



## **Communications Group**

*(On behalf of the Management Committee and Club Members)*

### **July/August 2020 Newsletter**

**Dear Members**

*Slowly but surely we are returning to a new normality, whilst being very cautious about health and safety. We are able to play golf in fourballs, and the booking system is allowing a large number of members to play regularly, and enable visitors to come in healthy numbers on a pay and play basis. There have been several in-house competitions, and one large Pro-Am tournament, and now the Clubhouse bar is open. Although we cannot start serving food in the Clubhouse yet, the arrangements for pre-ordering food and drinks from the Half-Way House seem to be popular and successful*

***Membership of the Club has grown during the last few months, which is great. The £20 bonus on each member's bar card who paid their subs by 1<sup>st</sup> April, which will be there in mid-August, is a small mark of our gratitude for the loyalty of members.***

#### **On the Course**

- ***All the greens staff are back working, and the programme of work – spraying fairways, (including iron spray during the drought period), and greens maintenance – is on target.***
- ***N.B. We are constantly encouraging members and visitors to keep to paths with their trolleys and buggies, to prevent wear around vulnerable areas such as the bunker and greens. Ropes round some of these areas will be re-introduced.***

- ***We urge all players to constantly repair all their pitch marks on the greens, and all their divots on the tees and fairways, as well as club-raking the bunkers after playing out. That way we will all maintain the high quality of the course.***
- ***Longer term, we are looking at improving the irrigation system, whilst the September programme of coring and hollow tining the greens will be firmed up.***
- ***Whilst the machinery and equipment stock has been fully serviced, we need to invest in some more, as far as costs allow, not least with the replacing of equipment stolen in the break-in some months ago.***
- ***The new trees planted along the side of the 10<sup>th</sup> fairway are thriving, and we will identify and mark, with stakes or bands, which ones golfers can get relief from.***
- ***We are in the process of marking out and installing new tee areas for Junior players, so members will notice many fairways with small areas marked out for this.***
- ***As ever, we encourage members to contact us and share ideas and suggestions for the course and Club. Thank you to those members who have commented on both the fine progress made on the course, and issues such as the temporary flag poles.***
- ***We have responded to those suggestions, so now all flag-poles have had the hooks removed and foam bases placed at the bottom of the holes, to make putting and retrieving easier and safer.***
- ***Fringes round the greens have been given a closer cut so that putting onto the greens is easier, and the sprinkler head areas have been trimmed to be more visible. Green speeds have been cut to run at 10.5.***
- ***We will respond to all issues and suggestions through the Greens Sub-Committee.***

### **Competitions**

- ***In-house competitions have resumed from mid-June, with regular Stableford and Medal events for both Ladies and Men.***

*Winners of Ladies events have been Mary Saddington, Barbara Burton, Sue Boyes, Bryany Crossland, Barbara West, Ros Waterhouse, Keran Hutchinson, Kim Vardy, Pat Eccleshall, June Palmer and Karen Pollard. For the Mens' Competitions, winners have been Owen Rafferty, Andrew Cooke, Ben Marro, Stephen Turner, Gary Smart, Matthew Peacock, Jason Treloar, Howard Cooper and Barry Cockburn.*

- *On 29<sup>th</sup> June, 164 players from across Britain and beyond took part in the Pro-Am Competition held at Retford. Although the Clubhouse was still closed, the visitors were very complimentary about the quality of the course. There were three professional golfers who, in tough, wet conditions, achieved scores of 6 under par, including our own James Freeman, who also eagled the 18<sup>th</sup>.*

### **Membership**

*It is pleasing to report that, for the first time in several years, the membership is growing. We are pleased to give a special welcome to more than 45 new members in the last two months and it's particularly encouraging that most of these are at the younger end of the age profile.*

*If any members have any difficulty in finding groups to play with then please see Craig who will be only too happy to assist.*

### **Booking System**

*We are being instructed by EGU to maintain the present booking system for the foreseeable future. As with all things this will be liked by some and not others. We must also point out that this is only free until the 31st December, and thereafter the Club would have to pay for it.*

*One major downside of the system is that Craig and Liam have been very accommodating, and the Pro's Shop has been open 12 hours daily. Some of this time Liam has covered on a voluntary basis to ensure we collect green fees, but this is not sustainable in the long term.*

*From the beginning of August the Pro's Shop will close at 5.30pm; this will still give time for members who don't have Internet access to ring and book a tee time.*

## **Club House and Social Events**

- ***The Club House was reopened on the 4th July, in line with government guidelines, and this now includes toilets and lockers – a relief to many!***
- ***At this stage service is limited to drinks only and it's not possible to hold any social events. It's understandable that some members may be reluctant to use this facility until the risks have further subsided. However, this does mean that for several days in the week the bar runs at a loss.***
- ***All drinks in the Clubhouse attract a 15% discount.***
- ***Additionally, the extra £20 offered to members, who paid this year's subs by 1<sup>st</sup> April, will be credited to bar cards by the middle of August.***
- ***Please ensure that you operate social distancing and respect the safety of the staff.***
- ***In the Professional's shop, business and banter have been brisk, whilst maintaining strict distancing and safety measures. Since this is a shop, we will also need to introduce the regulatory wearing of face masks, from 24<sup>th</sup> July.***
- ***The 200 Club has continued to operate. The monthly winner gets £80, and those have been (sorry to be formal here) Mr R Hill (March), Mr S. Booth (April), Mr J. Bowles (May), Mr D Moore (June).***
- ***On 16<sup>th</sup> July, the Captains presented their 2019-20 Charities moneys to the organisations chosen. Dave Stirling donated £2695 for St Giles School in Retford, which was received by Lin Tongue. Helen Dean donated a similar amount to Pancreatic Cancer UK, received on their behalf by Ted Eccleshall. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to***

**these magnificent sums.**



- **Club Centenary.** As members will know, we will try to carry forward into 2021 the events planned for 2020. Similarly, the Captains and Vice Captains will also carry over into 2021. To raise interest and awareness of the Club, we have recently published, in *Retford Life* and the *Retford Times*, articles about the history and growth of the Club, which we hope members will find interesting. We have attached the article below.

## **Retford Golf Club – 100 Years Old**

**For Retford Golf Club, 2020 is a landmark year – their Centenary.**

**Major plans to celebrate this high spot have obviously been hit hard by the Covid 19 pandemic. Health and safety are the first priority, so all celebration events have been postponed by the Golf Club, with the intention to make 2021 their celebration year.**

**The Club was founded in 1920 on 38 acres of land leased from Sir Albert Whitaker Bart, CBE, of Babworth Hall. Then there were only 6 holes; anyone wanting to play 18 holes had to go round 3 times! These holes were designed by Tom Williamson, one of the leading course designers in the UK, who also designed Coxmoor, near Mansfield.**

***In those early days, membership was 100 gents and 67 ladies – that was a very progressive ratio then, and even now would be.***

***The Club bought more land during the late 1940s and 1950s, and in 1958 more holes were opened by Sir Stuart Goodwin, and that completed the first 9 holes of the course.***



***During this era, of tweedy plus-fours and hickory shafted clubs, the Club attracted a variety of guests, including Bing Crosby.***

***During the 1970s and 1980s there were plans to expand the course, but nothing came of those plans until, in 1990, a further 9 holes were opened, to mark the growth into a full 18 holes course. The new land was mainly to the north of the main Sheffield to Lincoln railway line, and the new course was opened by Major Sir James Whitaker Bart – an interesting continuity with the opening of the first 6 holes 70 years early, opened by Sir James' grandfather.***

***At this point, the sport was very popular, and Retford Golf Club had nearly 700 members, with 504 gents, 116 ladies and 75 juniors.***

***The Clubhouse then was a single storey wooden building just off Brecks Road, but by 2001, a new Clubhouse was opened, by Sir Bob Wilson, the international goalkeeper.***



***Two storeys, brick built, and with full catering facilities, the new Clubhouse has hosted golfing and social events since then. Looking ahead to 2021, the Club expect to have a wide range of celebrations, including a “Hickory Event”, a display by the world champion Trick shot golfer, and there will be a full programme announced nearer the time.***

***We will keep members posted of any developments, as we look forward to returning to some form of normality.***

***Very best wishes from  
The Communications Group (on behalf of the Management Committee)***