

The Captain's Newsletter From Alistair Low

Only six weeks to go before my year as your Captain comes to a close. It has been a fascinating 12 months and I will share some highlights with you in the November Newsletter.

A good response to our Survey, thank you. And, for those members who have not completed it, I urge you to do so. Your comments are valuable and important as we plan for the future. When the Surveys have been collated we will publish the results.

Challenges continue to face the Club including an ageing membership, the general decline in the appeal of golf to younger people, an old and dilapidated clubhouse in desperate need of refurbishment, as well as health and safety issues on some of our boundaries, an ancient sprinkler system, water storage problems, and trying to maintain our course using worn-out equipment.

We face competition from local golf courses and we have to meet the ever-increasing expectations of a modern, consumer-driven population. Another challenge: deciding what should be tackled first. Currently we are working through a business plan intended to improve all areas and we want you, our members, on the journey with us. Your support is paramount which is why we value and need your input.

After a long, laborious process, the new, 30-year lease between the Great Yarmouth Racecourse Ltd., and the Club's trustees was officially completed on 12th October, 2017. Our future is now "officially secure." The rent reduction will allow us to make further investment maintaining the course.

By the end of 2017 the Club will be in a much better place financially as a result of the committee's hard work and the backing from members. Thank you is due to everyone. A word of caution – as Tim continues to stress, we are not out of the woods yet – but I am confident our proactive approach will stand us in good stead even if some of our policies are not universally popular.

The Course

The course has recovered quickly following the September maintenance work. A recent visit to the course by Dan Murphy, editor of the National Club Golfer, produced very favorable comments. He wrote: "Great Yarmouth and Caister is

pure links golf – complete with sleepered bunkers and some delightful green sites. Like all links courses, Great Yarmouth gives and it takes.” He nominated the 11th hole his favourite: “It flows beautifully and the flat green is situated at the foot of some more wild duneland.” He had a birdie there using a driver and a chasing 4-iron. To read the whole article Google “Great Yarmouth and Caister Golf Club in National Golf Club Golfer”.



Figure 1 Picture taken by Dan Murphy

As part of our ongoing effort to communicate news about course works and development, here is a preview: the green staff team will increase by one; more gorse will be removed; the 60K over-seeding programme begun two years ago will continue; re-laying of paths will resume and include holes 9, 11, 12, 13, and 16. As you know, this work has been generously donated by Bateman Ground Works Ltd. We are forever indebted to Richard Bateman.

A new TORO fairway mower will soon be part of our greens keeping equipment and a greens mower will be replaced in May.



This update gives you an idea of what lies ahead. I know it is Richard Bateman's intention to continue this practice of letting you know about work on the course in his monthly Newsletter.

Flags

Lenny Johnson, one of our former captains and senior statesman at the Club, has agreed to sponsor a new Club flag for the main flag pole. We are grateful to Lenny.

A number of the Friday Boys, among others, have described the flags on the pins as grubby. In the past, the flags were sponsored by SPS through Fred Rogers, but Fred has now retired. New flags have been ordered and we hope we can get as many members as possible to sponsor a pin flag at £10 each. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the main notice board in the foyer. Tim Starbuck has agreed to sponsor one flag, and I have agreed to sponsor the second, Sonia Bensly has sponsored 3 flags and Andy Coleman has sponsored one. A total of 54 flags are on order in red, yellow and white (18 of each).

Men's Competitions

The HKB Wiltshire's summer series has come to an end. The winner of the final is Darren Ward with 38 points from Tom Gilbert, who lost on countback. Thain Hacon was third – he just pipped Roy Smith into fourth place as both had 37 points.

The very competitive race to Royal Lytham was won by James Foreman. A big thank you to all competitors throughout the summer and special thanks to Dave Kightley, the administrator. The winter series will begin shortly and because of the popularity of the order of merit, we are going to run one in conjunction with the winter series.

Jason Pratt won the popular Jack Chase Bogey beating the course five up. Anthony Adams lifted the Professional Salver with 37 points, and the seniors' Dave Futter Bowl was won by Mike Hall with 36 points.

Ladies' Competitions

Lady Captain's Charity Day
Tuesday 10th October 2017

Thirty players took part in this mixed competition to raise money for Jean's chosen charity – Norfolk Lowland Search and Rescue. Jean has been a member of the team for 15 years and used her captaincy to raise money to buy specific items of equipment that team leaders carry when out on a search.

Format of the competition was a waltz, which is familiar to the ladies, but more novel for the men. Teams of 3 recorded their stableford scores with one score to count on the first hole, 2 on the second and all 3 on the third. This rotation then continued for the remaining 15 holes. The overall winners were Josh Brooks, John Richardson and Brian Johnson, with 82 points. Second were Rita Bleasdale, Joan Chatten and Liz Robinson, close behind with 80 points.

All prizes were donated with several coming from local businesses. £393.00 was raised on the day for the search team. Many thanks to all who played or donated prizes.



Ladies vs Seniors for the Revens Trophy
Friday 13th October 2017

The Revens Trophy is played annually over two legs, one in the spring and the other in the autumn. Ten pairs competed in this greensomes competition. Unfortunately, the ladies were one team member short and so recruited ‘Stephanie’ Greatrex to play alongside Rita Bleasdale. The ladies emerged as the winners for 2017 winning the second leg 3½ to 1½. Well done to all who took part.

Social Scene

Don’t forget to sign up for the Captain’s Dinner Dance on 25th November at The Imperial Hotel. Tickets are still available and can be booked at the club bar.

Another quiz night is planned for 17th November, and the Christmas Party Night is scheduled for 16th December featuring a three-course dinner and dancing to DJ Ross.

Until next time, thanks for taking time to read the Club Newsletter.