

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Donnington Grove Golf Club held at Donnington Grove Country Club on Wednesday 31st March 2010.

The Captain Geoff Kells opened the meeting at 7.20pm.

Committee members present: Lynn Turner, Tim Brunsdon, Brenda Agutter, Richard Lomax, John Rance, Chris Strong, Gareth Williams. Ann MacDonald.

Members present: 32

Apologies

No apologies were received.

Minutes of the 2009 AGM

The Minutes of the 2009 AGM were accepted as an accurate record.

- Proposed by Tony Coleman and Seconded by John Rance.
The members present accepted them unanimously.

Matters arising

Wilson Carlisle was concerned that the meeting had not been convened in the manner proscribed by the Club Constitution, in that no written notice was sent by post to all voting members at least 21 days prior to the meeting.

Geoff Kells replied that notice of the meeting had been contained in Richard's letter as incoming Captain, sent to all members with the renewal letter from Sandtrend at the beginning of the year.

Tony Coleman asked if any member had written in to complain about this.

Richard Lomax replied that none had.

Wilson Carlisle stated that this was a point for future reference.

Tim Brunsdon stated that the point had been taken on board and that this coming year the full agenda for the AGM would be sent to all members together with the renewal letter.

Management report

Chris Strong gave the following report:-

I will start by thanking Geoff and Lynn for all their efforts during their captaincies. They both worked very hard and I am sure that members also appreciated their valuable contribution to club affairs.

I would also like to thank the Committee for giving up their evenings to help with the running of the club. We now look forward to working with Richard and Ann during their terms of office and wish them both an enjoyable and successful season.

One of the member's concerns which were identified two years ago was the communication between not only the management and also the Committee. Gareth's weekly news letter helped in part to resolve this situation, but the member's website has really obviated that problem and I think we all owe a lot to Richard and Tim for their time and efforts with this.

I would also like to thank our members for supporting Donnington Grove by being members and hopefully weather permitting you will all enjoy a great golfing year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Gareth and his staff for their efforts in the Pro Shop and for his weekly news letter which keeps members up to date with what is happening at the club.

Our golf course continues to receive high acclaim from almost everyone who plays here. During this extremely hard winter, apart from the days under snow, we were rarely closed, whilst all around us courses were struggling. The greens were always used, with no temporaries and the fairways generally weren't under water, unlike most courses. For this we must be thankful for the huge investment in the golf course made by the previous owners and also to Dave Knight and his team for their efforts.

In my letter that went out with the subscription renewals, I committed us to six issues that were frustrating certain members.

1. Ensuring that tee times at weekends were restricted to members up to 11am.

Accordingly the tee times have been blocked out in the booking screen so that the Pro Shop and the team at reception are unable to inadvertently make a mistake and book hotel guests in before 11am.

2. Alleviating pressure on tee times and the condition of the course by increasing the cost of visitor green fees and controlling their regularity.

The green fees for visitors have now been raised and Gareth will be monitoring the situation in consultation with the Management and Dave Knight.

3. Restricting golf break bookings to no more than one a day.

All the staff responsible for booking golf breaks have been notified of this. We will strive to ensure that this is maintained as far as possible throughout the forthcoming year. There may be one or two instances where we have to honour existing bookings. Gareth will provide Richard with details of each month's bookings in advance for publishing to members.

4. Enabling members to play 18 holes on a Friday afternoon as well as the Champagne Roll up.

Wherever possible the staff have been advised to try to keep several tee times free for members during this time. Golf breaks and guests will be encouraged to book earlier tee slots.

5. Recruiting Starters and Marshalls to improve the control on the course and speed of play.

We have already recruited a number of members who are willing to act as Starters and Marshalls. They will take up the positions in April.

6. Adopting a stricter approach to the dress code.

The Pro Shop staff have been asked to police this subject more rigorously; although the odd one slips through the net if for instance they do not attend the Pro Shop! All golf break bookings are sent a copy of the dress code and the Management will ensure that this is continued. However hopefully with the increased vigilance by the staff and the introduction of more Starters and Marshalls this problem can be alleviated.

There was some concern over us changing the tee time booking system at weekends and as often happens Chinese Whispers took over and some members heard that this was going to happen immediately. This was in fact a survey question to gauge the feelings after the Committee had been asked to look into the matter by membership's several members. The results confirmed that the members did not wish for a change. No change is now being contemplated.

Today is the last day for renewals and I am pleased to report that there are 22 new members.

Course report

Gareth Williams gave the following report:-

After listening to comments and views of the members over the past 12 months we have put in position various changes to the system which we hope will alleviate the pressure on the tee times and in turn, help improve the condition of the course. To achieve this we have raised the price of green fees considerably and have pre booked times in the diary in advance times that are restricted to members only.

To add to this we have enlisted several Golf Course Marshals to help us improve the smooth running of the golf. Alan Agutter, Berny Parker, Peter Drummond, John Lewis, Norman Humphries & John Evans have all joined Chris Ashfield and will be working a rota that will include starting golfers and marshalling them around the golf course. We hope to add to the team as the year goes on and continue to improve this area of business.

At weekends and busy days during the week we will operate with 1 person starting on the tee and 1 person marshalling the course for the majority of the day. This will ensure that we can adopt a much stricter approach to the dress code and monitor better the etiquette and speed of play of the golfers. One of the perennial problems all golf courses incur is one of pitch marks which are left un-repaired, this is an area we can improve a huge amount with the help of the marshals by educating the offenders and regular checking of the greens.

Tee times at weekends before 11am have been blocked with much tighter control, and club competitions will be the only exception to the rule which allows members to book on the Monday of the preceding week. Regular checks are made to the booking diary to make sure nothing appears that shouldn't. In addition to the champagne roll up we have set aside more 'members only tee times' at other popular times which will ensure members have better access to the golf course.

Outgoing Captains' reports

Geoff Kells spoke about the past year and took the opportunity to say how much he had enjoyed his time as Captain of this wonderful Club and to give his thanks to those who have helped him along the way.

Two of his objectives for the year were to improve communications between Club and members and to improve the social side of the club. He felt that the Committee had made great strides towards these goals; Richard Lomax and his team have done a fantastic job with the member's website which has been up and running for about 8 months now and have proved to be a great success. Tim Brunsdon has been tireless in his organisation of social events for the Club, with events such as Race Nights, Ferret Racing, Quiz's, Night Golf and the launch of the Donnington Diners. The cash draw, kindly donated by the Management has continued to be a great success.

One of Geoff's highlights of the year was to see the Presentation Evening so well attended, with over 60 players taking part in the first Champagne Roll-Up of the season, for which we were able to give out 8 bottles of champagne. Again, many thanks to Tim for all his hard work.

This year the Committee introduced the position of Seniors Captain and it was with great pleasure that Geoff presented John Rance with the first Seniors Captains jacket. On behalf of the members Geoff thanked John for his tireless work with the seniors over the past five years. John has built up a programme of home and away fixtures and even trips abroad! The Seniors Open has become a regular feature in the diary and attracts more entries than any of our other Open Competitions.

Geoff was particularly pleased to be involved in the planning and installation of the Elfed Memorial Trophy Cabinet. Geoff thanked Paul Bailes and his company for making and installing the cabinet free of charge.

It was a very sad start to the year as we lost 3 of our past marshals and members; Terry Riordan, Peter Curry and Malcolm Sanderson. We also lost Trevor Evans, who sadly died after a short illness. These were a great loss and all will be sadly missed. There is now a memorial bench on the 8th tee to remember those members who have passed away.

Geoff thanked Chris Strong and his team; particularly Gareth, Charlie and Dawn for their support throughout the year. Dave Knight and his green keepers are always very obliging and put in a lot of hard work to keep the course in superb condition throughout the year.

The Scratch Foursomes with their captain Steve Clark won their division in the Thames Valley League.

The Hillman Trophy Team under James Dawes, reached the quarter finals to be beaten only in a play off after two extra holes.

The Concorde League team captained by Jon Millar and Geoff Kells were joint leaders until the last match and finished runners up.

Richard Lomax captained the Interclub matches with the team losing only one match all season.

The seniors won most of their matches: at least those they could remember!!

So a great year and Geoff thanked all the captains for their hard work.

Finally Geoff gave a special thanks to his Committee; Lynn for all her support and light hearted humour in the meetings, Tim, Brenda, John, Sean, Ann and Steve for their efforts during the year. Last but by no means least Geoff thanked Richard for his tireless and enthusiastic support throughout these 15 months – a superb Vice-Captain enabling Geoff to enjoy his year as Captain.

Geoff gave his best wishes to Richard and Ann in their roles as captains for 2010.

Lynn Turner reported that 2009 was a long year for her as Ladies Captain. 15 months in fact, but she enjoyed every minute, hoping she had been of value to the Ladies section. She knew she would have a good year upon ‘out driving’ the Club Captain at the Captains’ Drive in!

The Ladies Section is a small, friendly and happy bunch. Lynn stated she has had the most generous support from all the lady members throughout her term, for which she is truly grateful.

The Ladies Open, coffee morning, and away day held last year were a huge success, raising lots of money for The Air Ambulance. The Ladies team has been very successful, having played 16 interclub matches, with 12 wins, 3 losses, and 1 halved match. They also did pretty well in County competitions, reaching the semi-finals in the Daily Mail, runners up in The Angela Uzielli Trophy, and not forgetting that 2 ladies competed in the final of Donnington Grove’s own summer knock-out. 3 ladies have also celebrated achieving a hole-in-one. In April 2009, Donnington Grove hosted The British Ladies Golf Championship weekend, and The Tegna Trophy, run by The Ladies County Association.

Lynn thought that she and Geoff worked well together as Captains, supporting each other throughout, although she sympathised with him for never getting the chance to hold his ‘Spanish evening’ during his year.

The Club has been fortunate to have had a very efficient Committee during the year, and the new website has brought the club into the 21st century. My thanks go to all our 2009 Committee members.

Lynn’s personal ‘high’, as well as raising lots of money for charity, was managing to concentrate enough to retain the Ladies Club Championship Trophy, Her ‘low’ was the passing away of friends and members, Terry Riorden, Peter Currey, and Lynn’s best friend and mentor, Trevor Evans.

Lynn took the opportunity to thank the bar & catering staff for their service through the year, Barry and Allen for their admin work, Fiona for being our EWGA rep during her term, the ladies catering corps, and all the lady members who have made her year happy and successful. Lots of love and thanks go to Lynn's husband Jon, who she promises to pay more attention to. And last but not least, Lynn thanked Ann for being her Vice Captain and hoped that she will enjoy her Captaincy year as much as Lynn has.

Good luck to you Ann, and Richard for 2010.

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 –

Income and Expenditure The Club made an operating loss of £2,488 in 2009.

Total Income This was down by approximately £1,180 on the previous year caused mainly by Lower Competitions Income of £833. In 2 years the Competitions Income has dropped by £1,774, (2007 Competitions Income was over £10,000). In addition, we have not had the benefit of Interest income, due to Interest rates dropping through the floor.

Despite the Summer Ball being cancelled and the loss of the deposit paid for a Barn Dance, of £400, other successful Social Events like the Christmas Party and the Race Night ensured that we put £423 towards the Funds from the Social Committee.

Total Expenditure This shows a decrease year on year of £2,166, but if we disregard the costs of the Clubhouse Grand Opening in the previous year of £2,564, the costs have actually increased by £398.

This increase is explained mainly by 5 items.

1. The new website cost £690 to set up
2. Prize-giving Buffet of £418 was new.
3. An investment of £272 was made in Night Golf equipment for future use.
4. Photo Frame costs of £374 covered the framing of past Captain's photos in new, smaller frames
5. £812 was paid towards Team shirts

The total increase shown by these 3 items are offset by 2008 expenditure not repeated this year eg Touch Screen and new Competition Boards.

Balance Sheet The Clubs total current assets are £13,724, of which £12,762 is in the form of cash in the bank.

Total liabilities stand at £10,217, leaving total reserves of £3,507. There are still a number of old outstanding vouchers but as all vouchers must now be cashed, prior to their expiry date, the decision was taken to write-back the value of those vouchers still outstanding from 2007, a total of £1,590.

Apart from this there were no other queries regarding the accounts and the Treasurer's Report.

- Proposed by Keith Berry and Seconded by Cliff Waller.
The members present accepted them unanimously.

Notice of motions

There was 1 notice of motion as shown below

Motion ref 310310/1

That this meeting should approve an amendment of the Club Constitution to allow, at the invitation of the Committee, an outgoing Captain to remain on the Committee following his/her resignation to fill any vacant role or office other than that of Vice Captain, Seniors Captain, Seniors Vice Captain or ladies Captain.

- Proposed by Ray Ross and Seconded by Ann MacDonald and Geoff Kells.
A vote was taken: For 20. Against 4.
Geoff Kells declared the motion carried.

Any other business

There were no questions or matters raised.

Geoff asked that Richard chair the open forum following the meeting as incoming Club Captain.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7.55pm.

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

Tim Brunsten
2nd April 2010