



Captains Message

Hi everyone and a very warm welcome from myself, John Lewis and our Lady Captain Yvonne O'Keeffe. We would especially like to extend a warm welcome to our newer members. In normal times we would be able to meet and introduce ourselves in the clubhouse but as we all know, these are not normal times. That said, hopefully we will all get to know each other in the not-too-distant future.

Maybe, by the time you read this we may have some idea when we can reopen the course but we're not banking on it. There seems to be little that you can bank on at the moment. One thing that does seem certain though is that you're stuck with us as Captains for another year! Well, they do say "practice makes perfect". You never know, we might be making a decent fist of it by November!

So, the fixture list has been drawn up and torn up. We fell at the first hurdle really with the cancellation of the Captains Drive In but we'll include the schedule on our website anyway. We managed to squeeze in virtually all our major cups and competitions last year and we'll endeavour to do the same this year. Just bear in mind that everything is subject to change and cancellation at short notice.

Moving on to the course, we have not been idle. There are new tees on the 8th and we have re-laid the Mens green tee on the 9th. The greens were hollow-tined at

the end of last year and will be overseeded before the course reopens. The new practice area has suffered a little during the winter but our greenkeeper Dinny has assured me that it will be up to spec by early summer. We just need some warmer weather to get things growing again. We aim to have the two new driving bays in action soon as well and we have plans for ongoing course improvements throughout the coming year.

As some of you may be aware it's our 125 year anniversary this year. We have pencilled in a bit of an extravaganza for the August bank holiday weekend so let's hope that normality has returned by then and we can all enjoy it to the full. It's a big occasion so we'll be putting out anniversary merchandise and clothing etc. Let's just pray that it can all go ahead.

So as winter fades and spring and summer beckon, we hope you're all looking forward to getting out there and playing our little gem of a course. We certainly are!

Well, that's all from us for now so take care, stay safe and we'll see you on the fairways! All the very best, *John and Yvonne.*

I learned three things that morning

Welcome to one of the finest 9 hole courses in the country. Over the 125 years many great people have come and gone and it is because of them that we now have such a successful and thriving Golf Club that provides members and guests alike the opportunity to go out and enjoy a game of golf in a breathtaking location steeped in history and enjoy a warm and friendly atmosphere both on and off the course.

In my time with the club I have made some great friends and from day one I was made welcome and was allowed to be part of the club.

Golf should be enjoyed at all times but it can be unpredictable some times, I recall one Sunday morning some years ago we were playing a Foursomes competition where two play together taking alternate shots. On the Fifth hole, index 1, par 4 my partner on the day Martin O Gorman RIP managed to put the second shot in the left side bunker. I hit out but the ball took off to the right out on to the roadway just as a car was passing. There was a loud bang. I climbed out over the wall and approached the car, the lady driver was shocked by the noise of the ball striking the car. We looked around the car but luckily the ball must have struck the pillar between front and back door's as there was no damage. The driver was happy and proceeded on her way. I returned to the golf course to see a ball on the green. on examination it turned out to be my ball that had bounced off the car back on to the green. My partner putted for par. I learned three things that morning.

1. *The importance of having Golf Insurance as this may have had a different ending.*
2. *The importance of a bit of luck when playing a round of golf*
3. *That nothing is secret in Spanish Point G.C. as everybody seemed to hear of this incident.*

On a personal note, I would like to thank all the officers and committees with whom I had the pleasure of working with in 2020 mostly through Zoom, all who volunteered with projects and gave freely of their time.

Thanks also to the Parent Club who nominated me to continue as President for 2021 due to there being very little golf played in 2020. I look forward to serving the Club this year in its 125th year.

Keep safe and hopefully we will be back on track before too long.

Martin Davis (President, 2020 & 2021)



Secretary's Report

Covid-19 has had a major impact on Spanish Point Golf club and its members over the last 12 Months and it will be with us well into the future until everyone is vaccinated. Despite this, however, the club has been active on many fronts and a lot of planning and preparation has been under way to make the club an even better facility when we at last get back to something approaching normal.

COVID Impact

The pandemic caused the club to close from March until mid May 2020 when it reopened to members that resided within a 5km radius. This lasted until the mid-July when it opened to all members. The club was closed again in October and only reopened early December 2020. The club closed again after Christmas and remains closed (Feb '21). It is hoped, however, that when the current restrictions are eased, golf clubs will be one of the first facilities to be allowed re-open.

Works on the Course during 2020

The club was fortunate to receive a Sports Capital Grant of €35k during the year, which allowed it to develop the short game practice area adjacent to the club house which will be in operation by next spring. See "course development" on back page.

For health a safety reasons the club carried out extensive works on the 8th green and formed a new tee box for the hole.

Course condition

The condition of the course over the last year has been exceptional including the condition of the fairways, greens and tee-boxes. Our thanks go to our green keeper and staff and club member's volunteers.

Proposals for 2021

The club has also applied for planning permission to construct a 41sq.mt. extension to the rear of the club and it is hoped that permission for same will be granted shortly. The extension is intended to be used primarily as a semi-outdoor facility to address COVID and, indeed, other similar health threats. It will also be used to house a computer-based golf driving practice and teaching area and with the help of grant aid, it is hoped that the extension will be provided as soon as possible.

Club membership

Spanish Point is doing extremely well in this area at present: we have 579 members; 369 senior members, 144 junior members and 66 life members. A 15% discount on subscriptions was offered by the club to members who paid their subscriptions in full by the end of January 2021. In addition, they would be placed in the draw for a free membership for 2022. I am delighted to tell you that 400 members paid their subscriptions in time to avail of the discount. The winners of the draw for free membership in 2022 are; Full member; Geraldine Grealy; Junior boys; Tommy Malone; Junior girls; Ide O'Connor.

Juniors (see separate reports)

Club junior membership in 2020 was 125. It is fantastic that junior membership is so good and our thanks go to Michael Hehir, Les Seal and Val Shannon as well as a number of other volunteers for the wonderful work they do in guiding our club's young talent. The future looks secure in that respect.

Noel Connellan, *Honorary Secretary*

YOUR CLUB'S FINANCES

The ownership of Spanish Point golf club belongs to its members who are in effect the shareholders. The Trustees and Committees are non paid volunteers and any profits are reinvested in facilities.

Your club is in a good financial position but care needs to be taken in these difficult times to ensure we can continue for another 125 years. Our bank loans were taken out for land purchase and course development prior to 2014 and now stand at €160,000 due to Bank of Ireland. We have €100,000 in bank credit balances at 31/12/20, so we are in a healthy position to meet our obligations.

THE COVID EFFECT

The Covid restrictions impacted greatly on our bar and green fee income in 2020 and are likely again to have a major effect for 2021. Our estimate for 2021 is based on the hope that we will get an "open" period during the Summer months when we can generate some bar and green fee revenue. During the Summer of 2020 we had a boost in new membership which is not anticipated in 2021, and this, in addition to the 15% reduction in fees we granted for 2021 will leave subscriptions down from 98k in 2020 to 85k in 2021. This assumes that all members will pay their subscriptions.

	Actual results yr to 30/9/2020	Estimate for yr to 30/9/2021	Change
INCOME - bar	7	7	-
- subscriptions	98	85	-13
- green fees	55	35	-20
- fundraising	14	5	-9
EXPENDITURE	-125	-120	5
SURPLUS	49	12	-37

SUBSCRIPTIONS

In June 2020 the Committee made the decision to allow a 15% reduction in member's subscriptions for 2021 due to the restricted playing opportunities due to covid. The committee will review, during the year, whether a reduction can be afforded for 2022. Spanish Point GC is one of the few clubs to award such a reduction and have one of the lowest fee levels in the country. As you can see from the 2021 estimates the membership subs are vital; we know you might not get the chance to play whenever you want to but I would appeal to all members to pay their subs to ensure the survival of the club.

We face a catch 22 situation in that the greater the effect of covid, the less funds will be available to award a reduction. Please support your committee with the decisions they make, we are aware of the difficult times we are in and will do our best to keep subscriptions at an affordable rate.

Nearly 75% of fees have been collected to the end of January and I would like to thank all of you who have paid in such a positive and timely manner. WELL DONE and THANK YOU.

The balance of subscriptions are due by 31 March and will not attract the 15% discount.

Ivan White, *Treasurer*



Ladies Club Update

Happy New Year to all members. January 2020 started off with John and Yvonne's Captains Drive- In, which was well attended by members. Little did we know what was ahead of us ! The rest of the year was disrupted by Covid 19.

It was not possible to run Open Days and major competitions due to the ever changing restrictions during the year. However we did have our weekly competitions which were well supported by our members . At the end of the summer we had a Summer Finale sponsored by Ann Marie Russell. Congratulations to Clare Cullinhan on winning 1st prize.

We were unable to have the Ladies club annual outing in 2020, the last outing being in 2019 to Athenry Golf Club with a meal and overnight in the Raheen Woods hotel.

We ran a very successful Get into Golf programme which exceeded our expectations. We had 47 ladies sign up for it. Thanks to Val Shannon for co-ordinating the programme and to Martin Ward for the lessons and to the Ladies committee and members for all the help in running the programme.

The Ladies AGM was held by Zoom meeting on Nov 8th 2020. Lady Captain Yvonne O'Keefe introduced her Vice Captain Sally O' Dwyer. The committee were elected as follows. Hon Treasurer- Eileen Murrehy, Hon Sec- Karen White, H/Cap Sec- Mary Cleary , Competition Sec & Junior Convenor- Val Shannon. Committee members –Kathleen Haugh, Emer Mc Carthy and Carol Akroyd. We wish Yvonne & Sally the very best for the year ahead .Thanks to the committee for volunteering their time and energy to the club.

We have come through a tough year and still have a way to go , but hopefully we will run our Open days and Major competitions this year. 2021 marks the 125 year Anniversary of SPGC and we will celebrate this great milestone later in the year.

I want to welcome all our new Lady members and look forward to meeting and playing golf with you in the future.

Stay Safe

Karen White, Hon. Sec. Ladies Club

Golf Insurance

The club offers an optional Personal Accident Golf insurance through AON/Travellers Insurance. Below is a summary of the policy. If anyone requires further information please email the club.

BENEFITS AND COVERS FOR IRISH GOLF CLUBS

Cover is subject to policy terms and conditions

Hole in One Cover

- in an Official Club Competition or GUI/ILGU Event
 - Up to €250 on the day - for vouched bar expenses incurred on the day in the club bar.
 - At the Insurer's discretion-€100 - where expenses are not vouched.

Accidental Damage to Equipment (up to €4,000)

- Replace your lost or damaged Personal Golf Equipment through your own Club's Pro Shop.

Personal Liability

- Indemnity against Damage to Third Party Property, and Third Party Injury for which you may be liable.
- Insured to a limit of €2,600,000 each and every claim.

Personal Accident cover for Death, Disablement and Medical Dental Expenses.

- Limit is €150,000

Quick and efficient claim settlements

Junior Girls Report

With a nod to former Junior Girls Convenors in the club like Catherine Quinn and Della and Tanya Malone it is great to see so many girls now learning how to play golf. It is thanks to recently retired teacher Mairead Bergin who initiated a link between St.Josephs secondary school and the club, that we now have a good number playing regularly. There is also a growing number of younger girls attending Junior sessions on a regular basis with a total of 33 currently joined up and active. The future looks good.

Over the last few years our Juniors have played in competitions in Lahinch, Kilkee, Dromoland, Ennis, Doneraile and Woodstock with both individual and team successes. There is usually a development competition for the younger girls run alongside both 9 and 18 hole competitions for those holding handicaps. We participated in a Clare interclub League and hosted one of these successfully in Spanish Point in 2019.

A team representing St.Josephs Secondary school played in the inaugural Clare Inter schools competition in Woodstock two years ago and unfortunately like a lot of events it was not played for in 2020. The girls have been lucky enough over the years to avail of the services of golf professionals Ian Kearney, Mark Magowan and Martin Ward.

A big 'Thank you' must go to Sinead Sexton who this past year has willingly given the girls a lot of her time and wisdom which they greatly appreciated. Sinead has certainly given plenty back to the club where she started her illustrious golf career.

Thanks also to the many Lady club members and parents who have assisted with the running of Junior Girls golf. It couldn't happen without their help.

Congratulations to Amy Corry who has just heard of her selection to a Munster regional coaching panel, which is just reward for all her hard work and enthusiasm to learn and practice. Hopefully she is the first of many to get this chance.

Finally we hope to have a team playing in the Munster section of the Junior Girls Inter Club Competition this coming season. Another first for the club. We look forward to getting back to playing golf and seeing the Junior girls.

Valerie Shannon (Junior Convenor)



JUNIOR BOYS SECTION

The junior boys section has continued to thrive during 2020 with 99 registered members under the age of 18 years. The Junior Section headed by Micheal Hehir, and assisted by Brenda Hehir and Les Seal, has provided training sessions throughout the year with our regular Professional Martin Ward.

Our main event in 2020 was the launch of the SPGC Junior Boys Open on 29 July. With over 50 entries from golf clubs throughout Munster we saw some great golf on what turned out to be a very wet day. The winner of the main competition for boys over 12 years old was Paul Frawley who recorded an amazing 53 points playing off a handicap of 30, he was proudly cut 7.5 shots on the day.

A team of 5 were entered into the Inter Club competition and put up a spirited performance playing in Ennis Golf Club. This was the second year playing for most of the boys and they increased their overall score by 25 points compared with the previous year. All the boys are available for at least another 2 years and, if Covid 19 is suppressed, we hope to go out in 2021 and improve our score again.

The SPGC junior boys team agreed to play in the inaugural challenge match against Kilrush juniors. Sixteen boys representing Spanish Point with ages from 8 years upwards put on a stunning performance to take a 2 match lead from the home leg, then 7 days later, on a very wet Kilrush course, played some excellent golf to hold on to the lead and take the trophy. This will be an annual event and we look forward to meeting the Kilrush boys later in the year.

There have been coaching sessions during all school holidays and we have in excess of 60 hours of training with Martin Ward improving the older more experienced boys and starting off many new members on the road to a long successful golf career. The average numbers attending weekly sessions in the summer was around 40 boys, all very keen to become the next Rory McIlroy. Parents supported the group sessions with great enthusiasm and made sure that all the boys were playing in a very safe environment and within the Social Distancing rules. Some of the parents became very involved and resulted in them taking up golf and becoming members of SPGC.

The incredible increase in the number of junior members has made it very difficult for the three leaders to ensure that all the junior members can benefit from regular coaching and practice sessions, particularly with the current restrictions. We have a waiting list for junior boys to join our training sessions and they can only be accommodated if we have more regular volunteers from within the club membership. Any member with spare time in the summer months who is willing to help out will be made very welcome. No experience with juniors is required, we will give you all the training you need and ensure that you will be working in a very safe environment. Contact Micheal Hehir if interested on 087 643 4178.



Interclub 2021 Competitions

(subject to Covid restrictions)

Spanish Point has a strong interclub entry for 2021. The JB Carr (for seniors) will also be entered when the application forms are issued.

Men's Junior Cup - Manager - Michael Healy;

Men's Barton Shield - Manager - tbc

Men's Jimmy Bruen Shield - Manager - Les Seal;

Men's Pierce Purcell Shield - Manager - Tom Hehir/Les Seal;

Men's All-Ireland Four-Ball - Manager - Mervin Hehir

Fred Perry Trophy - Manager - Noel Connellan;

Mixed Foursomes - Manager - John Lewis/Yvonne O'Keefe;

Munster Country Clubs Cup - Manager - Michael Hehir

JUNIORS: Girls' Inter-Club - Manager - Val Shannon;

Boys' Inter-Club - Manager - Michael Hehir/Les Seal;

Fred Daly Trophy - Manager - Michael Hehir/Les Seal.



Sadly, the incredibly successful Christmas Party in December 2019 could not be repeated in 2020 due to the current restrictions. However, around 60 boys did take part in a fun Christmas training session and 6 holes competition with chocolates and gifts from Santa for everyone. Well done to all those who took part and to Sinead Sexton and Martin Ward for helping out on the days.

2021 will be an unknown as to what we will be able to put on for Juniors, we have planned a Junior Open, the home and away match versus Kilrush and 3 inter club competitions. The school holidays will see the return of coaching sessions and regular weekly competitions in the summer.

The enthusiasm of the junior boys and their parents gives great encouragement about the future of Spanish Point Golf Club. 26% of male members are over the age of 60, and 27% are under the age of 18. We currently have a huge void in members aged between 20 and 40 years, hopefully the foundations are in place to solve this over the next 20 years. The future is bright.

Les and Micheal



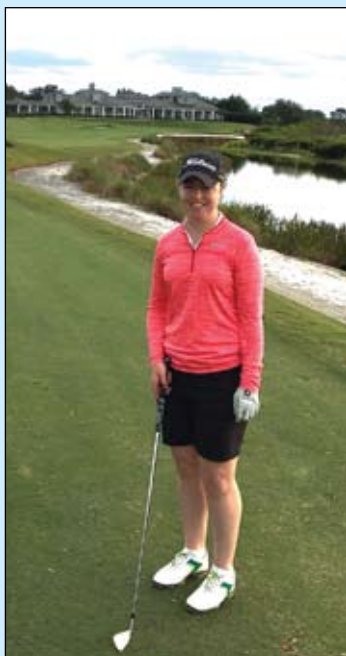
From Spanish Point to Boca Raton

I joined Spanish Point Golf Club in 2004 as a junior member. Tanya Carroll and Della Malone were very influential in my early days of playing as coming from a non golfing family it was the encouragement I needed to get me out playing regularly. They would take a group of junior girls weekly on the course and introduce us to the game, the rules and the etiquette required to play.

As I improved so did my handicap and my golf began to take me to places all over the world representing Spanish Point, Lahinch, Munster and Ireland. I was fortunate to be on the Paddy Harrington Golf Scholarship programme while studying my undergraduate degree in Business & Management at Maynooth University and the International Sports Scholarship Programme while studying for my Masters in Sport Management at the University of Stirling in Scotland.

In 2020, I made the decision to turn Professional and start the LPGA Teacher Education Program. I have spent the past 3 winters in South Florida working in Golf Operations and progressing into an Assistant Golf Professionals role at Woodfield Country Club in Boca Raton. It certainly is a different club compared to Spanish Point with members paying upward of \$50,000 in joining fees and an annual sub of \$24,000.

Sinead Sexton



Operation Transformation

Beginning on the 5th of January 2020, Spanish Point Golf Club hosted for the second time its very own Operation Transformation. In total forty eight participants took part varying in age from people in their twenties to people in their sixties.

Included in the program were cardio fitness sessions with Jonathan Hickey every Wednesday night, meditation and mindfulness sessions with Amy MacDonald setting long and short term goals to help making lasting change in their lives, food demonstrations with Armada Head Chef Peter Jackson and boxercise classes with Ezra Guilfoyle every Sunday morning. Combined with this there was a weekly weigh in every Sunday morning with Head Trainer and Nutritionist Jonathan Hickey and his wife Lisa. Fitness Instructor Deirdre Glynn also helped out, advising and encouraging participants at all times and particularly on the Wednesday evening 5km runs. Nurse Josephine Talty assessed and recorded blood pressure and body mass index for each participant establishing a baseline to work from.

Operation Transformation ran its full schedule of events except for the final 5km run and gala dinner presentation. Due to Covid 19 restrictions and concerns the awards were postponed indefinitely and it was hoped to have all participants celebrate together in announcing the winner. As the year transpired this did not prove possible and the eventual winner was named as local woman Doreise Power who had an amazing journey and transformation throughout the ten week programme. Doreise followed the programme with remarkable determination and also encouraged other participants in their journey. Her positive nature and active role modelling helping others along with losing over forty pounds in weight made her a worthy winner. She received a cheque for €1000.00 and more importantly the title of Spanish Point Golf Club's Operation Transformation Winner 2020 in a Covid 19 compliant awards at the clubhouse in

Our American Ambassadors

In August 2017, three Baynes brothers (Peter, Brendan and Christopher), two sons (Peter's sons Will and Jack) and two friends (Duncan Mackenzie and Blake McAllister) arrived in Spanish Point. Our mother/grandmother, Claire Baynes Garry (nee' O'Brien), who gave birth to 12 children in Rochester, NY, had passed away at the age of 90 just a month before and Claire's paternal great grandparents were James O'Brien and Catherine Foudy, both born in Milltown Malbay, in 1830 and 1832, respectively.

On the day of our arrival in Spanish Point we decided that, rather than searching deeper for our Irish roots, we should first head over to Spanish Point Golf Club and test its turf. A little (ok, a lot of) rain and wind didn't stop us and we had the course to ourselves. We were pleasantly surprised by our lower than normal scores after nine holes, which we bragged about when we stopped in the SPGC bar at the turn. That is, until the lads at the bar asked us how we fared on #8, "the terror," which we quickly realized we had inadvertently skipped.

After a pint or two and an inaugural Baby Guinness, we headed back out and finished the most enjoyable 17 holes we had ever played.

Upon our return to Ireland in August 2019, our first stop was SPGC, where this time we were greeted with a fine day as we took another stab at turf management, West Clare style. We finished the day with a pint and a picture behind the bar with "the two Bernies" and already felt like overseas life members.

When the pandemic struck in March 2020 and we brothers/sons/friends thought about what we were missing the most and who might need our support, we immediately thought of the 9-holer in Spanish Point that has been so good to us.

Our consortium of seven ultimately expanded to 11 with the addition of brother John, brother-in-law Dan Ryan, and friends Kevin Crawford and Chris Madden, and we applied for and were accepted as overseas life members of your fine club. We look forward to meeting you all and hopefully holding an Ireland vs. U.S.A. Ryder Cup event in August 2021 (subject to COVID vaccinations, of course) as we all celebrate SPGC's 125th anniversary.

Peter Baynes



November 2020. The total weight loss for the full group was 652 pounds which was a fantastic achievement. This was an average of 13.5 pounds per participant.

Many participants reported that within the ten week programme they began to sleep better, feel better in themselves while enjoying the social interaction of the group. They also remarked on renewed optimism for themselves going forward and this with the education on food intake and awareness of portion size in helping them to make better more informed decisions as being some of the main positives



The “Dear Leader” got a hole in one

I am on the first tee box and I am about to hit the ball. It's 384 yards long. Suddenly Ms Kim, my caddy steps forward and informs me that the very first time the “Dear Leader” played this hole, he got a hole in one. Needless to say I slice it into the pine trees. I am in North Korea as Country Director for Concern and it's the Spring of 1999. Looking back on it now I am half way through my 33 year career overseas as an aid worker. I started in Ethiopia in 1983 and I finished in Ethiopia in 2015. Born and raised in Ennis, County Clare, I was with the Mid Western Health Board working as a section officer in the payroll dept in Limerick when I volunteered to go overseas with Concern for two years in 1983. While I returned to the Health Board for brief periods in the late eighties, I have been overseas since that time until my return to Co. Clare in 2020.

A recurring theme during my 33 years overseas was war and its fallout. At its worst, there was famine, genocide and mass disease outbreaks with unimaginable tolls. In the first half of my career I worked in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Bangladesh, Sudan, Cambodia, Laos, Somalia, Angola, Rwanda, Congo, Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The two priests, Aengus and Jack Finucane, from Limerick, who were among the founders of Concern (during the Nigerian/Biafran civil war) were in charge and inspired me. I led teams of amazing nurses, engineers, logisticians (mostly Irish) and we employed thousands of dedicated and brave local aid workers.

I spent two years in North Korea from 1997 to 1999, which was going through enormous hardship. Even though it was in one of the most volatile areas in the world, it was safe. The North Koreans and I got on generally well, but one day in February 1999, when it was -25 C, my liaison officer (a lady from Foreign Affairs) came in to the office and we started an argument about a planned visit. She told me we must talk on the balcony even though it was freezing. After a few minutes on the balcony, we both started laughing and she realized that she had inadvertently confirmed for me that my office inside was bugged.

After North Korea, I returned to Angola in January 2000 and spent the next two years there. War and chaos again, which thankfully ended when the rebel leader Jonas Savimbi was killed. One man's megalomania had kept the war going, he was killed, the war stopped. I moved on to Zimbabwe for a year, where there were huge food shortages after Mugabe expelled the White farmers off the land. After a break of 6 months and a round the world trip with my golf bag, which included golf in Thailand, Australia, New Zealand and the US, I joined the United Nations in June 2004. I was the UN coordinator for Darfur in Sudan, where there was a war and famine going on. Even though we were constantly harassed by the government and targeted by the rebels a big improvement was achieved. After 5 years I was moved by the UN as I was about to be expelled.

It's 2009 and I am in Iraq. Now this is real chaos. On my second day in Baghdad, while chairing a press conference to highlight World Humanitarian Day (commemorated after the Baghdad bomb of 2003 which killed 23 UN people), a thousand pound bomb went off at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nearby. 70 Iraqi diplomatic staff were killed, this time the UN does not suffer casualties but it's a clear message that no one is safe. By now I have a family based in neighbouring Jordan (more



Michael in North Korea

later). After almost two years in Iraq, I move to Libya where there is a bitter civil war going on between Gaddafi and the rebels. Utter chaos but thankfully only for a few months as I have to rendezvous with my wife Sarah so that I can attend the birth of our second child Molly in Limerick in July 2011.

Sarah McNiece from Tucson, Arizona and I met in Khartoum in Sudan in 2005, married in 2008, had our reception in the Spanish Point Armada and she is an aid worker also, so she understands how it is (most of the time). Its September 2011, our first daughter Saoirse is two years old and all excited, Molly is two months old, has just been christened in St Joseph's Church in Miltown Malbay and we are all off to Ethiopia. We spend 4 years in Ethiopia, it is mega busy but generally secure and in early 2015 we decide I should retire and Sarah take the lead. She lands a dream job with the US government in Costa Rica and we spend 5 great years there. I do a few jobs for the UN in Nigeria but mostly stay retired.

Roll on to July 2020 and COVID etc and we traveled to Miltown Malbay, where we have had a place since 2006 and which we have visited each Summer. St Joseph's School welcomes our daughters, they love the school and we decide to move here fulltime. Sarah can telework, I can golf. I am a longtime member of Spanish Point golf course and since August I have played there regularly when it has been open. I have enjoyed the people I have met on the course and have met some old friends from Ennis, some I had not seen in 40 years.

Michael McDonagh

ALL MEMBERS MUST REGISTER ON CLUBV1

Covid 19 has necessitated the move to online booking, score recording and finance transactions. Like most golf clubs we have chosen Clubv1 software for this move and all members must register on the Clubv1 App to be able to play golf.

To register; download the App from the App Shop and follow the registration process using your email address and password which must be at least 6 characters; including one capital and one number.

You will then receive an email asking you to confirm the registration. You should then go in to Clubv1 and log in with your email and password. You will now be able to book tee times, record you scores, see your handicap index, purse and subscription balances, competition results and calendar, notices and club newsletters.

To ensure your handicap is linked to Clubv1 you will also have to register on HOWDIDIDO.com (same process as clubv1 registration).

It all sound complicated, but I asked my under 30 daughter to do it for me!!!!

If you have difficulties please message Les Seal on 0858105750.

Any queries about membership please email the Club Secretary on spanishpointgolf@gmail.com.

Treasurer

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A KERRYMAN ABROAD

Being a Kerryman my first love was for the big ball. Where I come from there definitely was no hurling and golf was only played by the visiting Americans in Killarney and Waterville. So it was a revelation that in this area so many locals played golf in Spanish Point. And to make it more attractive its location was a spot of immense beauty.

When I came to Miltown my golfing tutor was PJ Downes. I was busy in the job and used only sneak out for an hour here and there. I really looked forward to my time on the course. I remember that we spent a lot of time on the old second green. I was awe-struck by the way PJ got the ball so close to the hole every time with either a pitch or chip. Under his patient guidance I occasionally did get it close but consistency was never a part of my golf game. In fact the golf was only a part of the attraction of those hours I spent out there. PJ's stories of Miltown and the characters was always entertaining, told with wit and humour. It was obvious to me how much he loved his golf and the stories that were a part of the folklore of Spanish Point. I was told of Paddy Leydon and Paddy Casey. I had known that Martin Talty was a great musician a good friend of my in-laws but I never knew he was no mean golfer. The stories often had a different interpretation from various people you spoke to. Getting my golfing gear was always a wonderful experience. A visit to the pro shop, Joe Hennessey's, was always something to look forward to. You would always come out with the best of gear and a smile on your face as Joe described Miltown and its inhabitants with wonderful flowery language.

I was on the Committee for several years. At this stage the greens were protected from the marauding cattle by a low wire fence which wasn't always successful. It made the game more interesting to negotiate the wire and the left overs from the cattle which added to Spanish Point's charm for the visitors. I enjoyed the meetings with the sometimes very active debates. If there was any problems Father Tim Tuohy was always available for advice. I made new friends and sometimes we might continue the discussion over a pint in Paddy Hennessey's with my neighbour Tony Crowley.

I was amazed by the commitment of members to keep the club going in sometimes difficult times when golf was not as popular as it is today. The hours and effort of the older members such as Paddy Cleary and PJ Kyne put in to it was amazing. The support they gave to younger golfers helped many.

My next treasured experience was when Brendan McKenna, the outgoing president asked me to take over as president. It was indeed an honour and gave me great insight in to the work and commitment of all the people involved. The relationship between the women's and men's committees was always excellent and without them the club would definitely not be as successful as it is. This is especially true over Covid where Val and Sinead have been so active in passing on their skills to new members. The nights after the Captains and Presidents prize were always most enjoyable and new friends were made and old friends chatted about how they had a terrible day and only got 36 points. I must confess I still do not understand the handicaps and winning points. Lots of changes have been made over the years and the efforts of everyone involved in the design and implementation has been amazing. The ongoing improvements in the course, and how the committee has got so many young members involved, is wonderful to see.

I still love my trips to the course. It is a wonderful place to go for a chat even if my golf has not come on very much. I especially love hitting a few balls in the morning and chatting to Denny as he works to keep the course in its immaculate condition. When my sons come home it is always a 'must' and such a wonderful place to catch up. I sometimes just walk around and stand on the eight green. Memories come back of the lots of time in the valley around The Terror looking for my ball after my miss-hit shots. It was worth it because view from that 8th green can compare with the view from any golf course in the world.

Spanish Point golf Club has very much enhanced my time in the area. I have wonderful memories of old friends and I am so delighted to see it go from strength to strength. It is really great to see so many young people taking it up as it is a gift for life. Who knows but a few more lesions from my neighbour Sinead and I might be in line for a long overdue win but maybe to continue to enjoy this most wonderful piece of ground is more than enough.

Dr. Billy O'Connell



FROM CLANE TO CLARE

A lilywhite true and true who was lucky enough to meet a mad Clare woman. Growing up I played my golf in Millicent Golf Club, a nice modern parkland in Clane, Co. Kildare. I've been involved in both provincial and national panels before spending 4 years on a Padraig Harrington Golf scholarship at NUI Maynooth with good friend and exceptional golfer, the great Sinead Sexton!

Notable results along the way; Leinster boys winner 2007, Barton Shield winners 2012 (NUIM), West and South quarter finalist 2012/13, multiple Senior Scratch cups including the Waterford Crystal Scratch Cup in 2017.

Career wise, I have worked with the Linders Motor Group as Commercial Vehicle Sales Manager for the past seven years. I would be delighted to assist anyone at SP who is looking to upgrade or add a commercial vehicle to their business; we are Ireland's largest Citroen & Opel van dealership, stocking a large range of 150+ vans at all times.

Having just moved to Inagh, I am looking forward to getting out to SP when golf is back and getting to know all the members. The new short game area looks great, a fantastic addition to the club.

Ross Kenny



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The most precious things in life

The most precious things in life we can take for granted: health, family and for many golf on demand. Only when they're taken from us are we severely jolted. My close brush with death from Covid gave me a new appreciation for the blessings of good health. As for family, I've always valued the joy and harmony of family life. Then there is Golf.

I never regarded it as anything more than as an optional extra that is until the lock down. Suddenly it was taken from us- an understandable government response to combat the deadly virus. The two or three rounds a week that I so looked forward to vanished. It has left a void that has been very hard to fill for me as a retired person. I suspect many others share this feeling as well.

Apart from the golf I miss the camaraderie of my golfing friends, Brendan, John and Tony. The stories, laughs and general tomfoolery was all part a golf outing and it made for good friendships. Generally, a very warm atmosphere prevails in the club which lends itself to a feel good factor. For the moment all of this is on hold, due to Covid, which raises the question of the importance of connection in our lives. Interaction with people is so important for personal happiness and how damaging isolation can be. Hence we all welcome the arrival of the vaccines and the green light beckoning us to the freedom of the golf course again.

In spite of this set back the club is in a very good place, financially and development wise. Due to competent and very prudent management the finances have continued to improve. To use a buzz phrase (Mervin's favourite) you got the metrics right. The healthy finances have provided the resources for course improvements and new developments - the most obvious being a well structured practice ground. Huge credit goes to the various committees over the last number of years which have shown commendable drive and imagination. No wonder so many young people have taken up the game and joined the club.

Should they wish to take it, a few words of advice for young golfers. Listen carefully to your coaches. Learn the skills and practice them frequently. As a below average golfer myself, I wished I had the opportunity to acquire the skills at a young age. You have that precious commodity. Don't waste it. Put the joy of playing the game above winning. Trophies give you a momentary thrill but ultimately, they are lifeless objects. The real satisfaction is got from hitting a good golf shot. And lastly, most satisfying of all are the friendships you will make on the golf course. Cherish them. They may well be for life.

Worth remembering, we have a precious asset in our locality and with quality management it will continue to thrive.

Patrick O'Dwyer



Patrick O'Dwyer and friends

Bruce Foley

I am Bruce Foley, recently new member, and I am looking forward to my time at Spanish Point Golf Club and meeting fellow members.

I am one of 12 children, born in Buffalo, New York. My mother's parents lived on a small farm across the border in Canada, very close to Niagara Falls. Her people were from Cavan. My father's parents ran a bait and tackle shop in Buffalo. I am still researching his side of the family.

I was very interested in music from an early age, teaching myself the guitar at around 12 years of age and gravitated towards folk music. In 1973 I made a bicycle trip up the west of Ireland, making a strong connection with the people and Irish traditional music that would endure to this day. Returning to America, I joined a trio of musicians from Limerick and we toured throughout the northeastern USA playing in festivals, concerts and dinner theatres.

Life as a travelling musician was fun but after several years I decided to get a Civil Engineering degree at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh. I subsequently worked in the manufacturing industry, moving over to the computer side of things as that was the new opportunity. I eventually left to form my own consulting practice for ten years and ended up working for the Bank of New York.

During my working career I kept my hand in the music - playing in small Irish bands, learning tunes and even purchased a set of uilleann pipes while attending Willie Week in 1987. I was able to do short tours as a piper and whistle player with Tommy Sands of Rostrevor, Co. Down. The highlight of our performances was at Madison Square Gardens in NYC playing for Pete Seeger's 90th birthday in front of 25,000 people. Other performers at that event included Kris Kristofferson, Bruce Springsteen, Joan Baez, and Arlo Guthrie, to name a few - we all sang "Goodnight Irene" together at the end of the concert. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFFUshYEEYzE>

In 2010 I met Mary Coogan who has performed with Joanie Madden for over 36 years in the group, Cherish The Ladies. In September, 2016, we were married in St Joseph's Church here in Miltown Malbay. We purchased the old Nugent's Bakery on the Ennis Road and truly enjoy living here. For the past year we have performed weekly "Self-Isolation Sessions" at 9pm on Sundays on FaceBook Live (<https://www.facebook.com/brucefoleymusic/videos/>). We recorded a well-received CD titled "Turning the Tides" that can be heard at <https://brucefoleymusic.bandcamp.com/releases>

Bruce Foley



Bank of Ireland



365 online

Recollections of 40 years in Spanish Point Golf Club

My name is Helen McGrath and I live near Mullagh about five miles from that unique 9 hole links course that is Spanish Point Golf Club. My late husband Denis and I joined the Golf Club in the Spring of 1981. May Cleary of The Central Hotel was Lady Captain. I knew absolutely nothing about golf. The ladies and gentlemen of the club couldn't have been more welcoming and encouraging. The late Jim Cogan and Sean Finnegan took us out on the course on a number of occasions and taught us the basics. Many of the ladies also took me out. Ladies I remember from that time were Ena O'Neill who was one of the founder members of the lady's club in 1924, Kitty Hennessy, Kay Meade, Judith Ironside, Maureen Jamieson, Nancy Coakley, Catherine Quinn, May Cleary, Rita Cogan, Rita Finnegan, Maura O'Connor and Molly Ewen all of whom now play in that great golf course up above. Dot Shannon, Della Malone, Mary O'Neill, Kathleen Twomey and Moira Hillery were among others playing at that time. Soon after Mary O'Halloran joined. In those early years Mary cycled out with her golf bag on her back, parked her bicycle at McCarthy's, hopped over the wall and crossed the course to the first tee. How things have changed! Mary took up golf in her 50's but took to it like a duck to water. We soon became good friends and played many a game in Spanish Point and in Open Days all around the county and beyond. Mary was short off the tee and on the fairway but deadly around and on the green. She was a model of consistency and her name often appeared on the winners list. Mary and Dot Bolster another formidable golfer in those years are still hale and hearty in their 90's and as interested in the happenings in the golf club as ever. Go maire siad an cead.

The original club house was a one room structure called the Hut situated on the hill to the right of the present 5th fairway. That was replaced in 1952 by a two roomed building inside the gate where the Clothes Bins now stand. That was in use when I joined. The new club House was opened on 29th October 1981 by the late Dr Paddy Hillery. What a luxury! It was efficiently run by Kathleen Twomey assisted by Nuala Ferguson for a number of years. Anyone visiting the club house then and now are impressed by the friendliness and efficiency of the staff. Since then it has seen many a good celebration.

There have been many changes and huge improvements in the course over the years. When I joined the greens were surrounded by barbed wire with a stile to get into the green. There were no fairways as the land was farmed by Michael Hillery and the late Johnny O'Malley. A fence with a stile dividing the course ran across the present 5th fairway while cattle grazed on either side. The first tee was on the hill beside the carpark with the green in the hollow to the right of the present 2nd tee. The 9th was the "Terror" with the Tee by the present wire and the green to the right of the present one.

There were always a core of players for the weekly competitions during the year with numbers swelling during the summer when ladies like Val Shannon, Karen White, Mary O'Neill, the Morrissey's, Stapleton's, Hillerys, Kyne's and others were on holidays. For the Monday 9-hole competitions a different lady brought a prize each week and the Ladies club provided the 18 hole prizes. There were a few sponsors of the Major competitions. Lady members represented the club with distinction



Helen McGrath and Robin Bolster Drive-in 1986

in many competitions at home and Nationally. Lady Captain's Day was always the highlight of the year. On May Cleary's Captain's Day, I won the "concealed" prize and was chuffed to get a prize after just a few months playing. I didn't realize until later that it was for the worst score at the 9th!! The Ladies club did all the catering on Open Days, provided the food, main course and desert, often for up to 90 people with members contributing different dishes and serving the guests. We had a few outings in those years. One I remember was a trip to Killarney where we played 18 Holes of golf and then had a picnic by the lake. Another was a weekend in Enniscrone where we played 2 rounds of golf and the Bridge players in the group played Bridge after dinner. It was a most enjoyable weekend.

As the years went by my golf improved. I played in many club competitions and represented the club in team competitions. I won two Lady Captain's prizes, Golfer of the Year and some other Major competitions. Of course there were many days when everything went wrong and I felt like giving up but with the comradery, encouragement and friendship of the lady members I persevered. One open day in the late 80's I was playing with Kitty Hennessey and Kay Meade. I had 13 points in the first nine and wanted to give up but the ladies wouldn't hear of it. With their encouragement I had 28 points in the second nine (I don't think I ever again had that score for 9 holes) and won the 1st prize with 41 points. Proof one should never give up.

I was happy to serve on the committee for a number of years and I was honoured and privileged to be Lady Captain in 1986 with Robin Bolster as Captain. One of the highlights of that year was the Captain's dinner which was held in the Club House in December with a sit-down meal for about 90 members and friends. I was Lady Captain again in 2016 with Martin Davis as Captain. Another memorable year.

Thank you to Spanish Point Golf Club for the years of enjoyment, pleasure and friendships it has given me and which thankfully I still continue to enjoy. I thank all the members past and present who have made that possible. May the Club continue to grow from strength to strength in the years ahead.

Helen McGrath

Spanish Point Community Group

Spanish Point Community Group was formed in 2015 with the aim of enhancing our area for the local residents and visitors alike. The members work in a variety of different ways to promote the social, cultural, environmental, economic and general development of Spanish Point. We work with Clare Co. Council, Clare Local Development Company, Tidy Towns, Clean Coasts, Rural Social Scheme and local businesses to further our aims. We are an established group with several successfully completed projects. These include the provision of an outdoor gym, the design and production of historical information panels, the development of walking routes with explanatory leaflets, the creation of a website (www.visitspanishpoint.ie), the installation of wattle fencing to stabilise the sand dunes,

the provision of low-level lighting in the beach car park, informative displays on sea plastics, regular beach clean ups and a summer barbeque.

Recently, we were successful in securing funding of €225,000 from the OPW for coastal protection works. Clare Co. Council have resurfaced some of the footpaths in the area which is appreciated by the many walkers who use them, especially now during Covid -19.

The Golf Club is deeply rooted in Spanish Point having been established in 1896 and provides a sporting and social outlet for its 500+ members. Its award-winning course provides a very valuable economic benefit to this area which is valued by the Community Group and we congratulate everybody in Spanish Point Golf Club and wish them all the best on reaching their 125th anniversary.

Mary Cleary (secretary)

Pierce Purcell Shield Munster Champions 2020

Spanish Point GC became Munster Champions in the Pierce Purcell for the 3rd time following previous victories in 2013 and 2014. It took an extra 24 hours, but there was a Munster Champion in the AIG Pierce Purcell Shield. Spanish Point and Kenmare could not be separated in the Munster final after darkness forced the suspension of play in the deciding match in Fermoy. At 8pm, Tournament Director David Prendergast was left with no option after the deciding match was still level after four extra holes, so the teams decided to resume at 4pm on Sunday.

Spanish Point's Sean McMahon and Patrick Hogan faced Kenmare's Gerald O'Dwyer and Charlie Vaughan – the players back to recommence the titanic battle that started 25 hours previously. The match should have been settled on the 21st but Charlie Vaughan holed an excellent long putt across the tricky green. After that the par three 5th was halved in the darkness. On the resumption of play on Sunday, the two pairs halved the par five 6th hole and it was Spanish Point who won on the 7th, their sixth sudden death hole.

It's the first time in six years that we have won the Munster pennant and we will be hoping to repeat the provincial/national double of 2013/4. The latest update we have (Feb 2021) is Golf Ireland are still planning to play the 2020 All Ireland series and we await the plans.



The Winning Putt



The Captain and wife, Carol with the trophies



Back Row L - R: Johnny Leahy, Les Seal (Asst Manager), Mervin Hehir, Niall Heeney, Cillian Duggan, Kevin Hynes, Fergal Hehir, Tom Hehir (Manager) Seamus Conway.

Front Row L - R: Tom Prenderville, Patrick Hogan, Mike Donnelly, Micheál Hehir, Seamus McMahon, Michael O'Brien, Sean McMahon. Missing from photo Pat Lorigan, Billy Farrell, Paul Faughnan.

World Handicapping System Update

The World Handicap System (WHS) was fully implemented in SPGC in November 2020 and provides golfers with a unified and more inclusive handicapping system for the first time.

Before you play a player can calculate their competition handicap by referencing the handicap sheets on display in SPGC clubhouse. Once you have completed your round you can return your score using the ClubV1 app.

Handicap Indexes are calculated from an average of the best eight of your last 20 returned scores. When a new score is submitted, the Handicap Index is automatically recalculated and updated at the end of the day's play, ready for use the following day.



The Winning Putt

THE PATH TO VICTORY WAS:

Round 1 - SP 4 Kilkee 1 Round 2 - SP 4 Kilrush 1
Round 3 - SP 3.5 Woodstock 1.5 Round 4 - SP 4 Nenagh 1
Round 5 Munster Semi - Spanish Point 3.5 Cahir Park 1.5
Round 6 Munster Final - Spanish Point 3 Kenmare 2
(24th Playoff hole)

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Under the guidance of Dinny Gallery Jnr the golf course has continued to improve in SPGC.

As well as completing the short game area in 2020 we also replaced the New Zealand flax, at the side of the 6th red and green tees, with mounding. The 9th green tee has also been re-levelled and made bigger. We have completed the building of a new tee on the 8th hole to address the issue of stray golf balls going into a neighbouring property. We also re-meshed and extended the frame close to the first tee. The greens we punched last autumn and they will be top-dressed in the coming weeks.

In the past number of years, we have sought to improve the definition of the golf course; in that regard we have improved fairway and semi rough cuts. We are also planning to improve tee boxes with a border feature.

Other improvements have been the introduction of walkways which is an area we hope to further improve.

We have worked with world class people Joe Kelly and David Minogue to make these subtle but welcome improvements.

In 2021 we will be applying for Sport Capital funding to further improve the golf course and also to replace some of our machinery. If we are fortunate enough to receive such funding, we will proceed with further improvements depending on the level of funding received.



Short game Area/ Driving Bays

In 2020 we completed, with the aid of government Sport capital funding, a state-of-the-art Short game Area. We hope to have this facility open in early 2021 for all your enjoyment.

It will compose of a large putting green. It's essentially going to split in to one area for short game chipping etc and the other for putting. A large practice bunker is also included.

We have repositioned the driving bays; two 6x 3 bays will hopefully be ready when golf resumes.



HAVE GOLF WILL TRAVEL

Every year the men's and ladies clubs head off for overnight stays in famous golf clubs around Ireland. Unfortunately this was not possible in 2020 and most likely will not take place in 2021 either. These are great occasions to get to know your fellow members and offer an opportunity to play other courses at reasonable rates. Kerry, Galway and Mayo have been the preferred locations in the majority of years; in 2018 the ladies visited Glasson, Athlone and the men played Carne and Enniscrone.

In 2019 the ladies visited Athenry golf club and the men went east to Mount Wolsley and Mount Juliet. The men played a Ryder cup format of Europe V USA, with Europe winning in Mayo and USA champions in the East. The club also organises an annual outing to Trump Doonbeg, over 50 members played in 2019. The 2020 event had to be cancelled and the moneys are being held for the next possible date, hopefully in October this year.

There are many companies organising golf trips and it is great to be able to play in sunshine on courses in Spain and Portugal. In Feb 2020 eight members of Spanish Point played for Munster, led by rugby legend David Wallace, versus Leinster in Vilamoura in Portugal.



Men's Outing 2019



Above: Ladies Outing to Athenry 2019

Left: Doonbeg 2019

Get into Golf for Women (GIGFW)

After consultation with the CGI, Spanish Point Golf Club agreed to run the GIGFW programme from April 2020 as a recruitment drive for new Lady members in the club. That start date was obviously affected by Covid 19 and finally it began in late July.

There was a huge interest in this programme with 47 Ladies signing up for 4 weeks of lessons with Ennis professional Martin Ward ably assisted by our own Sinead Sexton who is home from USA where she is training as a PGA Teaching Professional.

This was then followed by another 4 weeks of playing scrambles with the assistance of Lady members who walked with each group. Starting with 3 / 4 holes, many were quickly playing the full 9 holes, often finishing in the dark!

With all the Covid 19 protocols it was very difficult to include any of the social aspects of playing golf but hopefully that can be introduced soon. However, it didn't seem to dampen the spirits of the group at all as they maintained their enthusiasm throughout.

Once the 8 week programme was completed a membership package was offered and a total of 35 new Lady members joined the club. Hopefully all will renew for 2021 and the plan is to continue helping to integrate all into the club and provide assistance wherever it is needed.

This couldn't have been the success it was without the backing of the Parent club and the huge input from the Ladies committee, ably led by Lady Captain Yvonne, and other willing Lady members who helped in so many ways...Lending golf clubs, sanitising everything in sight, welcoming the new Ladies and assisting with the scrambles, making tea etc. Thank you all so much.

GIGFW Co-ordinator, Valerie Shannon



INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP OFFER 2021

2021 - €280	Mandatory Golf Union of Ireland levy of €24 per annum
2022 - €340	Optional Insurance is available for €27 per annum
2023 - €390	(full rate)

Merchandise 2021

This year we are very lucky to have Adidas and Galvin Green on board.

Even though Adidas and Galvin Green maybe that bit more expensive they are top quality brands and we can match any prices out there in the market so why not shop local and support your club by purchasing from us. Laurence Murray will lead this element of the club and he will be posting samples on the club What'sApp group and we will also email everyone.

Newsletter compiled and edited by Ivan White

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10 RULES FOR GOOD GOLF ETIQUETTE

- I. DON'T BE THE SLOWEST PLAYER
- II. KEEP YOUR TEMPER UNDER CONTROL
- III. RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE'S TIME
- IV. REPAIR THE GROUND YOU PLAY ON
- V. BE A SILENT PARTNER
- VI. MAKE YOUR GOLF CART 'INVISIBLE'
- VII. ALWAYS LOOK YOUR BEST
- VIII. TURN OFF THE CELL PHONE
- IX. LEND A HAND WHEN YOU CAN
- X. LEARN THE LITTLE THINGS

