

WILTSHIRE GOLF NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2019



Welcome from the Chairman – County Cup Day

This year's County Cup day was hosted by Kingsdown Golf Club. Many thanks to the club and its members for making their course available and their hospitality on the day. The course was in great condition and as the Kingsdown team won the competition, we look forward to returning next year.



County Cup Winning team from Kingsdown – Robin Thornton, Jan Scott, Shane Lyon and Gary Gales Side

The purpose of the day is for the County to show its appreciation to the volunteers from our clubs and to give them the opportunity to feed back their views, particularly on how we are fulfilling our role in administering the game and supporting clubs and their members. At last year's County Cup Day, Delegates said we needed to improve our communication with Clubs. We have worked hard to do this.

We have published our first newsletter, improved our website and we now send Clubs copies of the agendas of our committees for comment and suggestions. Minutes of our meetings are on the county web site. County Cup day is one of three Members Forums we run each year. The first, which we held in Spring brings together Delegates and new Club, Ladies and Men's Captains. We will hold another Forum for Delegates in December to canvass Club's views on our plans for next year.

Our commitment to communication and to work for and with our member Clubs was one of the main reasons we were named England Golf County of the Year at EG's annual awards evening. This year we were also planning to have a "County/Club Volunteer of the Year" award on County Cup Day. The winners would have been our nominees for the England Golf

Volunteers of the year awards which are the highlight of their awards evening. It was very disappointing that we only received 2 entries from Clubs, which meant we were not able to proceed. If you think this is a good idea and we should try again next year, please tell your Club Delegate.

We endeavour to ensure that Club members are informed and involved in everything we do. However, as I said in our first Newsletter, we rely on Club Delegates and Managers to keep their members informed and feed back to us their comments and suggestions. It was slightly disappointing in the feedback session that there were still people who had not heard about some of our competitions. Although most events have been well supported, we have had to cancel two due to insufficient entry. I asked those at the meeting whether their clubs had notice boards dedicated to County news and had "County Corners" on their web sites. There are still some clubs which have neither. This is where the communications link with the County can break down. If you feel your Club is not providing you with sufficient information about the County – to which you pay an Affiliation fee - please speak to your club Delegate.

Ray Smith
Chair, Wiltshire Golf



Performance & Player Development Review

This season has been one of transition for all the Wiltshire teams, and as a consequence results have been mixed. However, signs for the future are good and the coaching review that has been carried out by Ali James and his team means that we can look forward to the future with huge confidence.

As demonstrated by the European team's victory at the Solheim Cup, golf is a game of incredibly fine margins, and this has been the story for all our squads this year. The Men's 1st team battled heroically over 6 days at Parkstone in South West Week and had a couple of putts dropped could easily have finished up in second place.

Likewise, the Ladies at Woodbury Park played fantastically well but missed out by inches on several occasions, and as a result their final placing did not reflect some wonderful performances from a young team. A lot of those players also form the basis of our Girls' Elite squad who came very close to winning their Inter-Counties week – indeed prior to their final match they were only half a point behind the eventual winners but came up agonisingly short.

Our Boy's and Senior Men's teams haven't fared as well as we would have hoped this year but results in competition tend to be cyclical and due to our coaching & performance assessment changes we are confident of success moving forwards.

Individually our players have had outstanding success. West Wilts Sarah Gee won the Ladies South West Championship at Filton with a magnificent 8 under par for 2 rounds, and Cumberwell's Joe Retford shot a final round 66 to win the SW Under 18 title at Burnham.

We have carried out a review of our approach to coaching. The review was conducted by Director Ali James, Head Coach John Jacobs, Ladies Captain (and Girl's Junior Organiser) Anne Ferguson and Boy's Junior Organiser Ian Welding. The main changes will be:

1. Girls & Ladies Elite squads will be merged into one. Selection criteria will be published and placed on the website soon.
2. There will be 3 additional Girl's Development squads based on age & ability
3. There will be an Elite Squad for Boys based on ability, a 15 and Under Squad and a 12 and under squad. Details of selection criteria for the Boy's squads will also be published on the website in the near future.

Operations

We are working very closely with our partners at England Golf to deliver the following programmes, and we will soon be publishing details of events to be held around the County:

1. Safeguarding & Safegolf
2. Revitalising Junior Golf in member clubs
3. Handicapping and the World Handicap System
4. Further Rules events and a Level 1 Rules Course

If you are interested in participation in any of the above events please contact Operations Director Scott Talbert at secretary@wiltshiregolf.org

We are also completely revolutionising the Wiltshire Golf County Card. For reasons of commercial sensitivity I cannot reveal exactly what it will look like but you will be able to download it into your virtual wallet, and we are hoping that it will give you money off offers and free entry into two brand new competitions just for card holders – watch this space!

Scott Talbert
Operations Director

Competitions

The Competitions Committee has had a number of meetings through the year.

Firstly, thanks to you all, for those clubs hosting our competitions to the Ladies and Men at your clubs who assist us in running the competitions and to all your staff for doing their 'bit' – greens and catering staff in particular.

A truly super golfing year, with many competitions being well supported and blessed with fine weather - in the main.

Our aim this year was to trial some new competitions based on inclusivity and encouraging more to enter. Also trying to ensure that when we use your clubs the disruption to your members is minimal

The men's competitions have been well supported across the board and so apart from changing the entry cut-off date to 2 weeks before the competition we have not tinkered with them at all and it has worked well.

As always, all the results are on the county website, but I highlight here our County Champions

- Men's Champion is Tom Stagg from Salisbury & South Wilts
- Ladies Champion is Sarah Gee from West Wilts
- Senior Men's Champion is Chris Graham from Ogbourne Downs
- Senior Ladies Champion is Carol Main - our President - from Chippenham



Sarah Gee



Carol Main



Chris Graham (on left)



Tom Stagg (on right)

Last year there was a call for more competitions so in response we made the following changes:-

We advertised a Par 3 competition to take place on Sunday 22nd September but unfortunately due to a lack of entries this event had to be cancelled as we cannot ask a club to give up tee times for a handful of entrants.

A 4BBB was planned but again, a lack of entrants has meant that this also has been cancelled.

The men last year asked for an inhouse competition to be run similar to the Ladies Coronation Medal – I regret this has not happened this year, but it will in 2020. This will be a trial and will depend on the numbers entering at club level for future years.

The South West Ladies Foursomes was held at Chippenham Golf Club on Thursday 3rd October. Despite very wet recent weather the course was in good condition. We were

advised that the bunkers had been flooded 24 hours previously, but they were all back in play – many thanks to the greens staff and all the staff at Chippenham.

All 6 South West Counties were represented, and the winners were Jane Southcombe and Jo Terry from Yeovil and Ferndown. A good day was had by all and in the dry! Please look at the website for full results.



Jane Southcombe and Jo Terry from Yeovil and Ferndown

Buthlay Cup Final

The final of the Buthlay Cup was held at Marlborough Golf Club on Sunday 6th October between Ogbourne Downs and Broome Manor.

Ogbourne Downs were the winners beating Broome Manor with a score of 3.5 to 0.5. Congratulations to the Ogbourne Downs players.

Many thanks to Marlborough Golf Club for hosting the event and to their staff and greenkeepers.



Buthlay Cup Winners

Ladies Knockout Finals – October 2019

The rescheduled Ladies Knockout Finals were played at Ogbourne Downs on the 13th October.

There was an all Chippenham Foursomes final of Ruth Bridgewater and Janie Sharpe against Tuppence Hale and Jill Kee. Jill and Tuppence were the winners of this match.

The Handicap Knockout between West Wilts and Kingsdown was played next and after many hard fought holes the winners were West Wilts 3/2. All matches were very close, the last one going to the 19th hole.

The Scratch Knockout between Kingsdown and Chippenham was won by Kingsdown, with 3 matches coming down to the 18th.

Well done to all those who played. Thanks to all the caddies and spectators who turned out and to Ogbourne Downs and all their staff.

As you may know I will be standing down as Competitions Director at the AGM in February and I am currently delegating many of the jobs I do to the hard working and dedicated members of the competitions committee to make the post less onerous. If you are interested in finding out more about this position please contact Scott Talbert at secretary@wiltshiregolf.org for more information. The post is enjoyable and although takes some time you will help to shape the future of golf in Wiltshire.

Lynn Thornton
Competitions Director

Club Services and Participation Committee update

At the County Cup event held on 13/09/19, I updated the Delegates on recent committee activity.

Linda Brown's team of course raters have continued completing the course ratings required for WHS and have just one course to complete.

As reported in the last newsletter, 5 of our referees are now Level 3 qualified and 3 are Level 2 which is a tremendous achievement by them. If sufficient interest is received from members, a Level 1 referees' course will be scheduled.

The offer of additional members' rules evenings has been made to the delegates and this was welcomed.

The Handicap committee met recently to discuss its objectives for the coming year and to develop a timeline for WHS. The meeting minutes to be published shortly. The key points are

- Identification of the Club Handicap / WHS secretary to be completed
- Invitation to attend workshops for Club Handicap / WHS secretaries to be sent out
- Regular updates shared with the clubs
- Intention to offer members' evenings to help with providing a consistent message to our members
- Provide ongoing support to Club Handicap / WHS secretaries

We continue to liaise with England Golf on various topics including the safeguarding policy.

Quentin Grandison
Director of Club Services and Participation

Treasurer's Report

We started the year with reserves of £78,000 and set a budget with a deficit of £5,000 (comprised of £139,000 of spend and £134,000 of income). Hence the intention is to run our reserves down slightly.

Whilst there are a few months still to go and maybe £40,000 or so of expenses still to come I am pleased to say that it looks like we are broadly on track to hit that target.

Looking ahead to 2020 we have reviewed the budgets in order to set the County Affiliation Fee for next year. It was agreed by the Board to leave the County fee for 2020, unchanged at £8.90.

The England Golf Affiliation Fee has already been set at £9.50 (up from £9).

Roger Hunt
Treasurer

Referees' Corner

Rules Clarifications

Many players with low as well as high handicaps have misconceptions and misunderstandings of the rules of golf. Below, we have highlighted and hopefully cleared up 3 examples.

1. Declaring the ball lost.

There is no such thing as being able to declare the ball lost. If a player does not plan to search for his or her original ball because they would prefer to continue play with a provisional ball, the player may ask others not to search, but there is no obligation for them to comply. However, if the player plays the provisional ball from a spot nearer the hole than where the original ball (yet to be found) is estimated to be, then the provisional ball becomes the ball in play. If the original ball is found within 3 minutes before the provisional ball is played, then the player must make reasonable efforts to identify it. However, it is permitted, after a shot into very deep rough to play another ball under stroke and distance after saying "this is not a provisional". That ball is then the ball in play.

See Rule 18.3c

2. Marking and lifting the ball

If a player is lifting a ball under the rules which requires them to replace the ball on that same spot the ball MUST be marked. The ball marker must be a man-made object such as a coin or tee peg (not a stone or a leaf); the marker can also be the head of a club or even your shoe but is not good practice.

When a ball is lifted to take relief under a rule, e.g. unplayable ball or GUR, the player is not required to mark the spot before lifting it. However, it is often advisable to do so if there may be some dispute about the position of the subsequent drop if this was close to the limit of the one club-length of relief.

A ball lifted from anywhere may always be cleaned EXCEPT when it is lifted to see if it is cut or cracked, when it is lifted because it is interfering with play or lifted to see if it lies in an abnormal ground condition. If it was lifted to identify it cleaning must be limited to assisting identification.

See Rule 14.1

3. Searching for a ball.

Note that the time limit for searching for a lost ball was reduced from 5 minutes to 3 minutes last January. The search time starts from when the player, partner or his or her caddie(s) arrives at the estimated place where the ball might be. If the following players have been called through it may be tempting to search until they are out of reach of your next shot. This infringes the lost ball rule. The ball is lost when it has not been found within 3 minutes.

See Rule 18.2a

4. Preferred Lies (Winter Rules)

With winter approaching Greens Committees will be considering implementing "Winter Rules". Rather than just using a notice displaying the term "Winter Rules in play" clubs must display the full meaning of applying "preferred lies". These are shown in Model Local Rule E-3 on page 467 of the new Official Guide to the Rules of Golf.

An example of this Local Rule is:-

"When a player's ball lies in a part of the general area cut to fairway height or less, the player may take free relief once by placing the original ball or another ball within 6 inches (can be a score card or even a club length) not nearer the hole and playing it from this relief area.

In proceeding under this Local Rule, the player must choose a spot to place the ball and use the procedures for replacing a ball under Rules 14.2b(2) and 14.2e."

Hope these explanations help. More rules clarifications will be in the next newsletter.

Peter Andrews

Wiltshire Golf Chief Referee

Volunteers of the year/quarter

We are looking to thank those people who are outstanding volunteers for the County or your club.

If your club or section within the County has a special someone that you would like to nominate for a special mention for the work that they do for your club or for the County please send your nomination to Scott Talbert on secretary@wiltshiregolf.org together with a note of why you feel they should be nominated.

Wiltshire Golf Website

The Wiltshire Golf Website can be found at www.WiltshireGolf.org

Here you will find News items about events going on in the County, information about the exciting Junior Development Tour, upcoming competition events and competition results and much more. There is also a link to the R&A rules and CONGU information.

The website has been updated and some changes made.

There are various headings on the top of the Home page, and you will find the following information under the various headings:-

Golf Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men's, Ladies, Junior and Mixed events for the year • Upcoming competitions for the current year • Junior, Ladies, Men's and Seniors Competition results and reports for the current year
Diary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diary of all events for the current year
News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News items
Wiltshire Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and news for the Men's 1st team, Junior Teams, Senior Teams and Ladies Teams
Junior Golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junior News items, Order of Merit, Opens for current year, Junior Development Tour information, Information about Girl's Golf and the Girl's Squad, Boy's fixtures for current year and the parental consent form
Other Golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buthlay Cup information • Results, rules and information re the current year for the Ladies Scratch League, Ladies Handicap League, Wiltshire Inter-club Scratch league, Senior Winter Scratch League • Information about the Ladies Past Captains and Ladies Vets • South West Women's golf and Men's Past Captains
Results Archive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honours Board and Results Archive for previous years • Previous Newsletters
About	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various Documents for Wiltshire Golf including Articles of Association, Rules, Safeguarding and business plan • Board Meeting minutes and AGM minutes • Role Profiles for various directors within Wiltshire Golf • The current year's Information Book which has details of contact etc • Some history about Wiltshire Golf
Club Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A map of all of the clubs in Wiltshire • County Card Scheme • Nationwide County Venues • Golf Rules 2019 information • Information about Course ratings and Handicaps