

Final



Forrester Park Golf Club – Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 30th September 2020 at 20:00 via Zoom

Attendees:

Philip Yearling – Vice Captain (PY)
Paul Kelly – Incoming Captain (PK)
Steve Barraclough – VETS Captain (SB)
Barbara Luxford – Ladies Captain (BL)
Judy Podd – Incoming Ladies Captain (JP)
Jeannine Beckwith – Secretary (JB)
Peter Waknell – Treasurer (PW)
Reg Brunt – Junior Section (RB)
Tim Forrester-Muir – Proprietor (TFM)
Nick Swanson – Green Keeper (NS)

Apologies: Phil Prior – Competition Secretary (PP), Martin Gunfield - member (MG)

Welcome and Introductions:

PY welcomed all committee members and attendees to the group.

Men's Section Captains Report:

PY addressed attendees explaining that when he was first asked to step in as Captain, he saw it as an honour and a privilege. His time in the roles has since proven that this was true. The club and membership have welcomed his family and friends and for that he is grateful. Whilst he is pleased he has done the year he wouldn't want to do it again!

PY expressed his thanks to the committee, PW and JB for their tireless support. DG, PP, KR, MG etc. He also wants to thank the bar staff who brilliantly supported the big functions, working extra hours, seeing to everyone's needs.

He would like to thank SB and BL, who were a shoulder to cry on and who offered advice and help throughout.

Thanks go to Leo, for the frequent Friday night phone calls, his ongoing help was much appreciated.

This year's charity was Great Ormond's Streets and despite the challenges of going in and out of lockdown we managed to range approximately £6000 – everyone's generosity has been overwhelming and PY will be proud to present the money to such a great cause.

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Dale Whitnell has supported both PY's and KR's charities this year by contributing £5 for every birdie and £10 for every eagle whilst playing on tour. The final sums to be confirmed.

During lockdown PY realised he was a poor golfer! However, it made him realise that it wasn't the golf he missed, but the social side of golf and this had reinforced to him how accepted his family been in the club. It is clear that many people remain at this club because of the social side and because of the people. This made him even prouder to be Captain.

Lastly, the Club is getting a fantastic new Captain, one with a great temperament on the golf course, a good man and one who will look after the club as Captain.

Thank you all.

Vet's Section Captains Report:

Copied from SB's report presented to the VET's Committee and also presented at the All Section AGM:

Before I start my golf report as the Vets Captain, I just want to pause a moment for us to take a step back and think of those who have departed our fairways over the course of this past year, whether as a result of the Covid pandemic or other causes. Those who come to mind are: Nigel Howchin, Eric Barker, Ray Quy and Vivien Cornwell. I know that there are others that were near and dear to you, our deepest sympathies and condolences on your loss.

Reflecting on Golf and the Veterans Section during the last 12 months, it wasn't an easy start, we managed to get the Captain's drive in completed, along with a couple of months of golf in damp conditions, with only a couple of competitions having to be cancelled due to the weather conditions.

In November, we, along with every other golfer in the world, adopted the World Handicap System, I think I can say that getting to grip with the new handicap system has been a challenge for some of us. I wouldn't say that all of us totally understand the new system, but slowly but surely, we are getting there... I'm happy to give lessons to those who find the WHS, HowDidIDo and MyEngland Golf challenging,

In late December, due to Covid, we were closed down again, though we were kept entertained by the daily "Smiles" email from Alan, and some fantasy golf from Peter – thank you gentlemen.

Thinking back, I'm glad that we were closed in January, February and March, as the weather conditions were horrendous, and I'd hate to see the condition of the course today, had the course been open during that time, with hundreds of golfers yomping their way through the mud. As it is, it's nice to see those areas around the greens that would normally be bare, compacted earth, actually having some grass on them as we come to Autumn.

In the Spring, some normality returned to our golf – yes, our golf was just as bad as it was before the lockdown, but at least we were allowed out of our houses and onto the course, in a controlled, socially distanced manner, where we were subjected to the usual cries of "bandit", "what handicap are you playing off.." etc.

As the social distancing restrictions were lifted, our annual programme of interclub friendlies was started. We started well, with a win, but that track record was short lived, until recently, when I think we scored our 2nd win. To be honest, although it's nice to win, it really is all about taking part in these interclub matches, they are great fun with plenty of banter and I thank all of you who took part and contributed to the success of these matches.

I want to dedicate the next section of my annual report to the "thank you's". A number of events were cancelled this year, but that did not stop the Vets from making significant contributions the Captain's Charity – The Alzheimer's Society – The Fun Day was really well supported, raising over £1000 on the day, so a big thank you to those who supported, donated prizes and bought the raffle tickets, and to Mike, Barry, Ian and families for organising the day.

A special thankyou to Trevor MacDonald for organising the Past Captains Competition – Trevor told me that I could host and play in the Competition, but I was not allowed to win as I wasn't a "Past Captain" yet..... Trevor, please accept this framed photograph of the 19 captains on the day.

It's time for me to thank the Committee, who do a huge amount of work to make the Forrester Park Vest section run so smoothly.

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Harry, for being General Secretary for the past 7 years, keeping us all on the straight and narrow. Harry will step down as General Secretary, and will be “replaced” if that’s the right word, by Ian Smith.

Alan, for being our Almoner, keeping track of our members health, phoning them and their families on a regular basis, offering help and support.

Barry, yes Barry.. for getting the trophy’s engraved, purchasing the winners mementos for our “major” competitions and getting the best deals on birdie balls, wine – in fact anything that he buys...

Ian, our Past Captain, for guiding and supporting me through the duties of being a Captain, and for volunteering to take over from Harry as General Secretary.

Mike, for being there, supporting and helping to get things done.

Ron, how do I start to thank Ron our Competition Secretary for all the work that he carries out on our behalf. From battling with BRS, to bringing the “tick sheets” back to life, to checking every handicap on a Tuesday night before our Wednesday Competition – Thank You. And if anyone still does not know how the tick sheets operate, please stay behind afterwards for a lesson.

And last, but in no means least, to Malcolm “Two Jobs” Harlow, our Treasurer who introduced us all to online banking, created our Competition Account for our entry fees, and has been very quick at reimbursing me for the prizes that I bought...

So gentlemen, thank you for your support and I wish Malcom a great year as your new Captain.

Ladies’ Section Captains Report:

Copied from BL’s report presented to the Ladies’ Committee and also presented at the All Section AGM:

Well I finally come to the end of my term as captain. I have certainly had a difficult and interesting two years, but thankfully I have had great support from the ladies committee and sections overall. Although the ladies are only a relatively small section we managed to raise over £2500 in the last years for my charity. So thank you for your kind donations. We enjoyed the usual inter section competitions. Against the men, vets and juniors. Playing two vets matches which resulted in one win each. The quad match was one by the men with the ladies a very respectable second, and finally. The simms bowl which was unfortunately cut short to 9 holes because of the weather and was declared an honourable draw. I have a few thank yous to make my fellow captain's Phil and Steve, Jeannine Beckwith golf secretary for their continued support throughout. To the 2 Mike's (manning and Yore), for turning up to each and every special day acting as starters and manning the hut for nibbles. To all the ladies who supplied the cakes, sausage rolls and other tasty nibbles for these events. Without your help and support we could not have made these a success. I would finally like to wish all the incoming captain's good luck for the next year. Thank you

Junior Section Update:

RB provided an update on the Juniors Section.

- Numbers are down following a peak at 21.
- Some are no longer juniors, some have left.
- Craig did promise not to take them with him to Five Lakes although he is still coaching them so there is still a risk they will go.
- County Competitions were curtailed this year.
- Saturday competitions continue and include summer knock outs, golfer of the year, junior with adults, trophy for the most improved golfer etc.
- Next week PY is presenting the trophies at the end of session event.
- We are desperate to get a pro to fill Craig’s shoes, someone who likes the juniors ideally! Someone who will bring the juniors on. Juniors are the future of this club.

PY wanted to say a massive thank you to RB for the work he tirelessly does with the Junior Section. There wouldn’t be a junior section without his efforts.

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Competition Report:

PP was unable to attend this years AGM but prepared the following report which was read out during the meeting on his behalf:

Apologise for my absence.

ANNUAL AGM COMPETITION REPORT 2020 / 2021

On the 4th October, the Captains year of Sunday morning competitions commenced, with the customary Drive in and Bees Trophy.

This was followed on subsequent weeks with October and November Medals plus two rounds of Winter League matches.

Until on the 5th November the golf course was closed due to covid.

Four weeks later, on the 2nd of December the course re-opened. Allowing a third round of Winter League matches and the annual Turkey drive, to be played.

But after only two weeks on 16th December, tier 3 and tier 4 restrictions were introduced, restricting play to only 2 ball competitions.

On the 4th of January, the golf course closed, and the Winter League competition was abandoned.

Twelve weeks of lockdown later, on the 4th of April, the course re-opened and has remained open. To date, 26 Sunday morning competitions have taken place, all attracting good support from the members.

Inter club competitions, Thorndon Cup, Leslie Wood, Norman Plum and Jubilee Cup all managed to proceed, albeit in a modified format. Teams were selected and some enjoyable matches ensued, but alias progress proved too difficult. My thanks, go to all the team Captains and team members for their excellent support.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Captain Phil, for all his hard work during this very difficult and challenging year.

I would also like to thank David Gillespie, for his help in the promotion of the Men's website and for the communication of competition information.

Treasurers Report:

The men's section treasurer report is available on the website and can also be accessed using the following link:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vRJFExmd6EMIZ-x6YivuvjRf_SEkV19qU_yT35H9a1HZAKYEU9AXBfdDF98FSX_fS6FvoyFTX_vbQ4e/pubhtml

Within this link you can view the current years accounts and a summary of the previous year.

PW updated to say:

- The section has a workable balance of £2700 which we don't really need by will keep an eye on it.
- The online Christmas Raffle was a success
- The cashless system is also working well, however, members are encouraged to check your own balances and top up with sufficient funds to cover forthcoming competitions.
- Thanks for Clive Warby for auditing the accounts last year. This was particularly difficult due to the cashless system but this remains to preferred approach for payments.
- Annual Competition funds still need to be paid out.
- The 200 club sadly came to an end this year. The clearing off of these accounts was a challenge.
- We must acknowledge the sad and recent loss of Vivien. Vivien did so much for the club including running the 200 club for a number of years. She will be sadly missed.

Finally, PW is looking forward to next year, which will likely be my last year as Treasurer.

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FPGC Presentation:

NS, Green Keeper, introduced himself and gave a brief summary of his background, explaining that he is currently working part time, hoping to go full time in the future.

Whilst clearly new to the club NS explained his plans for the golf course in the coming months:

- Pop up irrigation to tees, the plans to treat them more like greens next year.
- Fairway work to help with drainage.
- Bunkers: removal of the bunker on the left of the 7th green; edging and weeding, raking (limited resource but there is a desire to improve them); dig and unblock the bunkers prone to flooding.
- Greens: 6 to 8 weeks aeration process (spike/split aeration to minimise disruption to play)
- strimming benches, improving ball washers, uncovering 150 yard markers, repaint signs etc.
- Tee Markers will be moved twice a week to reduce damage.

Action: BL noted that markers need to remain the same between Saturdays and Tuesdays for ladies' competitions.

- Roping off areas to minimise damage to greens over the winter period.

Next Year we hope there will be chances to add our own touches, but this winter will focus on irrigation and basic improvements.

Action: SB offered Vets help with big jobs (irrigation) if needed. NS asked to approach Captains if help required.

Question: When will the trees lopped on 2nd, 10th and 11th be removed – NS confirmed that someone was coming to remove.

Question: Tee Boxes – Rabbit and Mole holes – what is the plan to manage? NS confirmed that there was a plan to rebuild the tee boxes but has said that if we treat as greens, we can top dress and keep level.

Question: Leather Jackets – plan to monitor and act before they become an issue? NS confirmed that the sheet method used worked and will plan to use them again. NS also noted that the worm casts were getting a bit serious and looking to get something down for them.

Action: NS would like to get a box of pitch repairers to put with the scorecards to encourage people to repair pitch marks.

Question: Beach Hedges at the back of the 7th Greens looks dreadful – is there a more sympathetic way to cut back in future? NS confirmed they can look to do by hand in future – will look at.

The Committee welcomed and thanked NS.

TFM then presented about wider Club matters:

TFM thanked PY and Paul Beckwith for a fantastic job over the last 2 difficult years. He also thanked BL who has covered for 2 years and SB and Ian Smith.

Thanks also go to staff past and present.

TFM confirmed the following:

- By spring they hope to have appointed a new head green keeper.
- New greens mowers being purchased.
- There are plans to improve watering, feeding etc.
- A new golf professional is coming.
- Staff update provided. There have been difficulties over the last 18 months with staffing supply.
- The hope is that in the coming weeks services can start to return to normal (by end 2021)
- Confirmed that the business is not up for sale. However, TFM notes he is not getting any younger and needs to think about succession.
- To help improve comms a practical suggestion is to have a liaison officer from each section to help manage comms. Question: isn't that the point of the committee and Captain role?

Action: Question from TFM: do members know of anyone who can help while we are so short staffed?

- TFM thanks all for their support and confirmed that brighter years are to come!

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Question: Have been a member of 27 years and was proud to be here but recently the club has lost its atmosphere and heart. We are losing the clubhouse, there is no longer any incentive for people to attend events – what are the plans to change this?

Answer: TFM confirms that boards can be rehung on hooks so they can be removed if a bride wants them gone for a wedding, but he notes they are very short staffed! He accepts however there is a need to get it back to feeling like a golf club again although says it is balance because they need the weddings.

Action: Boards to be put back up – members can help if needed.

Question: will trophies also be returned to the clubhouse?

Answer: we will see!

Action: TFM to confirm if Trophies will be return to the club house.

Question: are trophies insured? They are left in an unlocked area which is not visible to staff.

Action: TFM to check if Trophies are insured.

Question: Provision for monitoring the course? We are seeing five balls playing, inappropriate clothing, trolleys on tee boxes – we need someone out checking/policing. Concerns that people aren't paying green fees. Also note green fees can't be paid in the clubhouse, only online.

Action: TFM confirmed that checking is being done but confirmed that it would be helpful to do more.

Question: plans for clubhouse opening times? Existing opening times make it difficult and has exacerbated the loss of atmosphere and heart in the club.

Answer: we want to open for longer but can't with such limited staff numbers. We are advertising. What staff we have will focus on weddings during wedding sessions because they need to be staffed up to 2am.

Question: Air Compressor – the club members paid for it on the condition to club maintained it – what is being done to honour that commitment?

Answer: TFM confirmed that John Bloomfield will look at it and we will go from there. Manual ones are illegal. The brush ones have no mechanics at all – TFM confirmed we may have to resort to that! The plan when fixed is to place the air compressor by the laurel hedge.

Question: Pull trolleys – with the club house closed before competitions start we have no access to the pull trolley handles if needed (i.e. if we arrive and batteries are flat), so currently we have to go home. Can the handles be left somewhere members can access them?

Answer: TFM confirmed that trolley handles can be left in the changing rooms.

Marquee Funds:

Members generously contributed to purchase a marquee for use by members during lockdown. £435 surplus funds were collected as part of that and we need as members to decide what to use those funds for. Options discussed during the meeting include:

- 18th hut repairs (PY confirmed he is happy to provide the floors boards for this)
- Signage (confirmed this should be funded by the club as part of course maintenance)
- Split between charities
- A Bench for which plaques can be added to honour lost members.
- Edging bricks by 1st (quite unstable and a Vet fell today – agreed this is part of course maintenance TFM aware and addressing).
- Direct access to a bar provision for members during weddings!
- Trees of Remembrance

DG to use the website to put options to a member vote.

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AOB

None

Date of next meeting:

Mens Section committee meeting 24th October 2021.

JB thanked all for their attendance.

Meeting closed.

	Action	Owner	Target Date
43	BL noted that markers need to remain the same between Saturdays and Tuesday for ladies competitions.	NS	Ongoing
44	SB offered Vets help with big jobs (irrigation) if needed. NS asked to approach Captains if help required.	NS	As needed.
45	NS would like to get a box of pitch repairers to put with the scorecards to encourage people to repair pitch marks.	TFM	End October 2021
46	Question from TFM: do members know of anyone who can help while we are so short staffed?	All	Ongoing
47	TFM confirmed that Boards to be put back up – members can help if needed. TFM to seek support if needed.	TFM	End October 2021
48	TFM to confirm if Trophies will be returned to the club house	TFM	End October 2021
49	TFM to check if Trophies are insured.	TFM	End October 2021
50	TFM confirmed that checking out on the course is being done but confirmed that it would be useful to do more.	TFM	Ongoing
51	TFM confirmed that John Bloomfield will look at the air compressor and we will go from there.	TFM	End October 2021.
52	TFM confirmed that trolley handles can be left in the changing rooms.	TFM	End October 2021.
53	Edging bricks by 1 st – quite unstable and a Vet feel today – agreed this is part of course maintenance TFM aware and addressing.	TFM	End October 2021.
54	DG to use the website to put options for Marquee funds to a member vote.	DG	ASAP