubs along to a WHS Workshop delivered by the England Golf Team. My team are proud of the support we give in this area and will help with everything from simple calculation queries to complex disciplinary hearings.

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In February we also organised an R&A Rules School for Level 2 Referees. We are very fortunate to have Millie work for BB&O, and her Level 3 experience allows us to train referees both at county and club level. She is also known for running the odd Rules Evening at quieter times!

Our Course Rating Teams have kept up to date with their rating rotation and completed new ratings for 10 of our courses. In addition, we also carried out lots of “extra tee” ratings and other, smaller, rating work. We now have 3 Lead Raters and a further 4 assistants in training. We are the envy of most other counties! We continue to try and educate clubs and Managers on this difficult subject and arranged for our Lead Rater to deliver a workshop at our AGM in March.



Events

If we are to create an environment in which talented young athletes can fulfil their potential, it's essential that we provide enough quality opportunities for them to compete against their peers. In America the AGJA Junior Tour and then the collegiate system ensures a steady pipeline of “tour ready” golfers. In this country, it's the counties who look to nurture young golfers who have set their mind on a career within the game. Clubs, quite rightly, look after their membership, which is made up pretty much entirely of mid to higher handicap golfers. Without county tournaments scratch golfers or better would have to rely on national events and invariably struggle without experience at county level. Why is this important? Every other nation has a performance pathway, and we benefit from enjoying watching our home-grown talent play on the world stage. Without the pathway there would be no English players at Augusta, the Ryder Cup would be pretty dull to watch, and the likes of Tommy Fleetwood, Matt Fitzpatrick and Tyrell Hatton would be playing football for Manchester United.....or worse.... Liverpool! Our primary goal is to give the very best young golfers at your club the opportunity to make the club proud.

We recently re-branded our Development and Futures Tour which was granted DP World Tour Development Program status for 2025. Every one of our 7 Futures Tour events were fully subscribed and the young talent on show in our Development Tour was out of this world. Our most successful junior tour season ever was capped off in our final event where the three order of merit winners were crowned and given prizes donated by our partners at Titleist.

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Nearly all our Championships boasted full fields and our Amateur Championship, a WAGR event, was won for the second year running by Ed Davis of Studley Wood Golf Club. Not only is every event heavily subsidised by BB&O, but we pride ourselves on offering the highest facility fee offered by counties and genuinely bringing a “big event” feel to clubs who support us by hosting county competitions. In total, we provided 5 Development Tour events, 7 Futures Tour events, 5 County Championships, 2 Trophies and 2 team events plus the ever-popular Hillman Trophy.



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County Teams

Part and parcel of supporting players as they develop is team golf. Competing in county leagues forces us to create squads which, in turn, develop relationships between players acting as a catalyst for the honing of competitive natures. We often find that players progress in small groups when both competing and training together.

We are forever making changes to our coaching programs, and this year took further steps to track data which allows us to work more individually with our very best players. Through a combination of squad days, educational days, and individual sessions we worked with a total of 36 boys within our junior squads. We also employed a part-time Junior Talent Development Manager to ensure effective communication lines between player, coach and Team Manager. In our men's team, the very best of our talent returned from their respective colleges in America to compete for us. We ensure that we financially support their personal amateur careers and do our very best to give them every opportunity to represent England at a national level.

We had success at Under 16 level where BB&O won the northern league only to be beaten in the South East Group Finals. Our Under 18s went one better (as did our Seniors) and were champions of the South East Region.

Over ten rounds of golf our Men's Team missed out by a shot in the National Six Man Qualifier.

Individual Performances

We had two past squad members qualify for the Challenge Tour (John Gough and David Langley) and one qualify for the Alps Tour (Archie Smith). John Gough only missed his DP World Tour card by a shot! Eddie Pepperel re-gained his DP World Tour Card, Tyrell Hatton played brilliantly in the Ryder Cup, and Luke Donald was magnificent again.

Summary

With men's membership up by 1.3% and boys' membership by 15.9% in 2025, a healthy bank balance and board members who are committed and progressive, BB&O are perfectly situated to continue to develop and improve their service to amateur competitive golf.

We constantly liaise with England Golf and hope to increase our educational offerings to clubs in the future. We plan to host workshops on sustainability, WHS, and safeguarding as well as service the everyday need of clubs.

We continue to liaise with the Women's Associations in the hope of unifying men's and women's golf administration within BB&O and ensure that all development budgets are spent on both boys' and girls' golf.

We are already well into planning our 2026 season and look forward to more success, both locally and nationally.



We are aware of the many sporting bodies that work within the golfing arena and so concentrate on activities that might not ordinarily happen without BB&O Golf

- Course Ratings to USGA standards.
- WHS and Rules Support for BB&O Clubs
- Amateur Competitive Golf Governance for BB&O Clubs
- Local Elite Amateur Tournaments
- Local Junior Pathway Tours
- County Team Management and Coaching.

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