

Hello dear members,

I'm sorry to start on a sad note, but I think it is only right to write few words about a very popular member of staff, Tina Sym, who passed away recently. Tina was only 43, but had been struggling badly with cancer over the past couple of years and obviously with Covid interrupting things, many of us had not seen dear Tina for quite a while. She died peacefully and now we hope there is some relief for Kevin and her family. R.I.P. Tina.

As always lots to report since my last blog..... we've had a great fun Captain's Drive-in, with Steve being as enthusiastic as ever and then a very entertaining Calcutta Cup event, with Bharat having his long locks all shaved off and we raised over £ 1000 for charity ... well done everybody. Steve Coyne showed us that class is permanent and form is temporary, once again winning the club championship. In addition we have managed to squeeze in quite a few club competitions Golden Jubilee, Millenary Bowl, Silver Jubilee, Whitbread Trophy, Stag Trophy, Bertie Jansen Trophy, President's Prize, as well as the usual monthly medals ! Again well done to all those winners and thank you for all taking part.

The Captain's away-day is now fast approaching and we currently have 67 members attending at Stoke by Nayland, near Colchester. There are 2 very good courses and a very nice 4-star hotel with really good leisure facilities. A good time should be had by all. The format will be a 36-hole stableford competition over the 2 days.

Also coming up soon, will be our second Q&A session for all members to ask questions of the board.... we want to hear your views, your concerns and your suggestions for general improvement to OUR club. This will be on Thursday 14 October at 7.00pm in the club's dining room. Please send in your questions now and we look forward to seeing you there.

As I have mentioned before, we set up a working party (amongst members) to give us feedback on the online booking system. We promised to review it and we are doing just that. We have spoken to many other clubs.... some have scrapped online bookings, others will swear by it and some have adopted a hybrid solution. We will keep you informed.

Golf membership seems to be on the increase throughout the country and we are no exception. At the last count we had 525 members and during this summer there has still been plenty of availability in the afternoons. It will be interesting to see how things work out during the winter months and shorter days.

I am pleased to see quite an increase in younger members in the club and we hope to get them more and more involved as time goes on. Also we have seen a recent swell in the junior section with numbers now approaching 40 ! Some of this is due to a new agreement that we now have with Trinity school. More on this soon. I am also pleased to announce that Jack Denman is taking on the role of Junior Organiser and we know he will do well.

You will have read that we have now updated the dress code – on the course and in the clubhouse. New posters should be on display soon.

Unfortunately we are still trying to catch up with our accounts for the last year and this has meant that we are having to postpone our AGM again....probably to December and then we hope to send the audited accounts to all members for approval. Regarding the election of officers and directors of the club, we have decided to postpone this to an EGM in April 2022, when we will also be proposing the subscription fees for 2022/23.

Other issues recently discussed include –

- We are still exploring the economics of buying a GPS system for the buggies.
- Increase in prices for societies and green fees in 2022.
- A revamp of our website.
- New prices (& a new brochure) for functions, weddings & meetings.
- We have now recruited a 5th member of our green-keeping team.
- The new Golf and Greens committee have been busy with proposals for some course changes, especially regarding winter tees in the future.
- Work as set out in the course roadmap is progressing well, but there are plenty of projects still to do (see below).
- The £ 10 levy in your subscription has been allocated to finish off the 13th tee box, which we hope to begin on the 11th October. The tee mat will have to be used in the meantime.
- There is a lot of discussion at present about course drainage and course irrigation. We will report a lot more on this in the months to come.
- We hope to run a pro-am next year (in May). More details to follow.
- We are looking to review the local rules more soon.
- We are now reviewing the cleaning contract for the club and then we will probably re-introduce towels in the changing rooms.
- Projects in and around the clubhouse include lighting around the putting green, improved LED lighting in the lobby and the lounge, refurbished Gents visitors' toilets, a new electronic notice-board in the lobby, more CCTV cameras and a request for quotes to look at the guttering, the rendering and paintwork around the outside.

The greenkeepers have been working hard on various projects over the past month or so.... they needed to locate and clear the blockage around the old smaller pond on the 18th and we now need to re-assess what do next. They needed to spray most greens with fungicide against disease. Following the heavy rain on the 14 September, many of the bunkers including 3, 15 and 16 needed complete shovelling, de-compacting and re-raking.

You will have seen that we have filled in the first bunker on the 16th..... there was no point in keeping it and it just caused more work. We had to hire a 6-ton dumper truck, but all the soil delivered, did not cost us anything. We also hope to avail ourselves of more soil for some other projects soon. New forthcoming projects include –

1. A proper new fence is being erected at the back of the practice ground.
2. 7th yellow tee to have a new sleeper wall erected similar to 13th (courtesy of Steve Denman). It will then be re-turfed, after levelling with new rootzone.
3. Members of the board had a site meeting and have discussed filling in two thirds of the big bunker on the 5th and re-lining the remainder, to prevent stones coming up and to prevent silt/soil washing in and contaminating the sand.

I have been asked to let you all know that the 'TANTRUM TROPHY' is back !... If you witness any member having a sense of humour failure on the course and throwing a 'tantrum', please report this as soon as possible to Mr David Millar, who is the custodian of the trophy. It will be awarded accordingly and hopefully even photographed for the forum, until the next recipient comes along !

Finally, I would to say a BIG thank you to Jayne Wilding who has been a great help to us recently. She filled in temporarily to cover some sick leave in the office. She has now taken on a new GM role at a golf club near to where she lives and we wish her well.

Many thanks for your attention and if you have any issues to raise, please do not hesitate to contact YOUR board.

Best rgds

Keith Povah

Chairman.