



# Wollaton Park Golf Club

Newsletter — Spring 2008



## FROM RON TURNER - CAPTAIN 2008

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### IS YOUR DRIVER BREAKING THE NEW RULES?

Scores of your favourite driver models became illegal on January 1 after a change in the rules around driver design.

According to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, the body that oversees golf's rules, many new drivers are actually breaking size regulations and you won't be allowed to use them in any form of competition from January 1 2008. Illegal drivers are those with a "spring-like" face which catapults the golf ball off the driver face.

The so called "Hot Face" design is deemed un-conforming by the R and A and although you can use them for social golf with agreement from your playing partners, illegal drivers will be banned from all competitions.

With the entire playing season still to come, I have to say what a pleasure and honour it is to be the Captain of this fine golf club. I thank all those who attended my "drive-in" when I was fortunate enough to strike one "down the middle" and some distance too!! I attended the Lady Captain's "drive-in" and she also hit a fine shot. It could be said that both Captain's got off to a good start.

For my Captain's Charity I have chosen both The British Heart Foundation and Rainbows, the East Midlands children's hospice.

I must mention the Men's Christmas Dinner, a prominent speaker let us down at the last minute and by chance (and a little help from Neil Highfield – many thanks) we obtained the services of Mel Thomas, a spritely 70 year old gentleman who, as the guest speaker, was superb. He concluded by presenting a hilarious "This is Your Life" upon yours truly. It was an evening I shall long remember and I know from comments made to me it was enjoyed by everyone present. We have retained the same committee and sub-committee structure with one small change, which has seen our Treasurer, Reg Carter, also take over the Chairmanship of the Finance and Membership sub-committee. We are very fortunate to have Reg and his previous experience in finance is being put to very good use.

The Club is now on a sound footing and whilst prudence has to be the password, we have set out in a direction which will keep both the course and the Clubhouse to a standard expected at this Club. This year, 2008 we are the "County Course", for this reason, but not only for this reason, we intend to present the course in the best possible condition and appearance for our members, guests and all the visitors. We have gone a long way recently updating our equipment, the greens staff have settled into their new contracts and following the agronomist's report, the signs are good. Good weather will, of course, help but I am confident in the end result.

Vice Captain Robin Bow and I are looking forward to the approaching season and seek your support in representing the Club in matches. I shall make every attempt to play golf with as many members as possible and, of course, the thought of pairing up with our Club Professional, John Lower, in club matches is indeed an exciting prospect, for me anyway!

Finally, good golf, good company and most of all good health in 2008.



Visit the Club's website at [www.wollatonparkgolfclub.com](http://www.wollatonparkgolfclub.com)

## SOCIAL SCENE FROM TIM BOWLER

I thought I would have an easier year as Immediate Past Captain but with the Captain bestowing on me the great honour of being Chairman of the House, Social & Catering Committee this year that thought has gone by the board. For some time now attendance for social events at the Club have been struggling to achieve decent levels for reasons probably best known to those members that never attend social events. The club socials offer a wide variety of events with good food, good company at a very affordable price and yet the vast majority of members staunchly decline to even try them. This particularly applies to almost all the new members admitted over the last few years who all state categorically at their membership interviews that they will support social events without fail! The Club's social calendar for the ensuing year is put in place well in time to appear in the club diary so there is no excuse for not knowing when these events take place.

Events are also publicised in the Clubhouse with posters and table notices and a list of forthcoming social events are on the back page of this newsletter. There are some really good social events coming up this year with some great acts booked so watch out for the posters. The Club tried a different format for New Year's Eve in 2007 but will probably revert back to the tried and tested formula of a "ball" with "black tie" which should always be one of the "social highlights of the year". Please let the committee know your thoughts and wishes for this specific event via the Secretary. The series of five Quiz Nights held during the winter months have a very faithful band of devotees and continue to be an enjoyable night out, if you haven't tried them get a team of four together and come and test your knowledge. The last Quiz Night of the current series takes place on Saturday 29th March. In conclusion I can only ask you all to give the socials a try, make up a table amongst your playing partners and come and enjoy yourselves on these occasions amongst friends.

Our eighty-year old Clubhouse continues to be a drain on money and resources as the committee is never quite sure what is and how much the next "vital" repair is going to cost however it is vitally important that the furniture, fixtures and fittings and state of decoration is kept up to a good standard and to this end the committee is constantly reviewing what can be spent to improve standards. Reg Carter in his report has touched on the financial aspects of keeping the Clubhouse in good order with the most noticeable improvement being new carpets soon to be laid in the dining room and bar.

One of the most disappointing aspects of spending money on the Clubhouse is of course it's woeful under-utilization by members at times other than just after playing a round of golf. The Club has a truly unique situation for a clubhouse in a beautiful setting only a mile and a half from the city centre and yet at times it is deserted. Please don't forget this facility for the odd drink out or a quick meal or even booking it for your next family party or special occasion.

## GREEN, MATCH & HANDICAP FROM PETER DION

Your Committee invested heavily during 2007 on new equipment and this outlay has been reflected in improvements on the course. It is hoped to continue this investment albeit maybe to a slightly lesser degree during the coming year. As you are aware we are the "County Course" of the year for 2008-2009. A course inspection was carried out recently by the Notts Union of Golf Clubs and the certificate we have received confirms our existing Standard Scratch Score. The course was last measured in 1995 and a re-measure will be carried out in the next few weeks.

The new CONGU Rules and recommendations are now in operation for the period January 2008 to January 2011. The Handicap Sub-committee, Michael Rush, Steve Parton and Brian Ross will continue to use these Rules with regard to General Play [Now Rule 23] i.e. that is using non-qualifying comps, match play comps, four-ball better ball comps and other forms of team events, in addition to stroke play performance, to adjust handicaps where and when necessary. Casual Golf, such as society, roll-ups, scrubbers etc. will seldom be used for official Handicapping. A copy of the CONGU Book is available in the Clubhouse for perusal by Members.

There are various minor amendments to the rules as detailed in the latest Rules of Golf 2008-2011. Copies of these rules are available in the Clubhouse. There are notices around the Clubhouse with regard to the R & A latest rules regarding conforming and non-conforming drivers. It is the responsibility of the Member to confirm that his club does conform with these new rules. A list of non-conforming clubs is available in the Lounge, if members wish to inspect the full lists this can be accessed on the R & A website [[www.randa.org](http://www.randa.org)].

There is an alteration to Handicap Rule 5 in the diary. Last year you could enter Trophy, Cup and Knockout competitions if you had put in a card in a qualifying competition in the previous 12 months, but you could not win a prize. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, to be eligible to enter any cup, trophy or prize table competition, you must have put in a minimum of one card in a singles qualifying competition played under strokeplay rules during the previous 12 months. From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008, you must have put in a minimum of three such cards to be eligible to enter such competitions (except the Veterans' Cup for which one card in 12 months is the minimum requirement.)

## MONEY MATTERS FROM REG CARTER

I think I am safe in assuming that this newsletter will not be the first item you have turned your attention to in this postal delivery!

For those of you who have now absorbed the subscription notice I thought you might like to know a little of the process we went through and our plans.

Before that however I should like to give a brief synopsis of what we have done this year and bring you up to date with our current financial position.

The bulk of our expenditure is geared to the maintenance and improvement of the course which, rightly, accounts for 40% of our costs. My personal view is that this is adequate as I feel that the course has improved greatly over the last couple of years. As a committee we expect this improvement to continue.

The year didn't get off to the best of starts. We had a major problem with the septic tank down near the eighth green which cost £2,410 that we hadn't anticipated then we were hit by the fairway mower breaking down – this had to be repaired and so another £3,000 flew out of our coffers.

However on the positive side green fees and visiting society income have held up nicely and helped us to absorb these unforeseen costs.

The problem with the fairway mower only confirmed our view that we needed to ensure we had back-up in this vital area of equipment and so we purchased another fairway mower and rough cutter. We now have two of each and are well covered. These items of machinery cost £56,000 and we financed them by way of lease purchase agreements. We have also purchased a new set of vibratory rollers, £2,950, which will be extremely useful in getting the greens playable soon after aerating them.

There seems to be a limitless amount of equipment we could buy for making improvements to our course (I thought it was just golf club manufacturers who preyed on the hapless golfer with promises of immediate improvements to yardage etc!) – It is no easy job being a treasurer trying to hold on to funds in this area !

Whilst we are always looking to ensure we have what we need, without going overboard on spending, all the equipment in the world is no good if we don't have the manpower to use it. I think we are well served by our greens-staff in this regard.

In addition to the course we have the cost of our clubhouse to consider. We are proud of the clubhouse we have. Many positive comments are received from visitors that continually remind me of what a great asset we have. Of course it is leased and so our strategy is geared more to maintaining it in good order rather than development. Even so this does not come cheaply. We have started a process of replacing our furniture gradually and the recently purchased tub chairs in the bar area seem to have been well received. New carpeting has been put down and with regular decoration we feel the club house is comfortable and more than adequate for our needs. If this is not the case then let us know if you have any ideas (constructive and clean please!).

The main problem with any property lies with major items such as the fabric of the building, heating and services. At the time of writing we are investigating possible problems with one of the chimney stacks and we have the perennial problem of the boiler. Either or both of these items could be very expensive to deal with but they are not things I have budgeted for. We shall have to look to our reserves or other funding opportunities when a need to spend arises.

After all that our finances are in good shape. I said at the AGM that I hope to add to the reserves at the end of the year and I remain very confident in that regard.

This is a good time to comment on subscriptions. The first question I, and the finance committee, addressed was - "Is an increase necessary?" The answer was yes. The main reason for this is simply that we would have no leeway for even minor hiccups. The "no increase" option is never really going to be a realistic option which I feel is a small price to pay to remain as a private members club.

Having estimated the likely day to day running costs we looked for areas where savings can be made. Following that we then had to determine what level of income we need to generate to cover those costs. We are mindful of the demands made on all of us as members as we are the main source of income and so wanted to ensure any increase was reasonable to cover day to day costs and generate a surplus to cover any capital spends. The increase of 3.5% that we decided upon was the minimum amount that achieved this aim.

I have heard a whole range of comments from "increase subs to whatever you like..." to "I expect a reduction in subs..." between these wild and unsettling points I think we have got a reasonable balance.

If you would like to comment or make any constructive observations about what you would like to see our money spent on then drop me a line via the secretary and I will do my very best to respond to any correspondence received in the next newsletter.

## LADIES UPDATE FROM JEANNA PARTON

Nearly four months have now passed since I became Lady Captain and Rosemary Bow, Vice Captain. It hardly seems possible. The Ladies Christmas Lunch had great support with over ninety lady members attending and it was particularly rewarding to see so many of our more recent lady members in attendance .

My chosen charity - the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance - is up and running and is being very well supported - the charity box on the Lounge bar is growing heavier day by day - a good sign. My thanks to all those members concerned !

The start of the new golf season is fast approaching along with spring and the lighter evenings so we can all look forward to playing a lot more golf in improving ( I hope ) weather conditions.

We have our usual forthcoming mixed matches with Beeston Fields and Ruddington Grange to look forward to but this year hope to be able to arrange further mixed matches with Scraftoft, Whittington Heath and Newark, all of whom are very keen to develop an involvement with us.

Lots of work goes on in the background of the Ladies Section in order for it to run smoothly and my sincere thanks go to all ladies - both committee and non committee members who have given of their time and effort and shared their knowledge and past experience in order to make this happen.



## When Lightning Strikes!

During club competitions, if the Club considers that conditions are dangerous, one prolonged note on the klaxon will be sounded. You should mark your ball and seek shelter immediately. This is mandatory and to play on will result in disqualification.

If three consecutive notes are sounded on the klaxon, you may either mark your ball or complete the hole being played before seeking shelter.

When two long notes are sounded on the klaxon, then play may be resumed again.

Under Rules of Golf 6.8, even if the klaxon is not sounded, when you feel that conditions are dangerous, you should make your own decision to seek shelter. You should mark your ball and resume play when you consider conditions to be safe. Such incidents should be reported to Committee via the Secretary.

Please remember that the fact that the course has not been officially closed, does not warrant that it is fit for play – golfers must take responsibility for their own behaviour and appreciate that they have a responsibility to look after themselves and others.

## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The Club would like to extend a very warm welcome to all those new members joining since October 2007, they are:

Ladies: Susan Clay, Caroline Fenely, Barbara Forrester, Sally McGarvey, Jean Noon & Anita Wilson

Juniors: John Hunter, Sebastian Thompson & Joshua Wainwright

## UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

Saturday 29th March — Quiz Night, last in series

Thursday 24th April — St. Georges Night Sing-a-Long

Saturday 31st May — Spring Dinner & Dance with The Jimmy Willan Connection

Saturday 12th July — Hog Roast & Barbeque with A1 Avanti Disco for all the family

Saturday 13th July — Ceilidh with "Five Go Off"

*"I was summoned to appear before the club committee for playing off the ladies tee. I had to explain that I was playing my third shot"*

Bing Crosby

