

Halesworth Golf General Committee Meeting, Wednesday 15th September 2021

Minutes of the Meeting:

In Attendance

Ben Townsend – Club Manager (BT)
Richard Davies – Club Professional (RD)
Rob Sherington – Club Captain & Competition Secretary (RS)
John Clatworthy – Past Captain (JC)
Lynda Baldry – Ladies' Vice-Captain (LB)
Tom Fletcher – Seniors' Captain (TF)
Paul Kent – Seniors' Vice-Captain (PK)
Robert Steven – Handicap Secretary (RSt)
Ken Parry-Brown – Treasurer (KPB)
Don Wellman – Secretary (DW)

Apologies: Caroline Emeny

Minutes of last meeting: Minutes were agreed to be an accurate summary of the meeting.

Matters Arising: In answer to a question from RS, club manager BT confirmed that the minutes of our Committee Meetings would be available for club members on the website in the near future. RS also suggested that we might consider having tee-peg caddies on the Valley Course and also commented that the small sand bags seen on some other courses available for players to repair damage to the tees seemed to work well and something that we might consider at Halesworth in the future. He also noted with pleasure that the Seniors' Blyth Cup, spoken about at an earlier meeting, was now in place.

Club Update: BT explained that the rough on the course, the length of which has been a topic of conversation recently, is due to be cut back in October. He also mentioned that in order to encourage greater numbers to the upcoming race night he would include a free drink as part of the admission price.

In response to the question of the rough on the course there followed a series of comments. TF wondered if there was a rationale for the long rough and both he and PK remained concerned about the length of the 1st cut on the 7th hole where it was difficult to spot the ball with associated slow play implications. RS felt that the long rough on the course should be regarded as a hazard with players choosing their shots accordingly. There was obviously a balance between making the course too player-friendly and on the other hand unreasonably difficult with narrower fairways and long rough. The Committee were not suggesting that Head Greenkeeper, Mark, was doing anything other than producing a wonderfully prepared course for members but RD and BT said that they would take a look at the rough and 1st cut on the 7th which seemed to be the main area of concern.

In other updates RD confirmed that the touch screen would be placed outside the shop by the end of the week making it more visible for players to enter their scores and avoiding unnecessary congestion in the pro shop. He also mentioned that our assistant pro, Alistair, finished 8 under par in the Suffolk Seniors Open which was a great achievement given how little tournament golf he is playing at present. DW was asked by RS to send Alistair a note of congratulations on behalf of the Committee. RD also wished to thank RS for his hard work in organising the Club Championship and the Captain's Charity Day both of which had been very successful. There had been 67 entries for the Club Championship with Paul Coby the winner and former Captain JC winning the handicap trophy.

Lady Captain's Report : We've had lots of lovely comments from visiting ladies about the ladies changing room who love the transformation. The course gets compliments on how it is ever improving and we thank the greenkeeping staff for all their efforts despite the very dry weather we've been experiencing of late.

Winners:

Rita Fossey and Ken Parry-Brown did get through to the final of the inaugural Ping Mixed 4BBB at Woodhall Spa which was played a few weeks ago. Whilst they may not have had a winning score, the overall experience was well worth the trip and they both thoroughly enjoyed it.

Our Stearn team played an incredible semi-final match against Felixstowe at Bungay on 6/9. The format is 18 holes foursomes match play both morning and afternoon. It was an unbearably hot day with temperatures reaching nearly

30 degrees so very tough playing conditions with hard bounces on very dry ground. All the matches went to the wire meaning that they all went to the 18th hole in the afternoon session. We unfortunately lost overall but our team should be very proud for getting so far, the best we have ever done in this competition. Team Captain Rachael Goldsmith did a brilliant job and is thanked along with all the squad for their commitment. We are very proud of them.

Our Weston team won all 3 of their home matches and we believe we are mid table in Division 2 so should remain in that division for 2022. Well done to Team Captain Barbara Dennis and all her squad who had some very tough away games at the start of the season but transformed this brilliantly with 3 home wins.

We played our first mixed friendly match since pre-Covid on 11/9, away to Rookery Park. We only managed to muster 6 pairs but all the games were played in good spirits with everyone clearly enjoying the opportunity to play at another course. Halesworth won 3 ½ to 2 ½ so a good result on an away course. Well done to all the squad. I'm using match management where possible for these fixtures, although it's still a learning curve but a great facility within IG. The next and last of this season's mixed friendlies is also away, to Gorleston, on 16 October. We already have a full squad of 8 pairs for this game.

Congratulations to my team mates Carol Hume, Linda Freeman & Lynda Baldry for coming 3rd in the recent Pear Tree Charity Day against predominantly male teams. The girls did good!

August Stableford:

Silver Division 1st Sara Higgins 41 points, 2nd Rita Fossey 39 points, 3rd Lin Smith 37 points

Bronze Division: 1st Mary Pickering 41 points, 2nd Angela Middleton 34 points OCB, 3rd Jo Calver 34 points

I had a very successful Lady Captains Day, themed Black and White and I would specially like to thank Ellie and all her staff for really pulling out the stops to ensure the food was satisfactory. It was more than that. It was excellent and I am very grateful to Ellie for all her help.

We had the Halesworth Mixed Open on 21st August, Rob, Rachael and myself were all on hand all day to help the event run smoothly. It went very well, lots of lovely comments during and after the day about the course, the food, the way they were all looked after, the brilliant starter (Rob) etc etc. 60 people took part which included 6 Halesworth pairs. Lynda Baldry and John Clatworthy got the highest overall score of 48 points, the winning visitors got 47 points. We had a hole in one that day and an interesting time when 2 pairs played some holes out of sequence which resulted in us furiously trying to ensure we applied the proper ruling for their faux pas!

The Land Salver 3BBB was played on August Bank Holiday with a very respectable 36 entrants (12 teams). The winning team was Ed Bowles, Keith and Mary Pickering with 89 points. Proceeds of £140 were handed over to Ted from the Pear Tree at their event a few days later.

Our winter singles KO and Winter League start in October so still lots of competitions to keep us on our toes. I'm looking forward to our first Lady Captains Charity Open on Thursday 28th October. Richard, Ellie and myself have discussed this and capped it at 72 players (teams of 3). We are currently at 66 entrants so I am really excited about this fun Halloween format and hope it will be a spectacular day.

Captain's Report: The course continues to look in great condition, with yesterday's rain sure to help the recovery of the greens following the coring that took place last week - well done to Mark and his team.

It was great to play with Richard in the beat the Pro / Captain challenge on Sunday August 29th. Competitors seemed to enjoy the 2 ball Texas Scramble Format. I was pleased that I was able to perform well in front of our Pro however despite scoring a net 68 we finished 18th costing me 34 sleeves of golf balls. Our harsh handicap of 2 coupled with 3 off the tee – YES in a Texas Scramble (I teed off first!!) costing us 2 shots – We would have finished a creditable 8th with a net 66!

The Gents Club Championships were held on Sunday September 5th with 67 entrants. 36 holes medal is always a difficult format especially all in one day. Interestingly the rough clearly is making the course more difficult especially in medal play. It was good to see Paul Coby win the gross competition all be it with a score higher than the winning score last year 150 v 148. In the handicap competition it was really pleasing to see last year's Captain John 'Ernie' Clatworthy become the runaway winner with a Net 134 the same as the winning score last year. Only 6 players

managed to score level or better than their handicap over the 36 holes this was compared with 18 last year!! **Our course is tougher whatever some members may say!!**

Gents Captains Charity Day took place on Sunday September 12th. This was a successful event. Mrs Hunt kindly bought all players who participated a drink afterwards which was appreciated by all. She also presented the prizes at the end, and it was great to see her involved in such a high-profile event providing the opportunity for members to see her and thank her for what she has done for our club.

Emma Healey Manager of Halesworth Volunteer Centre, Ted Edwards Trustee of the Pear Tree Centre, and John Giles Volunteer Driver for the Hoppa all attended and spoke about the work their organisations were doing to support the elderly and vulnerable in our own local community. They all were so appreciative of our efforts in raising money to support their work.

The event raised a further £3714 to be split amongst the 3 groups making a total of £5289 from the Charity Day and Gents Invitation Day. It is hoped that £6000 can be reached once the Drive in Money is added along with other smaller events. The next of which is the **Race Night on Friday October 8th** which I hope we can get at least 50 to attend so as to make it 'Rock with bids' **although I am a little concerned by the price of the tickets** as the main priority especially in the first event since the pandemic should be to encourage people to attend even if the food makes a loss it will be more than made up by bar receipts and then more money to our Charities.

The breakdown of money raised through the Charity Day was: -

- 4 Ball Voucher bids – 26 vouchers raised £2225 (approx. avg £85 per voucher)
- Terry Jeffrey Barge Painting kindly donated £250 (good bid Lynda)
- Vintage Golf clubs donated by 007 £200 (great bid NICO)
- Entry Fees from players £480
- Raffle £784 (thanks to the many local restaurants' that I visit who donated vouchers)

= £3939

- Minus £225 given to the first 5 teams (£25 - £20 - £15 - £10 - £5 to each player)

= £3714 Raised through this event

Gents' matches continue against other clubs most recent results are: -

Wednesday August 25th v The Police Home WON 3 - 2

Tuesday September 14th v Eaton Away LOST 2 - 3

Saturday September 25th v Stowmarket Home

I continue to talk to as many visitors as possible especially when they are indulging in our superb dining facilities! along with new members as well as play golf with as many different members as possible to try to get to know them all. It is refreshing to see so many new members many of which are already piling in club competitions across all sections.

DW was asked to send messages of thanks from the Committee to Terry Jeffrey and Allan Barnes for their kind Charity Day donations.

Seniors' Captain Report Since the last meeting on Wednesday 18th August it has been a busy programme for the Seniors section (Aside: those uninterested in numbers and timings might be best to skip the first section).

Friday 20 August. The Seniors Championship over 27 holes took place. The course was in fantastic condition, all credit to Mark and the team. Winners were Graham Schilling (gross), playing off 4 and scoring 110, and Tony Shrubshall (net) playing off 23 and scoring 104. Congratulations for a well-managed competition to Richard Fernley, aided by KPB, John Giles and Robert Steven. 49 players took part, teeing off between 07:28 and 09:52.

Tuesday 24th August. There was a Stableford competition (34 players), followed a home match v Diss (24). 58 players were away between 07:30 and 10:30. Many were back at the clubhouse afterwards, where there was another great meal and service from Ellie and the team for the match players.

Friday 27th August. Texas Scramble. Teams of four. 56 players away between 07:30 and 09:28.

Tuesday 31 August. Stableford competition. 40 players away between 07:28 and 09:32

Friday 3rd September. Pear Tree Centre Charity Competition. A successful day with 68 competitors teeing off by 12:50. Good to see lots of Captains, past and present, in the first four winning places. Messrs Wellman, Stannard, Higgins and Spindler took the top prize, leaving the current Captains to cry in their beer, beaten into second place by one point.

Tuesday 7th September. Stableford Qualifier. 42 players away between 07:28 and 09:28. This competition was cancelled due to the condition of the greens, which were cored following the Club Championship. Something to bear in mind for next year's programme planning. Access to the Planner in IG for one of the Seniors team for 2022 will help here.

Friday 10th September. Stableford team competition (1,2,3). 45 competitors away between 07:28 and 09:28. Quirky format but generally enjoyed by players, according to feedback when many returned to the bar.

Tuesday 14th September. Stableford Competition (30 players) and home match v Sprowston (24). All 54 players away between 07:28 and 10:28. Match players returned to a busy clubhouse for another great lunch. Excellent service from the team, while supporting another function of 70 persons taking place upstairs.

We are continuing to support new Seniors members. My Seniors emails are now distributed to 220 members. A spreadsheet that tracks competition fees for roll-ups includes 115 members, and there are more Seniors who just play in the Qualifiers. I am continuing to see new members taking part in the Tuesday and Friday competitions. The Seniors Roll-up WhatsApp group is proving to be the best tool for introducing new members. We are now finding members who joined the club earlier in the year taking time out to play with and sign cards of the newest members.

There have been recent reports of slow play by Seniors, which is largely down to a few individuals. Paul Kent and Richard Davies spoke to those concerned and reported back that the players were positive about improving their pace of play.

In Seniors competitions we can have players with handicaps of 30 and above playing in the middle of the field. Having a more difficult course may result in fewer very high scores but does nothing for handicaps. The issue of handicaps and high scores is being addressed by increasing the number of qualifying rounds per month and increasing the number of Qualifiers required for entering trophy matches, including knockout in 2022.

I know from playing in Sunday competitions that slow play is occasionally an issue with Gents teams. Slow play can be addressed by players if they change their behaviour on the course, and by letting others play through. However, a number of players have commented on the new design of the course with respect to length of grass and the impact this has on slow play.

It would be useful for members to have a clear understanding of the rationale behind letting the grass grow longer in both the areas of rough and first cut. There are areas of rough where balls are lost more often than found. It also slows the pace of play hitting out of the rough if the ball is found. In places the first cut is high enough to hide the ball. As mentioned before, hole 7 has become more difficult to play and remains a good example. A drive to the left of the fairway can end up with a lost ball in the first cut. A slice to the right and balls are invariably lost. Approaching the green there is a relatively steep camber down to the left and balls hit with distance from before the crest in the middle fairway often make their way into the difficult rough on the left.

It would be interesting for members to know what considerations are given to pace of play and members enjoyment of the game when addressing course design in this respect. Is there a plan to continue with the current design or modify the approach in some way?

Coming up in the next month the Seniors join the ladies for the Pearce Trophy and there are away matches at Eaton and Thorpeness. John Morley is continuing to do a great job tidying up the fixtures for both this year and 2022. In 2021 there were potentially 32 fixtures in the calendar. One club (St Audrys) has been dropped, leaving 30 matches to be spread through 2022. This will be reviewed again with a potential further reduction in 2023 after canvassing Seniors squad player (comprising those who have played in matches in recent years).

There are two Trophy matches coming up in early October, Enticknap and Blyth. The clocks go back on Sunday 31st October, which will affect options for block bookings. There appears to be no let- up in the Seniors enthusiasm for the Tuesday and Friday competitions and the numbers of players we need to manage.

Competition Secretary's Since the last meeting **LOTS of different competitions have been completed including the Club Championships.**

Sunday 22nd August **Gents August Stableford – Stableford – 90 Entrants**
Winner George Swallow 45 Pts, 2nd Mick Harvey 42 Pts, 3rd Christopher Haslam 42 Pts

Sunday 29th August **NEW Beat the PRO / CAPTAIN – 2 ball Texas Scramble – 66 Entrants**
Winners Richard Doddington & Mark Henderson Net 63
2nd Gary Etchels & Paul Tillett Net 64
3rd David Brown & James Patterson Net 65 ocb

As part of this competition the Richard as Pro put up bottles of wine for 4 nearest the pins and Rob as Captain gave a sleeve of balls to all players who beat his score – 17 PAIRS!!! = 34 Players

Rob & Richard finished 18th out of 34 pairs with a net 68 (Not helped by a harsh 2 handicap and 3 off the tee on 7!!!)

Sunday 5 th September		GENTS Club Championships – 67 Entrants		
Gross	Winner	Paul Coby	75 & 77 =	152
	2 nd	Shawn Stammers	78 & 75 =	153 ocb
	3 rd	Daniel Milne	77 & 76 =	153
Net	Winner	John Clatworthy	70 & 64 =	134
	2 nd	Sam Borrett	68 & 72 =	140
	3 rd	Paul Calver	73 & 69 =	142 ocb

Sunday 12th September **Gents Captains Charity Day – Best 2 from 3 Team Comp**
Winners Paul Sherwood, Chris Daunt & Gavin Lugo 89 Pts
2nd Rob Sherington, Paul Raynes & Ian Cooper 86 Pts
3rd Wayne Jacques, Matt McGinn & Craig Bacon 85 Pts ocb

The **Ashurst Cup** (Gents Summer Singles) All Matches have been completed on time!!

- **Wayne Jacques** to play Andrew Browne in the final

The **Judd Jennings** (Gents Summer Doubles) Has now been completed.

Winners Lee Adams & Billy Thurston
Runners Up Kevin Bates & Chris Peach

Player of the Year: - This runs until October 31st, **we now have a NEW LEADER**
42 Pts Tom Feveyear
36 Pts Stephen Brown, Darron Ridgeon and Sam Borrett

Gents Summer Eclectic – This is VERY CLOSE at the top
 Net 52 Stephen Brown, John Clatworthy & Sam Borrett
 Net 53 Chris Calver, Bradley Reynolds & Kevin Bates

Next Competitions due as follows: -

- Sunday 19th September Sherwood Bogey
- Sunday 26th September Gents Monthly Stableford
- Sunday 3rd October Gents Monthly Medal
- Sunday 10th October Field Salver
- Sunday 17th October Captain Ernie Challenge
- Sunday 24th October Gents Monthly Stableford

Finally – I am in the process of finalising a document detailing the **Men’s Competition Rules and Rules for Playing Golf for all Gents / Mixed competitions at Halesworth Golf Club**. This will be sent out in draft form before the next meeting so committee members can review before being adopted.

Treasurer’s Report:

Current Balances are: Deposit £2460.16, Current £4845.97

These balances seem to show a very healthy position, but it must be recognised that much of it is money raised on behalf of the Captain’s charities.

The share of competition entrance fees retained to cover committee expenditure was £887.50 banked until the end of August.

The only unusual expenditure was £123 for the competition label printer.

1. Handicap Secretary’s Report: Since 18-08-21, Initial Handicaps issued to:

Name	Handicap Index
Geoff Day	22.1
Curtis Liddel	28.3
John Harlow	12.2
Mark Hitcham	12.6
Justin Martin	21.2

2.

1. General Play Scores

1. A total of 283 General Play scores were entered by Halesworth members through IG during August 2021, up from 210 the previous month. A further 59 were entered directly onto the WHS platform using the MyEG app, up from 19 in July.
2. I asked some Halesworth members why they were using the MyEG app in preference to IG. They said they felt it was easier to use and their handicap index was updated immediately their score was entered and attested by their marker, rather than waiting until the next day to see the result in IG. I asked if they were keeping their cards in case the handicap Committee wanted to see them and they said they always

tore them up as they understood that the point of the new system was that everything went into the computer.

3. The official WHS approach to General Play is encouraging players to operate beyond the oversight of the Handicap Committee and it is clearly impractical and too much work to try to monitor what is going on.
4. For the future I don't think there is any alternative but to back off and just let the system operate mistakes and all.
5. Thanks again to Paul Kent for taking care of handicap matters for another two weeks, particularly as he also attempted to give our Captain a flavour of what the role entails.

2. Minutes of Handicap Committee Appeal Meeting

1. The Handicap Committee, comprising Robert Steven, Rob Sherington and Paul Kent (Tom Fletcher was unable to attend) met with Ken Parry Brown to hear his appeal against the Committee's Review decision to decrease his handicap by two shots. Ken made the case that the Committee had placed too much weight on his 4-ball, better ball results to arrive at a decision that wasn't justified by his individual scoring record. The Committee accepted Ken's argument and changed its proposed adjustment to a one shot cut, which Ken accepted.

3. WHS Handicap Review Adjustment Issues

1. Following confusion over the apparently inaccurate implementation of handicap adjustments on the WHS platform after last month's review, I sought clarification from Suffolk County Secretary, Charlie Wilderspin, who in turn asked for advice from a regional and then a national England Golf handicap specialist.
2. After a number of conversations and email exchanges, I am unconvinced by the England Golf explanations for some of the anomalous adjustments. I don't think they took the issue seriously enough and both Charlie and I were left perplexed by a somewhat casual off-hand explanation which in my view did not properly address the evidence I provided.
 1. Bizarrely part of their explanation was that the numbers in a column headed "Handicap Index" in a player's WHS scoring record does not necessarily show the Handicap Index for each round (this is the same column headed 'Handicap Index' in a player's Handicap History in IG). IG also ignored the IG labelled scorecard evidence I provided which showed actual handicap indices prior to the changes proving that the applied adjustments had not generated the intended outcome.
 1. Part of the problem is that there is limited transparency in the methodology surrounding the handicap index adjustment process on the WHS site so it is not clear for example whether there have been changes in soft and hard cap applications which have interfered with the intended adjustment. And after a manual handicap adjustment has been made, there is no retained record of what the handicap index was prior to the adjustment.
3. England Golf said they will be publishing a guide for Annual Reviews in a few weeks' time and hopefully this will provide some further clarity.

At the meeting there followed a discussion about cards filled out incorrectly and a failure to use the IG app correctly when recording competition scores. RSt had spent a great deal of time in chasing up cards where the card and the IG score did not coincide feeling that was the right thing to do as members gradually became familiar with WHS. He was to be congratulated for this but PF expressed the majority view of the Committee that we had reached a stage where we needed to be less lenient with incomplete or incorrect cards with players needing to accept more responsibility for their own cards and subsequent IG score information. There was certainly no excuse for cards not being signed and a discrepancy in the score between the card and the IG entry. BT offered to put a reminder on the website about this.

RSt felt that going forward it was now unnecessary to review all general play cards. RS felt that the onus should now be placed more with the player to complete properly and RD made the observation that we have become the victim

of our own success by doing so well in helping players to sort out their mistakes that some have become complacent about using the correct procedure.

Matters for Discussion: The remarks above led naturally into a discussion about the role of the Handicap Secretary in the immediate future. The England Golf guidelines circulated before the meeting suggest a Handicap Committee with a Handicap Committee Chairman but whatever is decided in the future for the short term the following was agreed.

The responsibility for overseeing handicaps would be with 4 officers. Namely the Club Captain, Club Vice- Captain, Seniors' Captain and Seniors' Vice-Captain. RSt would be the chairman of this sub-committee until he retires as Handicap Secretary at the end of the year. The plan would be that each of the four people concerned should take on the responsibility for Handicap Secretary for one week in turn, thus sharing the workload fairly between them. (A deal on free coffee for those concerned was at least partially agreed by BT!) This enables more time to be given to consider the long term replacement for RSt and what form this should take for this key position in the future. The above only applies to the Gents and Seniors as the Ladies have a system in place that works well for them and is efficiently run.

Health and Safety: It was noted that the defibrillator is kept behind the bar and there was some concern that it would be difficult to obtain quick access when the bar was closed. BT would look into the possibility of it being placed securely in an outside area.

AOB: RS mentioned the recent stroke suffered by Claire Swallow, wife of former Club Captain, Mark Swallow, and DW was asked to send a message of support to Mark and Claire from the Committee.

RS asked the Committee to endorse his plan for continuity in relation to the Club Captain for the next three years.

He suggested the following:

2022 Rob Sherington

2023 Bob Judd

2024 Paul Calver

There was unanimous agreement from the Committee for this proposal.

Members would still have the opportunity, as before, to nominate alternative nominations for Club Captain before the AGM.

In other business PF stated that John Ashton will take on the role of Seniors' Vice-Captain in 2022.

LB expressed her concern that Lynda Freeman had been unable to get a buggy for the Rear Tree Fund Day competition and suggested that 4 buggies for hire was insufficient for a club of our size. RD explained that it was a question of safe storage for the number of buggies that the club could accommodate and that he had tried to help on this occasion as he always does. With the limited number of buggies available it is advisable to book well in advance of a competition to avoid such a disappointment in the future.

TF confirmed that he was preparing a document to explain the role and responsibilities of the Seniors' Captain and Vice-Captain for future holders of these positions.

100 Club

- 1. S. Lord**
- 2. L. Freeman**
- 3. M. Bennett**

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 20th at 7.00pm

Don Wellman

