

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Donnington Grove Golf Club held at  
Donnington Grove Country Club on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009.**

The Captain Geoff Kells opened the meeting at 7.42pm.

**Committee members present:** Lynn Turner, Tim Brunsdon, Brenda Agutter, Steve Marshall, John Rance, Sean Sargeant, Chris Strong, Gareth Williams. Ann MacDonald.

**Members present:** 14

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Richard Lomax who is on holiday. Trevor Evans, Peter and Carmel Thornton, Viv and Mike Lewsey, Jon Millar, Tony Coleman.

**2. Minutes of the 2008 AGM**

The Minutes of the 2008 AGM were accepted as an accurate record.  
Proposed by David Hickman and Seconded by Lynn Turner.

**3. Matters arising**

A question had been asked regarding how members tee times were allocated in competitions. Geoff Kells stated that the Committee had looked into this. Previously members had put their names down for a specific time slot and could therefore pick whom they played with. The Committee decided that one of the points of the competitions was to get members playing with different people. It was appreciated that some members preferred certain tee times and so the decision was made that members could enter their names in 30-minute time slots, from which the corresponding tee times would be drawn.

Members had requested more ball washers on the tees. Chris Strong stated that Richard Lomax had taken this up and there were now new washers on every other tee. He further stated that every tee now had tee tidies for broken tees etc.

**4. Management report**

Chris Strong gave the report on behalf of Sandtrend and stated that the new clubhouse had now been open for almost a year and had been of great benefit to the membership. The Friday Roll-Ups during the summer had been very successful and there had been a noticeable increase in members participating the social events.

This years subscriptions were to remain the same with an option to acquire 12 months for the price of 11, if paid in full before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009. Chris said that around half the membership had taken this offer up to date. Each member will also receive 12 complimentary guest green fee vouchers.

### **Management report cont.**

The membership referral scheme is to continue. Any member who introduces a new member in the 7-day membership category only (individual or joint) will receive a voucher worth £100 for the Pro Shop and the new member will receive 12 Titleist Pro V1 golf balls.

The £100 levy on the cards will remain the same for the forthcoming year. Any members who still have credit remaining from their original card levy need to spend it before 1<sup>st</sup> April or it will be lost.

The Management had set the membership target for 7-day and 5-day members at 400. It reached a peak last year of 385. If the 400 mark is reached, thought will be made to introducing a waiting list and/or a joining fee.

Chris complimented Dave Knight and his team for the amazing condition of the course and thanked them for all their hard work during the year. There have been many positive comments.

The Management are aware of the problems experienced during the past winter in members booking tee times, especially on Saturdays. Chris has instructed the staff in the Pro Shop, whenever possible, to book hotel guests and golf breaks after 11 am.

On the ongoing developments, Chris stated that the 6 new rooms were on course to be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> May (as they have already been booked!). The Fish Farm units by the 10<sup>th</sup> tee have been put on hold for the present although interest has been expressed in 4 of the units. The planned hotel extension is also on hold, however the staff quarters are still going ahead at the old buggy store.

He finished by wishing everyone an enjoyable year of golf and asked Gareth Williams to give a report on the course.

### **Course report**

Gareth Williams reiterated Chris's remarks about Dave Knight and his staff.

There had been no need to hollow tine the greens during the year. This was after an agronomist had analysed soil samples and made his recommendations.

The alterations to the bunkers on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> are almost complete, as is the extension to the lake on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

A concerted effort is to be made, once the weather dries out, to remove the stones in the bunkers. This has become a problem due to edging the sides, thus exposing more soil and stones. The bunkers will now wherever possible be clipped, rather than edged and all the bunkers will be dragged to remove stones.

### **Course report (cont)**

The new tee on the 9<sup>th</sup> should be turfed in the next week and all the winter mats have been removed with the tees being over seeded, fertilized and scarified.

Gareth concluded by saying that he believed that we were going into this summer in a positive manner with a magnificent course.

### **5. Outgoing Captains' reports**

**Keith Berry** spoke about the past year and echoed the praise to Dave Knight and his team saying that they had worked wonders during the year in very difficult conditions.

He stated that we have now started the process of changing from being simply a great course to becoming a Golf club with the advent of the new clubhouse, which has become our base for activities.

There were 2 sad events during the year with the passing of Elfed Davies after a short illness and then Adam Clayton, a young man who had a great future in golf ahead of him. Both were great loses to the club and our thoughts are with their families and friends.

During the past year there had been several new events

The opening of the new clubhouse was subsidised by the Committee to any members attending on the day to a tune of £3,500 of which £1,500 was drink!

We dragged ourselves out of bed for a 6am start for the Midsummer Madness competition.

We ran a Football Day in October to raise money and support Mike Williams on the Seniors Tour for this coming year.

Keith thanked all those who contributed to the Captains' Charity Day. Total sponsorship on the day raised £4,000. This included a Charity auction hosted by Tony Coleman and introduced a hole sponsorship.

The Champagne Roll-Ups, which started in the summer, were a huge success with over 40 players on a couple of occasions.

The Seniors have gone from strength to strength thanks to the tireless work from John Rance and they have over 20 matches this year.

Keith finished by thanking Geoff and Lynn for their work as Vice-Captains and stated that he knew the club was in good hands. He was also heartened by the new members to the Committee.

### **Outgoing Captains' reports (cont)**

He stated that he had really enjoyed his year and was honoured to have served as Captain.

**Gill Lane** was unable to attend, as she was toughing it out on a sun bed somewhere in Spain, but Lynn Turner read out her report to those present.

Gill gave a huge thanks to Lynn for her work as Vice-Captain and wished her all the best for this year

She expressed her thanks to everyone for their generosity towards the Captains' Charities. Gill's charity was Breast Cancer Care and she was proud to have raised so much money for the great work they do.

She thanked all the ladies for their support during the year and for making her job as Ladies Captain so enjoyable. The Ladies Section is a small, but very friendly bunch, with the social side building superbly, as well as the golfing side.

The Ladies Social Evenings which started this January, run once a month and have proved to be very popular and well-attended, so much so that the ladies have insisted that Lynn continue with them this year. Not only are they a sociable evening with food and drink, but they give an opportunity for feedback from the Committee and to put ideas forward. It also enables members to discuss matters that directly affect the Ladies Section and the rest of the club. It also gives new members an opportunity to meet the rest of the ladies away from the pressure of the golf course.

On the golfing front, 31 attended a very successful Ladies Coffee Morning back in April, this included 19 non-members. This gave everybody the opportunity to look around the new Clubhouse and to socialise with the other Clubs in the area.

In June the Ladies Open was also well attended with 40 entrants, of whom only 4 were members. The winners were Karen Hugo and Sian Soanes from Newbury Racecourse.

The Club also hosted a very successful Mixed Open, which was won by our own Graeme Gourlay and Julie Davies.

There was a Ladies Away Day in September to Mill Ride, which everyone enjoyed. Unfortunately the weather forced some cancellations; nevertheless a good time was had by all.

The Ladies continue to enter the County competitions and the Mail on Sunday, however we are still awaiting our great success in these.

### **Outgoing Captains' reports (cont)**

Congratulations must be made to Ann MacDonald and Julie Davies who made it all the way through to the 7<sup>th</sup> round of the Daily Mail Foursomes, only just missing out on going to the Grand finals in Scotland.

Also many congratulations to Julie Davies and Nigel Bell for winning the Bader Cup regional final and qualifying to go to Portugal for the Grand finals.

Gill finished by giving her heartfelt thanks to Tom for all his support and patience during the year, and to promise him that she will be at home a lot more this year (except when she is on the golf course!)

### **6. Captain's report**

**Geoff Kells** thanked Keith for giving him the opportunity to be Captain. He is looking forward to this year, having enjoyed the last as Vice-Captain. He complimented Keith and Gill for a successful year, which included three great social events, which were well attended and enjoyable. All the club matches were well supported and their charity events raised close to £7,000.

Geoff then introduced his Committee for the year: **Richard Lomax** steps in as Vice-Captain, **Lynn Turner** as Lady Captain, **Ann McDonald** as Lady Vice-Captain, **John Rance** as Seniors organiser, **Brenda Agutter** as Treasurer, **Tim Brunnsden** as Social Secretary, **Sean Sargeant** as Competition/Handicap Secretary and last but not least, **Steve Marshall** as Members Representative. He believed that all members would benefit from their efforts.

Geoff also thanked the various team captains who give up a lot of their time to run the teams. The Team captains for this year are: **James Dawes** – Hillman Team, **Paul Bailes** – Sunday Mail Team, **Steve Clarke** – Scratch Foursomes. A special mention and thanks were made to **Jon Millar** who has, over the past three years been the overall team organiser, having put a huge amount of time and energy into getting the teams together. Jon will be the Concord Team Captain this year.

Geoff has two main objectives for this year. Firstly, to improve the communication between the management, committee and members. Richard Lomax has already started to look into a members website to be managed by the Committee. This should keep the members up to date with news, such as competitions and social events.

Secondly he wishes to improve the social side of the club. Tim Brunnsden has made a great start in this through a very successful Race Night in February. Tim has also started up an informal diners club, which meet once a month in the restaurant.

### **Captain's report (cont)**

The popular Friday Champagne Roll-Ups will continue throughout the year. The first will recommence on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April together with the new-look Presentation Evening. The free Prize Draw, which currently stands at £700 will restart on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April as well and Geoff thanked Chris Strong and the Management for agreeing to continue adding £25 every week throughout the summer.

Geoff stated that he was introducing a Captain and Pro Challenge, where members will have the opportunity to play against Mike, Matt or Gareth.

Last year was a sad one for the Club and members. In April we lost Elfed Davies, the Club Secretary after a short illness. Elfed had a huge input into the new clubhouse and it is a shame that he did not get a chance to see it completed and successfully used. Earlier last year the Club held a collection for Elfed and raised approximately £400. The Committee and Management have decided to install a trophy cabinet in the main bar in memory of him.

Geoff then thanked Chris Strong and Sandtrend for allowing Gareth Williams to take over the Secretarial role, as well as Gareth for doing a great job so far.

Then in November we lost Adam Clayton to a brain tumour at the age of 24. Adam was Club champion in 2007 and was working in a golf academy in Portugal, with a great future in golf ahead of him, when he sadly passed away. In memory of Adam, we have named the Most Improved Young Golfers Trophy after him. In May the club will host the Adam Clayton Charity day.

Geoff's chosen charity this year is one that Adam supported called ***Swings and Smiles***.

On a more cheery note Geoff concluded by looking forward to playing with as many of the members as he can, as well as their support throughout the year. He hoped everyone makes the most of their time and enjoys their golf (which includes slicing their Drive-In into the lake!).

### **7. Lady Captain's report**

Lynn started by thanking Gill Lane for choosing her as Vice-Captain and for preparing her for this forthcoming year. She intends to be a successful and supportive representative for the Ladies Section along with her Vice-Captain Ann MacDonald.

Lynn's chosen Charity is ***The Chiltern & Thames Valley Air Ambulance***. Events already planned to support this include a Ladies Coffee Morning in April and the Ladies Open in June, for which some entries have already been received.

### **Lady Captain's report (cont)**

There are 10 Ladies Friendly Interclub Matches and 8 Mixed Matches arranged throughout the year, along with a Ladies 'Away Day' in August at Weybrook Park.

For such a small section the Ladies Team still manage to represent Donnington Grove in as many Interclub and Knockout Competitions as possible. There is a Duncan Trophy Team, Daily Mail and Sunday Mail Teams, Interclub Challenge Team and a Bronze Section.

The Ladies social evenings are to continue, as these have been so successful. Thanks must be given to Matt Woods for the golf clinics he is preparing to enable the Ladies to polish off their golfing skills before the season gets underway.

Lynn ended by saying she will continue to support Geoff through his year as Club Captain and to work alongside him and the Committee to make Donnington Grove the successful and friendly golf club we will be all proud to be part of. Lynn sends her thanks to all who have helped and supported her so far to make her captaincy year a very enjoyable one.

### **8. Treasurer's report**

Copies of the 2008 Income and Expenditure Account and the Balance Sheet were circulated prior to the meeting.

Brenda Agutter brought attention to the following points –

The fall in Total Income of £572 was due to lower income from competitions. This occurred as several entry fees were reduced during the year from £5 to £3.

Total expenditure for this year was £5969.23. This was an increase of £4318 from 2007. This increase comprised £2,564 for the opening of the clubhouse, £939 for the competition scores touch screen (the Committee and Management split the total cost for this between them). £662 for the new competition boards and £165 for the Captains' Charity Day competition pledges.

There are a number of outstanding competition vouchers and a discussion was held around writing off any that had not been claimed for a year. The Committee had already discussed this matter and were looking into whether this was possible.

Apart from this there were no other queries regarding the accounts and the Treasurer's Report and the members present accepted them unanimously.

Proposed by John Rance and Seconded by Ann Macdonald.

## 9. Notice of motions

There were 2 notices of motions as shown below

**Motion ref 180309/1 - That this meeting should approve an amendment of the Club constitution to allow the appointment of a Club's Senior Men's Captain and a Club's Senior Mens Vice-Captain.**

Proposed by Richard Lomax and Seconded by Geof Kells and Steve Marshall

The members present accepted this unanimously

**Motion ref 180309/2 - That this meeting should approve an amendment of the Club constitution to move the year of captaincy from the current calendar year to one commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year running to 31<sup>st</sup> March in the following year. If approved this change to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010.**

Proposed by Richard Lomax and Seconded by Geoff Kells and Steve Marshall

The members present accepted this unanimously

## 10. Any other business

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.20pm

The Committee then invited questions from the members present in an open forum.

Tim Brunsden

19<sup>th</sup> March 2009