

Stalham 2021 April update

As the days lengthen and spring temperatures start to rise, a summer programme for Stalham Farmers' Club is being planned.

First, an early evening walking tour of an award-winning north Norfolk farm is planned for Tuesday, July 6. Although attendance may be limited and details cannot be confirmed at this stage because of Covid-19, please make a note in your diary. It is also hoped to arrange the annual clay pigeon shoot against Holt & District Farmers' Club, probably again in early July.

Family affair

In what has been an extraordinary year and for the first time, the inter-club award for the supreme sample of malting barley was shared between Stalham and Holt Clubs. Stalham's chairman, Chris Borrett, explained that Edward De Feyter, of C H Callow, of East Ruston, won the barley championship with a sample of Flagon. His father, Graham, of Edingthorpe, entered a similar Flagon sample from Holt – so there was no contest between father and son and the club honours are even.

Crop competitions

As the longest beet campaign in British Sugar's history nears completion, it is also hoped to report the results of the Cantley Cup for best overall performance by a member after the factory slices out on or after Monday, April 12.

As one of the club's longest-serving judges has announced his retirement, it is fitting to announce the results of the club's whole-crop beet competition.

Ken Matthews, who joined Stalham Farmers' Club in 1967 and has been the mainstay of beet judging for the past 54 years, has decided to stand down. A combination, he says of old age and the challenging of walking through hundreds of acres of beet, has forced his reluctant retirement. The club sends best wishes for his retirement.

Despite the various Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns, it was possible to judge crops across a large spread of east Norfolk including one 110-acre (44ha) field and another 70-acre (28ha) block in early October. It was not possible because of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions to judge the best two-acre beet competition. My apologies.

Whole crop beet cup

The winner cup – Robert Cook, of Boundary Farm, Ingham. The runner-up was Milligen McLeod, of East Ruston, and in third place, LF Papworth, of Felmingham with a field at Goulders Farm. Two points split the top three crops.

Potato Cup

Another long-standing judge, Denis Walsh, ran his experienced eye over a fascinating selection of crops.

The winner was the club's president, Thomas Love, with a crop of Innovator, grown by Brumstead Church and entered by his son William.

The runner-up was a field of Desiree grown by William Sands, also at Brumstead, and in third place, another crop of Innovator, grown for Lamb Weston by Robin Baines at Church Farm, Tunstead.

The grain competition was also judged.

Barley – 1 C H Callow, Edward De Feyter, East Ruston (Flagon); 2 Milligen McLeod, East Ruston (Choice); 3 Andrew Alston, Catfield (Laureate).

Wheat – 1 Milligen McLeod; 2 LF Papworth; 3 B R Ellis & Son, Hickling.

A further update will be circulated with details.

Meanwhile, please feel free to contact the secretary – michaelbpollitt@btinternet.com or telephone 01603 486997.