

Chairman's May Blog

Hello again Dear Members,

Another eventful month on the Board at Shirley Park.....

Most importantly, you will have read about Steve Murphy's retirement (after 16 years at the club). We have a lot to do to fill his boots and recruitment is underway right now. I think this could be an exciting new chapter for Shirley Park Golf Club.

Most of you will have received your renewal invoices for 2021/22 and hopefully we can look forward now to a complete year ahead without any lockdowns I really hope this is not a kiss of death from me!

Obviously, there is going to be a new normal. Social distancing and face masks may be around for a while longer and certain restrictions may be brought in regionally from time to time. We will have to wait and see and of course, we will have to follow those guidelines, which is also why we have made the initial decisions that we have, regarding our infamous online booking system! Many of you responded in our survey and the results have now been circulated. Thank you for your support and once again, thank you also for your understanding of our situation. We have said that we will be reviewing again in June, how we may tweak the system, and this may especially apply to weekend bookings.

The bar has re-opened, and we are now also allowed back inside the clubhouse – hurrah! We don't have to sit outside and freeze, whilst trying to be sociable. Anyway, Summer is on its way, I promise (HE told me).

Hopefully you have had a chance to look at the new course roadmap, which sets out the plan for Richard and his team over the next 18 months. This is a 'live' document which will change regularly as things happen. We will try to keep it as up-to-date as possible.

In one of our emails recently we listed many of the projects that we are undertaking now, both on the course as well as around the clubhouse. As you can see, we are keeping busy!

At our last Board meeting, we discussed quite a few matters –

- We are still evaluating a good, but affordable tracking system for our buggies.
- Membership is almost full, and we have re-introduced our five-and-a-half-day category for those wanting seven-day membership, until we can see how many people, if any, have not renewed. It's all very positive.
- Club competitions have been re-organised again for this year, which is wonderful. Our ever-enthusiastic Captain will have his drive-in on 26 June and hopefully soon we will know more about his plans for his away-day.

- Now that we are back in the bar, please look out for the charity boxes, in case you go in either of the bunkers on the 3rd.
- Bharat Patel and I are reviewing the society bookings for the year ahead, as well as planning our advertising, to bring in more functions and weddings, which is always good income for the club.
- Stoke by Nayland Hotel and Golf Club, Colchester this is where our past Captain, Paul Byfield, was intending to hold his away day in 2020. For obvious reasons, it never happened and now we have a large amount of credit to use up. Please keep an eye out for our member promotions. We will be offering some very good deals soon for golf and overnight stays. Stoke by Nayland is a 4-star hotel with excellent leisure facilities and 2 very good golf courses.
- As you know, we have introduced a new hazard on the 1st hole, by bringing in red stakes on the right-hand side. Hopefully, players will now not feel the urge to play a second ball if the first goes into the hazard. And in case you were not sure, there is no need for the out-of-bounds any longer, as the red stakes extend to infinity. Again, thank you for your understanding.
- Richard has now recruited 2 new apprentice greenkeepers and will obviously start training them straightaway, in order to keep on top of all his tasks and projects.
- We have plenty of projects under discussion now, in and around the clubhouse, which include the general paintwork, lounge bar upholstery and lighting, lighting around the putting green, the male visitor toilets and the so-called members' toilet by the 1st tee.
- We have received a suggestion to create 4 Shirley Park Majors and we are discussing this for 2022.

I would also like to make a special mention of the 100 Club, who have always done a fantastic job in supporting the club and this year is no exception, as John Finegan and Mick Avery have very generously offered to pay for the re-upholstery of the bar lounge furniture. More about this in the weeks to come. If you are a new member, please ask about the 100 Club... it's well worth joining, with a chance to win in their monthly prize draws, as well as the many social events they organise during the year. They are now organising regular Monday night Poker nights, hosted by Jamie Burrows, starting from the beginning of July.

I think one of my other roles as chairman is also to talk to you about standards. On the Board we really wanted to put up the dress code signs again, to emphasise how we want members and guests to dress on and off the course please. Please observe these rules. Also a few members have mentioned to me of late about dress standards concerning jeans. We voted a while ago to allow jeans into the club (not on the course), but these must be smart, clean jeans please (not torn and scruffy looking please). And finally, most important of all, foul and bad language this has been on the increase in the club over the last year or so and we really want to stamp this out. As you can imagine, new members and guests will not

be very impressed with some of the language used in the bar. Can we please make a concerted effort to control this more? Anyway, that's my Headmaster bit done. Thank you.

Finally, I have been asked to remind members that the snooker room is now open again and those members who regularly use it are very welcome back and apparently, they are looking for someone new to run 'the snooker club'. If interested, please make yourself known.

As you all know communication is THE key word we use now. So, if there is anything you want to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Board. Thanks.

Regards,
Keith Povah
Chairman.