

Here is the Club's February 2019 newsletter.
We hope you enjoy following what is happening at your Club.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Members, another busy month of golf.

We have had great fields every one seems to be enjoying their golf and good scores across all fields.

The new bunker rake has improved the bunkers no end. The sand is less dense and I'm very pleased with the result, work is continuing. We have added a chain digger to the Ventrax suite of equipment. This is to cut root intrusion to the fairways, greens and tees.

"Stumpy" PHIL Hummerston has resigned his position on the Committee. He has over many years, been a great servant of the club. On behalf of the members, Phil thank you for your dedication and great work at our golf club. The course is in great condition today because of the work you have put in. Your experience will be missed at the Committee level. The Committee have appointed Vice Captain Keith Disher to fill the vacancy.

The Committee has investigated the personal insurance situation that I mentioned in the last newsletter and has defined a policy on suspension of fees. This is detailed in the Treasurer's report.

The toilet blocks have been repainted and tidied up - looks good.

Our junior program has grown this year. The numbers have increased exponentially on Sunday morning and it is a privilege to watch the young people play golf. The future of the game is in great hands . Thank you Brian and his crew, plus the parents. You are giving these young folk something that will build their character and give them enjoyment through their whole lives.

We could do with some rain.

Cliff Searle

President

CAPTAINS REPORT

I was going to start by saying "As the year starts to settle in"; obviously that hasn't happened! Cyclone Oma is causing us some problems on the course. Thankfully, at time of preparing this newsletter it is slowly moving away. The damage was minimal considering what could have been, but I am sure it disrupted the golfing habits of most of our members.

This month I thought I would regurgitate some of the player responsibilities that need to be carried out to continue to improve the pace of play. Whilst I am generally happy with our "Ready golf" progress in the two years it has been in place, in reality we are only about half way to where I think we should be. I say this because of the things I still see members doing, or not doing, that would improve their individual times to complete a round of golf. I must say from the outset that although I do expect members to be aware and carry out the basics of pace of play issues, I don't expect the game to be played at a frantic pace so as not to enjoy the outing. If everybody is conscious of keeping the game moving, no one will be disadvantaged.

Before I proceed, I must say that I have played with many new partners over the last three months in order that I could see firsthand if we need to issue further reminders. This is in no way a direct incrimination of any of those players. I value their contribution.

Some pointers;

Basics

1. Keep up with the group in front of you.
2. Hit when ready, as long as it's safe to do so, regardless of your position being furthest from the hole or not.

If you seem to be lagging behind the group in front of you;

1. After putting out, leave the green (as long as one person stays with the players yet to finish), and head to the next tee block and play your shot before marking your card.
2. If you want to persist with numerous practice swings, do most of them whilst others are teeing off prior to moving into place to play your shot. Or, work out other ways to save time if you must have them. (An extra 15 seconds per hole is 4.5 mins per round.....and that's only for one player!)
3. Whilst realising that "walkers" cannot realistically keep up with "carters", they must work a little harder at doing other things to help their cause; e.g. hit first off the tee and prepare to move off as soon as other players have tee'd off. Mark your card whilst others are teeing off. Meanwhile, carters must appreciate that walkers are going to be a little slower than some of you formula one drivers, so get to your balls quicker so you play your shots whilst waiting for the walkers to get to their balls. Carters can get to look for partners lost balls quicker than walkers too.
4. The new rules allow the flag to be left in whilst putting, if you feel comfortable with that, use it, it certainly is quicker. A lot of Pro's are doing it too.
5. It's amazing how many players can have a putt whilst someone is quietly raking a bunker.

Above all else, having "Ready Golf" top of mind will greatly assist you to keep up with the group in front of you. If you have any constructive ideas or comments to pass on to other members via this medium, feel free to contact me (oborn@westnet.com.au) or drop your comments into the Suggestion Box outside the office.

The 2019 Solahart MATCHPLAY will commence with the qualifying round on Saturday 2nd March. The top 32 players wishing to play will be eligible to compete. See details on the website and on the Notice Board outside the Pro Shop. Thanks to continued sponsorship from Darren Page and Solahart. Vice Captain Keith Disher is looking after it.

A New Members Welcome night is planned for 6pm Sunday 24th March to officially welcome our new (Ordinary, new, full) members to our club. They will be contacted and will be sent invitations for them and their partners this week.

Caution.....lots of fallen branches caught up in the trees will fall sooner or later until removed. Take extra care around trees.

And the usual reminders; fix your divots and plug marks, and please rake the bunkers. Remember, it's only a game, enjoy it and let everyone else do the same!

Gary Oborn. Club Captain.

GREENS CHAIRMAN

Dear Members, February was a blur. It went too quickly to promote old projects or begin any new ones. I guess those 2 or 3 days short of a real month make a difference.

In the words of the woman who is the centre of my universe (COMU), February has been too bloody hot and too bloody dry. I have to agree and recommend a good dose of rain to get the party started. Besides I'm really itching to see the drainage works in operation.

I said last month that the Greens committee joined with the Forward Planning Committee to set a path to develop a list of projects for the coming year. Those projects are a combination of business as usual and improvement of the great course that we have. Time is however, our enemy. Alas we just cannot make things happen overnight. Or can we?

Well, the committee has progressed a number of issues which are worthy of noting. These include;

Greens Expansion. - The Greens Superintendent with the consent of the committee has audited each green and developed a list of greens to expand. The expansions will be

easy wins, where greens are widened around the perimeter, Now folks we can't do them all and we won't do them all because some greens need complete reconstruction. So if we are seriously going to give consideration to the course architect's plan developed some years ago, we should work on the greens that are minor changes at the moment. That way we are not just blindly doing expansion without a master plan in place. A priority list is being prepared for implementation.

Bunkers- A bunker improvement plan was put to the committee this month which audited every bunker on the course. We have 34 of them? possibly more. And yes, I've been in everyone of them! (not something I'm really proud of). So the new bunker rake is in action to better prepare the bunkers however, a number will require amended drainage and reshaping. Most of this will be carried out by the greens staff. A priority list is being prepared to establish which bunkers to do first.

Nursery Expansion - This is happening to accommodate the green expansions. So we will be extending the existing green nursery at the right of the 14th tee area to include about another 400 square metres of tuff-tuff turf.

Cart Paths – The committee workshopped a full course cart path strategy. The strategy provides for a cart path on every hole. Currently preliminary costs are being prepared to assist with future budget consideration. In addition a priority list of cart paths is being prepared for implementation. This is a huge and long term project however, if we are serious about accommodating motorised carts over the course then an implementation strategy is required.

The drainage on the 4th fairway is slowly progressing. The preferred option requires some consultation and agreement with adjoining land owners. If agreement can be reached we will be able to finalise a design and progress.

Upgraded on course toilets – Members may notice that the toilet blocks have been freshly painted and renovated. This was an issue that has been raised before and action had to be taken. The Green Committee has now arranged regular cleaning and replacement of the tired internal equipment.

Other News

Peter our Greens Superintendent has taken delivery of the new bunker rake and has commenced its use. I would be interested to receive feedback from members if they are noticing the change in the bunkers due to the deeper raking.

Peter was also able to witness a demonstration of the tree root cutting attachment for the Ventrac machine. Tree root cutting has normally been included in the course maintenance budget utilising an external contractor however, with the multi-purpose benefits that the Ventrac machine brings, we are now able to undertake tree root cutting ourselves. The performance of the attachment was so impressive that the order was put in on the spot. This way we can implement a tree root management program and not have to coordinate with external suppliers every time whilst utilising the budget that was

set aside for tree maintenance.

March is usually the end of the cyclone season but I wouldn't bet my house on that. We did again miss a bullet with TC Oma fizzling out however; the damage to trees and debris left on the course from the strong wind was another matter. Peter has implemented a clean-up program to address the debris. Members, your patience in the interim is appreciated. Please be careful of dropping branches in the windy conditions and report any potential dangers at the office so we can review and rectify.

No more to report this month. I look forward to receiving your written suggestions put forward on how we can further improve the course and keep our club progressing.

Happy Golfing

John McLennan

Greens Committee – Chairperson

GREENS SUPERINTENDENT

Well its been another dry month with high chances of rain from TC oma, we got high winds and no rain. The total for the month was 25mm with only light showers coming through. Greens, tees and collar renovations are complete with only the fairways to go, I wont be starting them until we get some rain for the reason that if I start scarifying fairways some of the dry areas on them will take a while to recover.

The club recently purchased a trencher attachment for the ventrac machine. It is root pruning around tees, greens and fairways as well as up and coming bunker drainage work.

The on course toilet blocks have had a facelift with new paint inside and out as well as the reinstatement of the toilet paper dispensers, so no more toilet paper sitting in the corner of the toilet getting wet etc. I would like to thank club member and course volunteer Ron Raverty for taking time out of his days to paint the toilet blocks for us. Job well done.

In the coming weeks we will be starting to replace the irrigation ball valves. We will be starting at the 4th green and 5th tee so you will see large holes dug. They will be fenced off but just be carefull where you drive and walk. We don't want anyone falling in these holes.

That's it for me enjoy your course

Peter Fraser
Course Superintendent

LADIES

The Ladies opened the 2019 season on Wednesday February 13th. The event was a 4 person, best 3 scores on each hole to count, Stableford event. A shotgun start was the order of the day in typically hot and humid conditions and I am sure we all suffered just a little from the heat. A field of 62 took part in the event. It was very nice to see so many of our ladies gathered together and enjoying each other company. The Club House donated a very generous voucher for the winner of the raffle and a big thank you goes out to all who donated prizes for the raffle. Feedback is most welcome, any ideas regarding how the opening day can be improved for the future can be placed in the suggestion box or have a chat to a committee member over a drink of your choice after a round of golf.

Congratulations are in order for 2 of our ladies, both managed that rare golfing feat of a hole in one. Carol Springer holed her tee shot on the 7th (2/2/19) and just to show how easy this hole is to play, Barbara Conway also holed out in one on the 7th (20/2/2019). Well done, Ladies.

Our first Monthly Medals for the year have been run and won. Saturday Feb 16th the Medal was won by Maryrose Ridsdale with a fine nett 71. Wednesday Feb 20th Medals were winners were. Div 1 Kath Griffith (nett 69), Div 2 Regina Grzyb (nett 70) and Div 3 Trish Hummerston (nett 74).

Wide Bay Mazda is once again the sponsor of the Wednesday Monthly Medal. Their support is gratefully acknowledged. Winner's vouchers and glasses will be distributed once they are available.

Ladies, our season long events have now started. Eclectics, Putts, Points, Golfer of the Year, Birdies and Chip-ins etc. Wednesday ladies, please remember to mark your score card if you had a birdie or chip-in.

The Matchplay Round Robin entrants will soon be placed in groups, if you haven't entered and would like to do so.....enter on the form on the Ladies Notice Board.

This year our Ladies Pennant team is being run by Colleen Bennett with assistance from Dee Hecker. Expressions of interest are being called and your interest can be registered with Colleen or Dee (notice on the message board). Time is of the essence, we need to organise uniforms etc.

Events not to be missed.

* Jenny Davies & Ross Funerals sponsoring the ladies competition on Wednesday 20th of March. This will be a shotgun start at 9am, the event of the day is yet to be confirmed....keep an eye open for the flyer on the message board.

* Check your programme book, calendars and the message for Wide bay District club events.

Hopefully the weather will begin to cool off soon

Enjoy your golf

Kath Griffith

JUNIORS

Another large turn out again this week. We had juniors representing Hervey Bay and Maryborough at the Wide Bay Schools trials in the week just gone. Six of those golfers are continuing on to the State Schools trials at the end of April. Well done to all those that played in Gayndah. You did us proud! Congratulations to Lydia, Allira, Braiden, Finn, Kai and Travis on their selection into the Wide Bay team.

This weekend sees Chase off to the Trans-Tasman Cup being played at the Palmer Colonial Golf Course. Good luck Chase!

Karleigh Jensen

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OUTCOMES

Clarification : No such thing as Leave of Absence of membership

Over the past few years the Management Committee has received an increasing number of applications for relief of membership fees based on a necessary leave of absence or "suspension" of membership, or alternatively an ex gratia refund of fees or credit on future fees, that are not specifically provided for in our Constitution. These applications are generally based on grounds of financial hardship or exceptional circumstances (usually due to prolonged illness but increasingly we are receiving requests for consideration based on a member commencing extended travels or seeking time to convalesce etc.). As a consequence they are becoming a regular debating point at our meetings and the issues relating to exceptional hardship or health are becoming more complex. The Management Committee is obliged to act in the interests of its membership base and where appropriate extend appropriate compassion to individuals.

Under Section 10 of the clubs (new) constitution a member who resigns is not entitled to a refund of membership fees paid in advance but may make an application to the Management Committee for an ex gratia refund of fees on the grounds of financial hardship or other exceptional circumstances whereupon the Management committee may at its absolute discretion grant or refuse the application. We do not receive many of these applications and they have been dealt with on a "piece meal" basis. Unfortunately, the complexity and volume of requests for suspension has led the Management Committee to review its policy relating to these matters. We are advised the same issue existed under the old constitution but it was decided not to include "leave of absence" or providing a credit for future fees, when drafting the new constitution.

Under our constitution, if a member does not renew their membership they are entitled to re-join at a later date (Rule 11(10)); and there is no joining fee (notwithstanding Rule 11 (11)) so members are not currently penalised for allowing their membership to lapse when joining again when their circumstances change). If the Constitution anticipated a process of suspending membership or providing leave of absence it would be specifically included and the circumstances prescribed. It is not. The Constitution does provide for pro-rata membership fees for joining during the year (rule 11 (12)). The membership fees shall be calculated on a pro-rata monthly basis from the date of lodgment of the application for membership where the initial period of membership does not extend to a full membership year.)

Some have argued that they lose the right to lease a Cart shed if they allow their membership to lapse. This is both true and fair. There are plenty of members on the waiting list for a Cart shed and appropriately any lapsing of membership instantly cancels a Cart lease (even if prepaid). And remember, we lease Cart sheds not storage sheds ... and our Cart sheds may only be leased by members who are storing their Golf Cart (and only for their use). Suspending membership and allowing a member to retain their cart shed is effectively converting a cart shed into a storage shed (and is contrary to their permitted use).

Others wish to suspend their membership because this entitles them to maintain or preserve their Golf Australia Golflink handicap (and any associated privileges) but again, this is not contemplated in our Constitution.

After much discussion, the Management Committee has decided it can only consider refunds pursuant to a notice of resignation of member pursuant to Rule 10(3) as prescribed in our constitution. If any HBGC members seek to amend the Constitution or bylaws in future to incorporate this provision then that will be a healthy debate.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE