



Message from the Captain

Welcome to the first edition of the Loudoun Gowf Club newsletter. We plan to publish a monthly newsletter to ensure members are kept up to date with events going on at the club. This will be the start of our drive to improve communication with the members. Newsletters, modernising our social media presence & website, membership surveys, focus groups are all planned. I hope the committee can be seen as open, transparent and approachable by the end of 2022.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their patience and understanding over the past couple of years. Covid 19 has hit society hard and Loudoun Gowf Club is no exception. It is testament to our members, staff and committee that the club has been kept on such a solid footing. I reiterate my thanks to John Goodwin, Gordon Clark, Liz Paterson, Annette Toal and their committees for all the hard work they put in under such difficult circumstances.

Since the AGM we have welcomed several new committee members. Despite it being early in year I am sure they will all prove to be great additions. On the course, Ronnie and his team continue to work tirelessly on the winter programme, as you will read about further down. The changes at the 11th, 12th and 17th look fantastic. Hopefully the removal of the trees behind the 13th green and 11th tee will improve both these areas.

Within the clubhouse we have seen a few changes, with Emma leaving us for pastures new. We wish her well. Russell is therefore looking to recruit both catering and front of house staff.

February has also seen a change of cleaner at the club. We wish Shan well, but welcome Fiona to the club. Fiona previously worked at Loudoun and has shown herself to be hard working and conscientious.

Unfortunately we will have to carry out significant remedial work to the electrical distribution boards in the clubhouse. Quotes have been received from 3 local companies and we hope to carry out the works prior to the start of the season. The shoe cleaner will also be revamped with a full service and new pipework and extendable hoses.

John Paton and Scott Gilchrist have been reviewing our sponsorship packages. If anyone is interested in providing sponsorship at the club please get in touch.

I would like to thank Rob Brown for all his advice and work in pulling this newsletter together. Rob has only been a member of Loudoun for a couple of years but is keen to get involved at the club. If anyone else fancies getting involved please do not hesitate to get in touch. Lastly I would like to wish you all the best for the 2022 season. Let's make this year a successful one!

Gavin Scott

Ladies Match and Handicap - Sally Hamilton

Entry to the summer knock out competitions will open shortly. The Blane Trophy (singles) and Bette Brown Trophy (4 ball) will be open to full lady members only, not 5-day members. The entry will be posted on club V1 with a closing date of 30th April. Cost is £3 singles and £6 per team for the doubles. Maximum handicap is 36.

All the ladies competitions for the season can be found on the Loudoun Gowf Club Website: Select 'Membership Zone' and then 'Club Events' to see the monthly schedule of events or by clicking [here](#)

For any ladies match or handicap queries through the season, please contact Sally Hamilton at salhm@aol.com



Ladies Captain - Elaine McDowall

The ladies charity has so far raised over £700 for the Crosshouse Children's Fund. This local charity raises money to support children and their families cared for at Crosshouse and Ayrshire Maternity hospitals. You can read more about the great work of the charity by clicking [here](#)

Elaine is absolutely delighted with the amount raised and the generosity of members through the donations received.



Gents Match and Handicap - David Johnstone

2022 Fixture list: Competitions for this Season can be found on the Loudoun Gowf Club Website: Select 'Membership Zone' and then 'Club Events' to see the monthly schedule of events or by clicking [here](#)

Opening competitions: The first three competitions will be team events, opening with Captain vs Vice Captain on 26 March. These competitions will allow members to get used to playing off grass and on a longer course without impacting on handicaps. The first Medal of the season will be on Saturday, 16 April.

The Wednesday Sweeps will continue as in previous years. These are handicap qualifying competitions, please arrange your own games.



Knockout competitions: Entries for the various knockouts will go live on 1st March, entry through Club V1 app or terminal in clubhouse. 5 day members are eligible to enter the over 55's Knockout. Closing date is 31 March.

Club V1 terminal: A new terminal has been installed in the hallway. It has the same functionality as previously e.g. entering competitions, entering scores, checking card balances and transactions etc. If you have a chipped membership card (black ink), simply present your card to log in. If you have the non-chipped card (blue ink), tap the screen and you can either log in with your card PIN number, or by typing in your surname. Entry for all qualifying competitions this season will be through either the terminal or the HowDidIDo / Club V1 app.

For any gents match or handicap queries through the season, please contact David Johnstone at matchsecretary@loudoungowfclub.co.uk

The Greenkeepers Cuttings

Ronnie Montgomery - Head Greenkeeper

The team have had a busy winter delivering key improvements to the course, often in terrible weather, while continuing to manage the impact of the pandemic across the team.

Along with the bigger projects the greenkeepers have been carrying out the usual routine winter maintenance on the course. Aeration of the greens has been ongoing to maintain plant health and remove excess surface water. Fairway verti-draining has also been regularly carried out throughout the winter months, which will have huge benefits to our course in the summer months.

Annual ditch clearing was also carried out at the hockey club. By clearing our neighbours' ditches this allows the burn at the 12th to flow freely and prevents it from overspilling.

During the summer it was noticed that the irrigation valves for the 17th tee and 16th green were leaking so these valves have also been renewed.

Below is a closer look at some of the bigger projects and improvements the team delivered through the winter months.

Drainage work at the 4th fairway

The first major job of the winter programme was back in October, with the installation of a new herring bone drainage

system on the 4th fairway. This area has been problematic for many years due to the

fairway being water logged through most of the winter leading to saturated soil and the inevitable build-up of moss. With the new drainage system now installed, and working as designed, members should notice the significant improvement in turf health benefitting year-round playing conditions.



Improvements to drainage at the back of the 13th green

During the month of November, the turf was lifted from the approach at the back of the 13th green. Due to this approach being so high it was preventing water from draining off the green. The raised areas were removed and the area graded allowing the approach to slope away from the green, thus enabling water to run off far more effectively. 4 Sitka spruce trees were also removed from the back of the green to allow more light and better air flow to the green, this will also help keep the green drier and improve turf health.



Renovation of ladies' 3rd Tee

During November the Ladies 3rd tee was also renovated. The surface was uneven and there was also a collapsed drain. Drought damage and a faulty sprinkler was also leading to noticeably poorer turf health on the tee.

Therefore, the tee was lifted, levelled and new turf laid. The sprinkler was also renewed with a replacement more suitable to a tee of this size.



Before



Steps at the front of the Clubhouse

After



Widening of the burn at the 12th and sleeper replacement

In the run up to Christmas the burn at the 12th was made wider and new sleepers laid. In some parts, the width of the burn was only 18" wide. This meant in particularly heavy spells of wet weather, water could surge through the burn and overflow onto the fairway at these narrow points. This was leading to flooding, and possible short term closures of the hole. Making the burn wider now allows the water to pass through it more freely, and reduces the risk of it overflowing as frequently. Bridges at the green, and another on the fairway, also received new sleepers as the old ones were starting to noticeably wear.

Before



After



Levelling the mound, extending and realigning the 11th fairway

At the start of the New Year the team started a major project on the 11th hole. This involved levelling the mound in the semi rough on the left-hand side of the burn. This area was then re turfed and will soon be cut into fairway. The old fairway used to follow the burn away from the green. This year the new fairway will point directly to the green across the burn.



Renovation of the paths at the 12th

During January the significant work continued with the removal of the old path up to the 12th tee and the renovation of the front path leading down to the 12th fairway. This path has been made wider with a bigger turning area at the top for buggies. This will likely increase the speed of play as it will direct everyone away from the 11th green after playing the hole.

While working on the path some trees to the left of the 12th tee were also thinned out. This brings our Sweet Chestnut tree into full view from the 9th fairway and when standing on the 12th tee. It was felt that rather than being hidden, this magnificent tree should be on full display. By thinning these trees, it will also create the potential for more tee positions to the left-hand side of the 12th tee.



Removal of the wall at the 17th tee

Through February the team started to remove the old wall at the 17th tee. This wall was crumbling and sections were breaking away, which was obviously not ideal from a Health and Safety perspective. The decision was therefore taken to remove the wall and reinstate the grass banking, with a new set of steps also being built.

Before



After



Tree work at the 16th

Since the beginning of the year our local tree surgeon has carried out various work for us. Most notable was the removal of 3 Poplar trees at the 16th hole next to the main road. This is because a couple of years ago a large branch broke off one of these trees and landed on the road. After closer inspection earlier this year, it was noticed that the tree was decaying from the inside out. As these trees were all of similar age, and not the ideal tree to be growing next to a busy main road, the decision was taken to remove them to prevent any accidents.



Upcoming Course works

Going into March the team will be focusing on bunker work. This will involve edging bunkers and topping up/relocating sand where needed. The greens and tees will receive a final verti-drain. Greens will be top dressed with 1.5 tons of sand per green and an application of Spring cold start fertiliser will be applied to greens and tees to get them ready for the upcoming season.

170 CLUB

Anyone wishing to participate in the 170 Club which raises additional funds for the Club, please contact Sally Hamilton at salhm@aol.com.

Entry is £5 a month with half of the takings paid as prizes and the other used to supplement Club funds. This additional money was used recently to purchase new seating for the lounge. For past prize breakdowns and a list of previous winners please [click here](#)



Food and Beverage - Russell McKee

As the Captain mentioned earlier, I am currently looking to recruit both front of house and kitchen staff. Should you know of anyone suitable, please contact me in the Club.

Friday 25th February saw us host the Ayrshire golf association prize giving.

A Premium Belgian lager, Heverlee, is now available on draft.
Read all about [the brewery here](#)



Club Clothing

A new stock of Glenmuir and Sunderland club branded clothing is now available for purchase. Waterproof jackets and trousers along with wind proof jackets are also available. For further info please speak to Russ.



The final word

I hope you found this newsletter helpful and / or informative in some way. It is produced for you, the member, in mind.

I would therefore ask that if anyone has any comments (good, as well as not so good!), feedback, questions or any suggestions for future content or articles to please email me at rob.brown@sky.com or The Captain at gavscott@doctors.net. I'm also always on the look out for photos that can be published.

The link to the newsletter will be distributed through Club V1. To ensure as wider distribution as possible, please could you ensure that the office has your most up to date email address. If you hear of others who haven't read the newsletter, please point them towards the office to have their email updated.

