



Foreword

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



The Newsletter of Whickham Golf Club

Founded 1911

Winter 2012-13



'N.E. SOCIETY GOLF CLUB OF THE YEAR'

The Golf Yearbook Online article reads ... "2011 marked the Centenary for WHICKHAM GOLF CLUB, which since its inception in 1911 has strived to provide a complete facility for golfers of all ages and standards within a friendly, welcoming environment, as Ken Greatbatch, Chair of Marketing at the Club explained in a recent interview:

*"Both Members and Visitors alike are able to enjoy playing on our well maintained course. It offers an interesting challenge and fair test of the golfing abilities for all standards of player. The course location on the edge of the **Gibside Estate** gives players an opportunity to view the fantastic scenery of the **Derwent Valley**. Spectacular views of the **Cheviot Hills** to the North and the romantic ruins of **Gibside Hall** and its Orangery, and **Hollinside Hall** enhance the local landscape".* He added: "2012 was a tough year for all Golf Clubs due to the unpreceded rainfall. Although we have only had to close the course

"Everyone at Whickham Golf Club has worked hard to give our Visitors a great experience.

Special thanks to the Team on Bookings, Catering, Bar, Office Greens and the Club Pro, for their polite, efficient, welcoming and professional approach. They deserve this recognition. Thanks are also due to our Visitors who have made this possible. We hope to welcome them and others in 2013."

The Club would like to acknowledge **GOLF YEARBOOK ONLINE** for providing the platform to attract even more Societies".

for eight full and four half days when the weather did its worst. Despite this Whickham enjoyed a 34% increase in Visiting Parties. Golfers of all abilities reported their delight at the course. So, whatever your golfing prowess, you will be enthralled by the peace, scenic tranquillity, mature trees and wildlife which enhance our golf course."

Having taken into account the Club's continual commitment to its members and Visiting Societies, it gives us great pleasure to announce that **'WHICKHAM GOLF CLUB has been singled out to receive the coveted AWARD FOR SOCIETY GOLF CLUB OF THE YEAR FOR THE NORTH EAST 2012'**; an independent Award scheme that is recognised both in the UK and abroad. Not every Golf Club can walk away with one of these accolades, that have become the hallmark of success, but those that do all emerge from the process more successfully; with many having gone on to become acknowledged leaders in the marketplace.

A challenging par 68 and measuring 5,969 yards when played from the Men's medal tees, Whickham's landscaped and contoured greens will try your putting abilities to the full. Its greens

are complimented by beautiful undulating fairways and strategically placed sand traps, providing a golfing challenge for players of all levels and handicaps. Originally part of the Bowes-Lyon family estate, the present day Club premises were built at Hollinside Park in 1938.

Over the years the Club has grown and developed and today welcomes Societies and Visitors, all of whom are able to take advantage of the wide range of facilities available. These include an excellent Clubhouse, which forms the perfect place to relax and enjoy a snack or meal, or to have a drink and chat to fellow players after your game, Ken commented: *"Our Function Room is available to hire for private and corporate events and we will be happy to provide bespoke catering to meet any specific needs and budgets."* The Club also offers the full services of its PGA Professional GARY McLURE with the Pro Shop being housed in one of the Lodges at the Club entrance, where you will find an array of high quality golfing equipment and accessories, as well as branded merchandise.

Little wonder then this award-winning Club regularly receives testimonials from Visitors. Receiving this accolade serves as a distinguishing factor that ranks WHICKHAM GOLF CLUB amongst the best in its field, as well as acting as a seal of approval to prospective members and visitors alike.

'Course excellent, a credit to greens staff'
WEST BROW GS

'Excellent value and great hospitality'
SALTWELL OLD BOYS

'Everyone very pleasant and made us most welcome'
RIDING MILL GS

'Very friendly and accommodating'
RED ROW BRICK GS

'Always been a good course and still is.'
NERSWA GS

'Excellent facilities'
SHELL PENSIONERS GS

'Greens very fast and good'
PLough GS



Mike Boldon with the winning team comprising Greens, Office, Bar and Catering Staff, Club Professional and Club President Les Britton with the Award

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CAPTAIN'S REPORT

JOHN GREENWOOD, Men's Captain

MY YEAR started extremely well, we were all playing golf in short sleeved shirts in March, beautiful! The Nordmann Course was looking well maintained, greens and fairways cut, bunkers raked, all we had to do was put the flags in the holes . . . then the rains came!

It was a Thursday, **Ladies Day**, we should have known, it always rains on a Thursday! And what rain we had, it just never stopped, so we never got on the two new holes. We need to hope and pray for a dry winter, and we may get on them next year.

We had a very exciting year with the Men's team in the North Durham League, we were languishing in the bottom couple of slots all season, but we had a chance in the final match, a home win against Seaham would keep us up. Unfortunately the match ended in a draw, and we were relegated by the smallest of margins. Can I take this opportunity to thank the sponsors of the Men's Team. **Martin Rankin**, who also did a magnificent job as Team Manager, **Alan Lennie, Dave Hutchinson** and **John Chapman**. Thank you all!

Thanks also to all the players who turned out each week for us, with the weather being so bad, we played in the rain, and for some matches, in the dark, and I can't remember a single night when we played in the warm with the sun on our backs! Thanks to the small band of supporters who turned up, home and away, on a regular basis, you know who you are.

I have to hold my hand up and say the outcome of the season hinged on one decision I made, in the very first game, when we were approached by Crook to swap the fixtures, and play our first game at home, as they had lost four holes to the weather. I agreed, and we lost that first match, and the subsequent return. Sorry

lads, I have broad shoulders, I can take it!

But look at it this way, if any one of you had won one more game than you did, on any of the weeks, in any of the matches, then, we would have stayed up. Simple! At least Steve has the opportunity to get the team promoted next year. Good luck.

Captain's Day, what a day, the weather remained pleasant, apart from the last few four balls, and I had a terrific time in the half-way hut greeting you all. The food almost lasted until the last of you had got through, thanks to Paul, who helped out at the end to supply a bit extra. The beer lasted out though, even the best efforts of some didn't manage to finish it off.

Due to the inclement weather the last couple of four balls decided to stay in the hut to help finish it off, I think some had a little too much, and someone managed to fall of his chair



Captain's Day Evening with the lovely ANNA REAY

that evening, resulting in his wife having to come to his rescue. Thanks to all of you who helped me tidy up and clear away the mess. I still never found out what happened to that case of 24 bottles of assorted lager, does anyone know?

We had a great night thanks to the lovely **Anna Reay** who entertained us into the small hours, and congratulations to all the winners on Captain's Day.

It was a long day, starting at 5.00am and lasting through till 2.30 am the next day, thanks to you all, you made my day very enjoyable and memorable.

I will say to you all, anyone who is given the opportunity to be Captain of Whickham Golf Club, grab it with both hands, it's Fantastic!



A FOND FAREWELL

On Sunday 18th November **BETTY** and **RON LAUDER** hosted a Buffet Lunch Party. This was no ordinary party, as it was to say farewell to the friends, memories and the Club they have both been members of for so many years. Betty and Ron are moving to a new home in the south.

To mark the occasion the Ladies Section presented a farewell gift to Betty; the Club had recently made a similar gesture to Ron. Betty made a very emotional response to say how much she appreciated the gift and how she would miss everyone. Ron then spoke of his many happy memories and thanked everyone for attending and asking everyone to raise their glasses, the toast '*Whickham Golf Club*'. Betty and Ron's passion for Whickham Golf Club is unquestionable. The records

show that they gave many years as serving Committee Members and Captains of their various sections. Ron went on to serve for a period as Club President.

They will be a huge loss to the Club.

Everyone at Whickham Golf Club wishes them health and happiness in their new home and hope they will make the sentimental journey back to see us . . . **Haste Ye Back!**



COMPETITIONS

Paul Tinnion, Competitions Secretary

ANOTHER GREAT SEASON

In spite of the weather, we managed to get through all the 2012 season's Competitions on time, with high levels of entries on Saturdays. The Midweek Medals and Sunday Stablefords also improved their entries, though there is plenty of scope for more. Any suggestions for increasing participation would be welcome.

NON-QUALIFYING BLUES

We had some non-qualifying Competitions this summer, owing to the bad weather. The County gave a general dispensation so that we could run qualifying competitions with preferred lies, but only when these were on closely-mown areas only.

Qualifying Competitions are pretty simple nowadays for handicap purposes: the computer does it all and it is difficult for anyone to argue. Once we have Non-qualifying Competitions, however, it is up to the Competitions Committee to change handicaps, which is permitted in exceptional circumstances, under Clause 23 (7), successor to Clause 19. Every member has their own view of who should be cut and by how much! Altogether we cut 13 members.

DO THE BUNKERS COUNT?

Your Competitions Secretary happened to be in the Club car park (see pics) – in a car – when the Great Flash Flood descended. So he saw the car park turn into a river, running into a waterfall down to the lower level.

The bunkers lost their sand and became GUR. Members have asked whether this affects the "measured course" status for qualifying competitions. The answer is that it doesn't. There is no mention of GUR in the rules, which allow temporary tees and up to two temporary greens, so long as the course length doesn't vary by more than 100 yards.

SUPPLEMENTARY SCORES

These have been more successful than anticipated, with 71 such scores being submitted since their introduction in April. Some members were keen to get their cards in for handicap purposes in early. One point that needs stressing is that cards should be returned promptly, not "stored up" and submitted in threes.



Remember John, it's not the winning that's important... well actually it is, I'm just trying to make you feel better!

EXCEPTIONAL SCORING REDUCTION

This new feature of the handicap system has enabled us to make additional handicap cuts when members have several good scores in quick succession. It has been a welcome improvement and I'm sure will be here to stay.

DON'T GO INACTIVE!

Members have to return three qualifying scores per season – either in competitions or as supplementary scores – to keep their handicaps active. Having an inactive handicap means you can still enter most competitions at Whickham, but you can't win a voucher prize. You can still win a sweep prize. Competitions you cannot enter are the JC Sharp and the Calcuttas. Entering Pairs or Team Competitions is difficult.

Unfortunately, there will be several more members going inactive in January. They can apply for exemption on medical grounds – some have already done so – or if they have been out of the country for a substantial period.

ANNUAL REVIEW

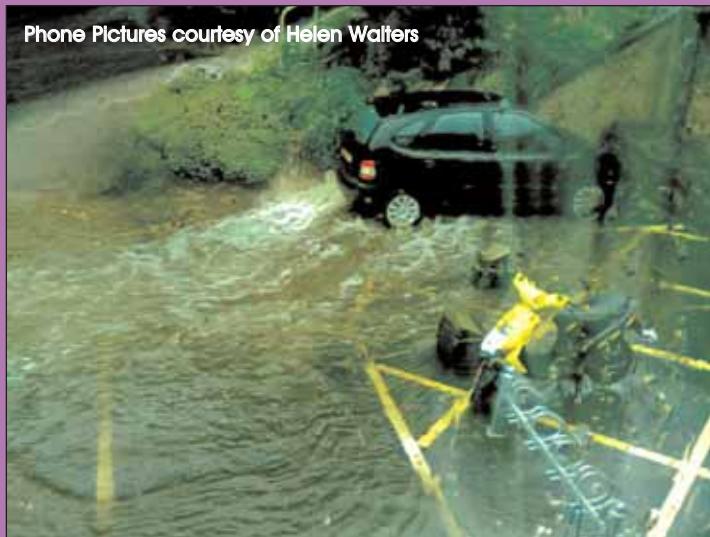
Our software system has now produced its recommendations for the annual review of handicaps, so we will be looking at these in due course. Only a few members are affected.

PLAY THE GAME

A few members are not entering their cards every time they play, perhaps because they are pressed for time or the computer is being difficult! This is no real problem, as I check that all cards in the box are entered. It helps if you write "not entered into computer" on the card.

More serious is not entering full scores for "no returns". This isn't playing the game. The handicapping system depends upon "stableford adjusted" scores, so even in an NR round of strokeplay the score at every hole should be entered. One member recently entered 17 NRs and one two! It's even possible not to have a handicap increase after an NR if the stableford score is high enough. Remember, all scores are published on HowDidIDo.com, so anyone can check up on you!

Phone Pictures courtesy of Helen Walters



MARKETING REPORT



December 2012

KEN GREATBATCH, (Chair of Marketing & New Membership)

‘The 2013 Open Posters have been printed and despatched. Details have also gone out to our On-Line Partners. I am delighted to report that **Hadrian Healthcare** will sponsor the 2013 Pro-Am’



WGC Fairway Riders and Disability Support

The trialing exercise has proven these machines to be very popular with our members.

They have been so successful that we have placed an order for two. Thanks to **Ray Dennis** and **Malcolm Hessian** for great work in getting this result. It was agreed they would be for pre-booking at £10 for visitors and £8 for members.

We will have a third Fairway Rider option due to **Matt Mahoney's** successful funding Bid to 'The Royal Mail'. This machine, although acquired for Matt, will give priority to disabled riders. Matt has agreed an arrangement for the Club to utilise it for our members. More details will follow.

Tee Sponsorship

All of the new signage has been delivered and is in the process of being erected on the course.

There are only four signs without sponsors now but with two potentials expected, we are hoping to close deals very soon. The Visitor Welcome sign remains the only design incomplete, I'm working on that at the moment.

Advertising

Artwork is complete and has been sent to **The Advertiser** for two adverts in the December Issue promoting "two months FREE when you join on 1st Dec". 'NE Golfer' failed to produce our quarter page November advert however they have offered a Half page in the December Issue for the original price. The second advert promotes our Clubhouse for parties, celebrations etc.

We recently explored an opportunity to promote the Club at Newcastle Airport. Mike Smith and I were invited for a tour of the airport to consider the options. On this occasion we agreed that it wasn't offering value for the money they required. We therefore declined.

Fund Raising

Tickets are printed and delivered for the "Grand Draw". Each member is being asked to sell £20 worth of tickets to family and friends. The Draw will take place at the end of our AGM on Thursday 31st January by our new Captain. Cash Prizes in excess of £1,000 can be won.

Your help to raise extra funds for further improvements around our

Club will benefit all members and visitors.

Visiting Parties and Charity Days

The 2012 Season has proven to be one of the most successful in the Club's history. I would like to extend my personal thanks to **Mike Boldon** and the team for outstanding commitment. As you all know Mike is standing down from his role as **Visiting Party Organiser**. The good news, Mike has offered to remain on my marketing team. Next year's bookings will be handled by Mike Smith and I supported by the office. Meeting and Greeting will be backed up by **Dave Gillender** and, **Malcolm Hessian**. We have had some enquiries for next year which we have responded to and received some early bookings.

Newsletter

Anyone who has a story to tell or pictures to show can forward their material to me. Digital images can be sent to kgr8batch@blueyonder.co.uk otherwise put your story/pictures in an envelope marked for my attention.

Visiting Parties

Mike Boldon

In my final Newsletter contribution I am very pleased to report that in a most challenging year with the wettest of weather and a difficult economic climate, the policies and practices of the Visiting Party Team has resulted in visiting party numbers rising from 52 in 2011 to 74 in this year. Profits from green fees have risen over the last year by 22%. This is in spite of Visiting Party Organisers finding it difficult to bring the numbers of players originally booked, the increased number of parties has, of course, benefitted the bar and food profits significantly.

In addition to the numbers of golf parties and profit improvements the winning of an award recognising Whickham Golf Club as the '**Most Welcoming Golf Club in the Northern Region**' was most welcome and does the Club great credit.

On behalf of the team I would like to thank all sections of the Club for their co-operation in accommodating the increased number of Visiting Parties. It proves that if you discuss a potential problem a solution can always be arrived at. Finally I want to thank every member of the **Visiting Party Team** including the **Greens Staff** for their unstinting support and ideas over the last two years, it really has been very enjoyable. *See you around the Club ...*

Ringing in the Changes

Since the last Newsletter a few crucial changes have been made to the Management of the Clubhouse. The responsibility for front of house is handled by **Steve Chapman**, his report can be found under "On the House".

Ray Dennis has joined the Management Team and he will manage all refurbishment, repairs, replacements and maintenance relating to the Clubhouse assets and Surrounds. Ray will be responsible for the sourcing of all items including the obtaining of quotes, analysing tenders and placement of orders and contracts.

As our Clubhouse gets older we are facing ever increasing demands for repairs and replacements and Ray's challenge is to manage the process in a cost effective, value for money manner.

Work in hand or in progress includes a maintenance book which is behind the bar to encourage all members to let Ray know of any issues needing attention in the Clubhouse or surrounds.

An Insurance Assessment where the insurers have visited the site and issued a report with a revaluation and recommendations. The insurers have recommended that we fit "Fire Alarms" to the Greenkeeper's Sheds as well as the Pro Shop and his Workshop. A quotation is being sought from our present Fire Alarm Contractor. All of the buildings and contents are now insured at full replacement value.

Plans are in hand to completely replace the Electrical System. It has been agreed by the Management Team that we now need to take positive action to bring the system in line with current

regulations. A full schedule of works is completed and enquiries will be sent to contractors. The works will be prioritised and, if practical, phase over a period of time.

A report from Northumbrian Water required several minor but critical alterations to various items including the need to replace the existing Dish Washer in the kitchen. This works now complete and the Water Company are now satisfied.

Both the Fire and Security Alarm Systems are currently being upgraded and the Monitoring and Maintenance contracts rationalised. At present we are using various different companies provide these services.

The work is to commence on 6th Jan 2013 for approximately six weeks on the Men's Locker Room's floor replacement which was damaged by flood back in June - *please note that Members will be required to empty their own lockers.*

The heating oil has been changed to Kerosene which is cheaper than Red Diesel giving a substantial saving in running costs. It is hoped that sometime in the near future that the existing inefficient boiler could be replaced with a new high efficiency condensing boiler. A possible project start date is summer 2013.

The Senior Section has generously agreed to pay for a new Committee Room Window. A tender is being sought for a window to match the lounge windows

Discussions are ongoing with our present Refuse Collector and further tenders have been received from alternative providers and our contract with our present supplier has been terminated, to give us the freedom to negotiate a new deal.

A new Lock-up Storage Unit has been purchased. It is being prepared to garage up to eight Fairway Riders.

Fairway Riders

Whickham Golf Club is actively looking for practical and economical ways to improve the service to members and visitors.

As well as looking to improve facilities at the Club it has been decided to introduce single man 'Fairway Rider' buggies. These Buggies are considerably lighter than the four-wheeled versions that are currently in use.

The Riders have been trialled during November to assess their winter

capabilities. Feedback has been very positive, so much so that the Club have taken the opportunity to purchase two for general use by members and visitors.

It is anticipated that users can enjoy the course all year round without the exertion of walking. Naturally some care is required during wet and frosty periods. Anyone interested in hiring the machines will be given a 15 minute familiarisation briefing and be asked to complete the insurance indemnity form before being allowed on the course. They will soon be available

by pre-booking on a first come first served basis for all to enjoy.

An additional 'Fairway Rider' has also been acquired by Matt Mahoney's Funding Bid to The Royal Mail Golf Foundation. This machine will be prioritised for use by anyone who are registered disabled.

The Club will be providing a secure storage space to garage and recharge the 'Riders' near to the Clubhouse.

Malcolm Hessian, Ray Dennis and Matt Mahoney have put in a lot of work to bring this project home.

Advantages:

- ★ Alternative for single riders only.
- ★ Smaller, Lighter vehicle.
- ★ Easier to store.
- ★ Back up for our aging fleet of buggies.
- ★ Cheaper, faster replacement for existing broken down buggies.
- ★ A quick source of additional buggies.
- ★ Fairway Riders are around 20% of the weight of a conventional four-wheeled version.



from **STEVE CHAPMAN**
HOUSE CHAIRMAN

ON THE HOUSE...ON THE HOUSE



ON THE HOUSE...ON THE HOUSE



As mentioned in the spring edition of 'FOREWORD' the Management Committee gave permission for a long term plan to refurbish the Clubhouse. The first phase, the refurbishment of the lounge was completed on the 19th July. The objective was to make the lounge a light and comfortable place for the members to enjoy. The feedback that I have received so far suggests that this objective has been met.

Already we have bookings for a wedding, golden wedding, birthday parties and an engagement. So don't forget if you have an up and coming celebration the clubhouse is now an excellent option.

The 19th Hole Committee have organised some very successful events in the clubhouse over recent months namely, **Soul Town, Frankie's Café, Anna Reay and Tony Washington's** tribute to the 'Little Waster' himself **Bobby Thompson.**

The autumn and winter entertainment programme is being finalised at present and dates to look out for are:

**December 31st
NEW YEAR'S EVE**
with "FRANKIE'S CAFÉ"

**January 26th
BURNS NIGHT**
with "THE GOOD OLE BOYS"

The tickets for **New Years Eve** with **FRANKIE'S CAFÉ** are on sale at the Bar.



! SENIOR MOMENTS

STEVE CHAPMAN (2012 Seniors Captain)

The challenge of wearing two hats (Senior Captain and House Chairman) has not proved as difficult as I anticipated as I have received huge support from a number of members – and my wife of course – who now knows more Senior Members than I do!

The season got under way proper in April with matches against Crook (home and away), Seaham and Eden which we won one and drew three. In all we play twelve different Clubs from around the region. It is social golf, no league tables, but there is still a will to win on match days.

The Seniors away day this year was at **Foxton Hall, Alnmouth**. The course had been closed before our arrival but thankfully it was opened and our 70 participants had a great day.

Despite the rain we have managed to complete all of our matches and competitions

The Seniors AGM was held on November 6th and a new **President Mr. Eddie Sarginson** was elected as well as the **Captain Mr. David McLaughlin** for the 2013 season.

JUNIORS 2012



IAN HARVEY (JLO 2012)

Well another golfing season has come to a close and with this comes immediate change within the Junior Section at Whickham Golf Club. As many people may now be aware there will be a change of JLO next year with **MICHAEL FARREY** taking over the role. This brings great excitement to the whole section, as right through the club the ideas and ambitions for the junior section appear to be moving in the right direction. In comparison to some other Clubs we have a good sized Junior Section filled with great players, individuals with experience from years in the team set up and others just starting out learning the ropes playing in Sunday Medals.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Juniors for their support over my short time as JLO and at some point in the future I would love the opportunity to give the role another go. I would also like to thank the Committee, Members and all the Staff in particular **Paul Fawcus, Neil Thompson and Andy Rutherford** for their constant support of our junior section, it is really appreciated by all involved. Finally I would just like to wish Michael all the best for the new season, with a great set of juniors and an enthusiastic, thorough new JLO the future looks bright for the junior section of Whickham Golf Club!

'Thanks Ian for your time, experience and enthusiasm in serving as the Club's JLO during the 2012 season. Best wishes for the future in your career and in golf'

(THE PRESIDENT AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE)

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

For the last couple of years the Management Team has prioritised on stabilising the Club's finances. Our resources targeted improved cost savings and ways of growing revenue streams. The accounts show that the actions are producing positive results. Work on the Club's development and branding has been constantly under review subject to available resources. I have been supported by the President to explore ways of improving the Club's standing in the community. The emergence of two new volunteers has put us firmly on the right path. MATT MAHONEY has joined the Marketing Team to explore funding and grant opportunities. Matt has begun by reviewing the Club's GOLFMARK programme which was shelved last year. MICHAEL FARREY has also stepped forward with his ambitious ideas and plans to become our new JLO. Michael has impressed us with his enthusiasm and commitment to develop our Junior Section. His programme aligns with Matt's development role and together they have begun to work towards gaining the Club wider recognition. The news that GARY MCLURE has completed his exams and is now a qualified PGA Professional is good news for everyone at the Club and we congratulate him. I know Matt and Michael are keen to commence work with Gary.

KEN GREATBATCH (Chair of Marketing)

I'd like to introduce Matt and Michael to you in their own words...



Matt Mahoney
Golf Development

I have recently begun work supporting the Club achieving 'GolfMark' accreditation with England Golf, a National Scheme that identifies and recognises junior and beginner friendly golf facilities. There are numerous benefits acknowledged by Clubs that achieve 'GolfMark' such as an enhanced presence and awareness in the community, an increase in membership, stronger junior sections and it can be a gateway to funding and grants for other development projects.

I shall be working closely with our County and Regional Development Officers along with Michael Farrey who has some excellent visions for our Junior Section. There is a mix of new work to be undertaken, implementing

some new systems, and in many areas simply demonstrating the great work that the club already does.

Clubs are assessed in three key areas
Coaching & Playing
Club Environment (including sports equality & ethics)
Child Protection & Duty of Care

I would love to hear from any enthusiastic members who would like to get involved with this project on any level. Drop me an email on mrmahoney@sky.com ,

themselves, playing social and competitive golf.

I would like to assure all parents that Whickham Golf Club is focused on providing opportunities for all and a safe environment for their sons and daughters, on our course or at away venues.

Junior Development is key for the Club; not only improving the skills of the players but also an understanding of etiquette and sportsmanship.

It would be great to see some of our talented Juniors make the breakthrough into the senior team in the next few years.

A prime motivation for the Club is to maintain and increase our Junior Membership and we can do this by providing good facilities, development and coaching opportunities and good competition.

The Club aims to engage with local schools, County Golf Associations and English Golf Union to develop this further in the near future.

Keep an eye out for an invitation in January for a 'Junior Kick Off' night at the Club.

Lastly, any member, who has any improvement ideas or areas of concern please feel free to approach me at the Club at anytime

I look forward to meeting and working with all the Junior Members, together with Gary Mclure and Matt Mahoney. ,



Michael Farrey
Whickham Golf Club's New J.L.O.

As a keen golfer and member of Whickham Golf Club for 15 years, I am really looking forward to working with all Junior Members at the Club, on and off the course.

My main focus is to continue the good work of previous JLO's to ensure the Golf Club is an environment where the Juniors can enjoy





LADIES CHATTER

JUDY SNELL, Ladies' Captain

THE LADIES SECTION is an integral part of the structure of the Club with the Lady Captain being part of the Management Team.

Throughout the year I have participated in many management meetings and seen the team take a pro-active roll to overcome many problems. I have observed an evolving structure of new management positions to make Whickham Golf Club an effective and successful business.

In the **Ladies Section** many of the Competitions this year were controlled by weather with many rearranged dates. In the team matches the Ladies got to know the **Ladies of Dinsdale Spa** very well having three rearranged matches followed by three teas, sadly we lost all the matches. I blame the Queen's Jubilee celebrations for all the bad weather 'Long may she reign'.

My Ladies Captain's Day saw **Marge Greatbatch** win the 'Gold Medal' (it was the final day of the Olympics), Trophy and Captain's Day Prize. Marge informs me she has eaten her chocolate medal. There were competition winners for a Silver Medal, **Lena Newton** and a Bronze Medal for **Pat Armstrong**. Marge won the Ladies Championship gross and **Emma Martin** the net.

Karen Snell played in the Durham County Ladies Championship losing in the semi final and went on to represent Durham County in the Northern Ladies County Championships at **Ganton Golf Club**.

Success for two Ladies teams came for **Nora Gosling, Monica Doherty** and **Anne Haste** winning the Durham County Jean Wood Trophy and **Judy Snell** and **Carole Lowdon** winning the Northumberland and Durham County Scout Cup.

Emma Martin had considerable success winning four Ladies trophies and four Mixed events with



Captain's Day – Marge Greatbatch 'Gold Medal Winner' plus Captain's Prize



the Men and Seniors. The Handicap Committee are considering further handicap reductions!

Throughout the year I have been raising money for my charity '**Emmanual House**' and will hand **Christine Deponio** a cheque for well over £600 at our Ladies Christmas Lunch.

Remember how to be motivated in your golf game. If you have nine bad shots and the tenth is successful ... 'there is your motivation'.



Presentation Night – Julie Cornish, Winner of the Nordmann Cup



Presentation Night – Durham County Jean Wood Trophy Winners, Nora Gosling, Anne Haste and Monica Doherty

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CLUB PRESIDENT



Les Britton

WE ARE NOW well into the winter months of the 2012 golf season and it is inevitable that we look back on the golfing year.

Unfortunately, the outstanding memory will be the fact that the summer of 2012 was statistically the wettest in over 100 years. Golf courses, nationwide, suffered as the rain continued to fall.

Many courses in our region were closed for long periods and it is pleasing to report that our Crombie Course withstood the deluge better than most. In fact, the Crombie Course was only closed on eight full days and four half days. On behalf of the management team and our members I would like to thank our green staff for a magnificent effort in keeping our course, generally, open and playable during the

atrocious weather conditions.

Of course, the Crombie course did suffer some flood damage and our Chair of Greens (Phil Byrne) and the Greenstaff are now undertaking repair work as the "Top Priority" over the winter months. Funds have been made available to source all necessary drains and other materials and we are retaining the services of our two temporary employees throughout the winter months to ensure that the Crombie course is in the best condition possible going into next year.

Unfortunately, the two new holes on the Nordmann Course were unable to withstand the excessive rains and were unplayable all year. We have used our website and written communications to all members explaining the reasons why the two holes were unplayable. As funds become available, we will undertake limited remedial work. The Management Team are fully committed, with some help from Mother Nature, to play the two holes whenever possible.

We have now completed our 2012 fiscal year and I am pleased to report that the Club generated a substantial

profit. This in turn enabled us to spend circa £93,000 on capital items during the year. The major items of expenditure were on a Rough Cutter, Tee Box Mower, Club House Refurbishment, Tee Box Signage and Computer Systems.

The next Social Event is the Christmas Party on the 8th of December which we hope will be another sell out. On behalf of all of us I would like to thank the Entertainment Committee under the leadership of Steve Chapman, supported by Jean Chapman, Diane Britton, John Greenwood, Ann Haste, Julie Cornish, Margaret Gillender, Neil Thompson, Paul and Steve Fawcett and others for their contributions during this last year. Through their efforts the 19th hole funds are growing and will be invested back into the Club.

‘Finally to all of our members I want to thank you for being a member of Whickham Golf Club and wish you ‘Compliments of the Season’ and a great 2013 golfing year’



Our very own 'Bethany Cornish' ... and the 'Durham County Golf Partnerships Srixon® Junior Golf Tour'



Northumberland, Durham and Cumbrian Teams

Bethany Cornish and other young people around her age represented Durham County as part of Durham County Golf Partnerships Srixon Junior Golf Tour. It is a similar but

smaller version of the Race to Rockliffe but for younger players. The top players from the order of merit went on to play against Cumbria and Northumberland at Carus Green in Cumbria. Durham

won the Cup, it was Bethany's first taste of competitive golf and it has encouraged her to take it further. You can get further

information from Jonathon Ward at the Durham County Golf Partnership.

Bethany Cornish with Jonathon Ward of the Durham County Golf Partnerships



On-Course . . . GREENS REPORT

TEMPORARY DECOMMISSIONING OF (Bird Hill & Snipes Dene), 'THE TWO NEW HOLES'

PHIL BYRNE
Chair of Greens



The exceptionally

wet Spring and Summer has resulted in the two new holes, forming the *Nordmann Course*, being unplayable. It has been known for about some ten years now that these holes were never fit to play during the winter months. The recent very wet weather prompted the Committee to request the *Chair of Greens*, *Phil Byrne*, to investigate the reason why they were permanently wet during the winter months. The result of this investigation, which also involved outside agencies, showed the clay based soil had very poor hydraulic conductivity and that the existing drains were capped with clay, also the number of drains was grossly inadequate for the abnormal conditions.

To remedy this problem would necessitate spending a large sum of

money, which at present the Club does not have, alternatively the existing Green Staff could integrate a new drainage system into both fairways over a period of years. The design of this drainage system would reflect the poor clay-based soil conditions. In the present financial climate, the Management Committee has made the decision to temporarily decommission these two holes.

Decommissioning the two new holes, with the intention of bringing them back into play at a future date, does not mean abandoning them. During the period of rest, minimum maintenance must be carried out. After discussion with the *Senior Green Keeper*, the best programme to follow would be:

- 1 During the winter period, debris and the like would be removed from the greens, tee boxes and the fairways.



- 2 During the growing season, the greens would be cut on alternate days.
- 3 The rough mower would be used to cut the fairways and surrounds as and when needed.
- 4 The tee boxes would be cut on alternate days.
- 5 The bunkers would be abandoned.
- 6 To maintain healthy greens and tee boxes, fertiliser, moss and weed killer would be used when necessary.
- 7 No maintenance of the ground separating the two new holes and the trees therein would be undertaken.

The approximate cost of decommissioning both of these holes, but with the firm intention of reopening them in the future, would cost between £1,000-1,500 per year, per hole.

WHICKHAM GOLF CLUB LTD

NOTICE

MEMBERS FEEDBACK PREFERENCE SLIPS

1) Are you prepared to invest in the repair of the two new holes? **Votes 25**

2) Would you prefer the two new holes to be mothballed until the economy improves and the Club has sufficient cash reserves to proceed? **Votes 211**

551 preference slips sent out – 237 returned

25 for No. 1) – 211 for No. 2) – 1 spoilt

Management Committee, November 2012

On-Course ... GREENS REPORT ... continued

FUTURE UP-KEEP OF THE CROMBIE COURSE

PHIL BYRNE, Chair of Greens



Most Members

are aware that the abnormal wet weather conditions of Spring and Summer have resulted in the *Nordmann Course* being unplayable all year. The *Crombie Course*, however, has generally coped well with the wet conditions, but is now showing signs of becoming totally waterlogged. In certain areas of the course, standing water has pooled.

In addition, a number of tee-boxes and greens are now showing that they are unable to cope with any excessive rainfall. Recent course inspection has shown that a number of drains on the course, including fairway drains, have become silted with clay and are no longer functioning efficiently; some

drains may have collapsed completely. It is generally known that Whickham Golf Club is built on ground which contains a large amount of glacial clay. In extreme wet conditions, clay particles

migrate into the drainage systems and subsequently impede their performance.

The number one concern of the Management Committee is keeping the Crombie Course playable in these wet times. High priority in the Winter Programme has been given to maintaining existing drainage systems and establishing new drains where appropriate. With some foresight, work has been prioritised to deal with problems that could or would affect the playability of the course in April 2013. This has resulted in work on tee boxes, greens and approaches to greens being the top priority. Extensive drainage work has already commenced on the 8th Tee Box. This tee box was initially constructed on poor

quality, clay based soil. Rear sections of this tee box will be replaced and the new drainage system, which is currently being installed, will prevent water running onto the tee box and the area immediately surrounding it.

Remedial work on the 15th Tee Box has also commenced and large, deep holes have been punched through both the white and yellow teeing areas into the drain bed. The cause of this problem was the use of sub-standard clay based soil as the top coat on which to grow the grass. The aim of this work is to replace enough of the sub-standard top-soil with quality Rootzone and sand so it drains correctly. To enable this extensive programme of work to be carried out the Management Committee has agreed to retain the services, throughout the winter period, of both the temporary ground staff.

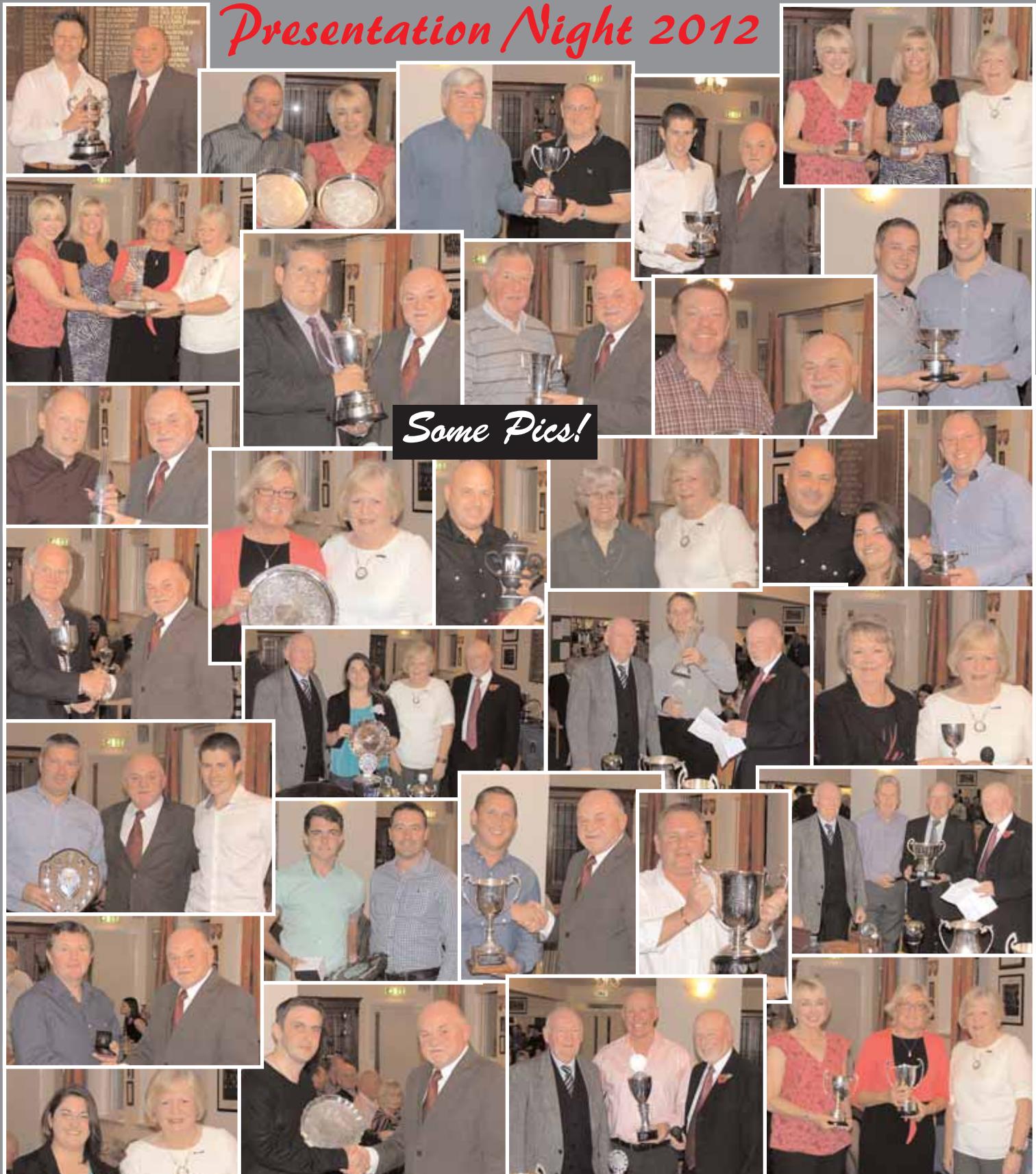
During the course of the winter season, regular updates from the Management Committee, on the drainage and remedial work associated with wet ground conditions, will be posted on the Club's Notice Board and internet site. Members should be aware that it may be necessary to close or restrict play on some holes whilst work is being carried out.

Kings & Queens



Presentation Night 2012

Some Pics!



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Whickham Golf Club

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