

CAPTAIN'S REPORT 2020/1

Sadly for everyone in the audience I have 2 years to report on! 2020 you may think was a non-entity but let me put that myth right.

A new word entered our vocabulary and it began with Z! Yes it was Zoom! It did however allow the Executive the opportunity during lockdown to rewrite our rules following the Incorporation agreed at our previous AGM. Nobody could say they were out golfing or dining. Interestingly in a conversation with Brenda Parker <a Past President> she did tell a tale that when the rules were last rewritten in the 90's it took 3 years, each amendment had to wait until the next Committee Meeting with no aids such as e mail or mobile phones. I bet the Executive used to curse every time somebody brought up another amendment. I did find Zoom useful in other ways. The Delegate meeting earlier this year held on Zoom allowed me to switch my camera off and change my clothes for a funeral whilst the meeting continued, I did however have a panic attack thinking I hope the technology is working as it should do and the camera really is off!

Sadly my first official duty was to attend the funeral of Sheila Wilde who was our Assistant interclub secretary. It was particularly poignant in 2021 to go to Sheila's home club at Wath for the A team final.

Sadly there was to be no County golf or Competitions during 2020. We did manage occasionally when government guidelines permitted to run a few training sessions. Any Past Captains who will have attended many of these sessions in the freezing cold during their tenure, don't know what cold is until you've done it during covid when you are not even allowed into the club house to warm up at lunch time. My thanks go to our 3 main coaches Lysa Jones, Gary Brown <who sadly is retiring from the YLCGA coaching> thanks Gary and last but not least Luke Allen who did their very best to continue our coaching during testing times.

At the beginning of 2020, the County had the task of briefing out and training on WHS, we were fortunate to be in the capable hands of Ruth Goodwin our Handicap Advisor and several executive members assisted.

So this will have been the shortest Captains report covering a year so I have broken one record.

After my magnificent performance of managing the virus in 2020, I was delighted and would like to thank the executive for inviting me to do a further year in 2021.

It was delightful to attend a junior match in April, The Girls V the Yorkshire boys. I cannot remember the result but what I can remember is how animated all these youngsters were, excited to see each other after a lengthy lockdown.

There was no club house to go into for refreshments but that didn't matter. Recently I had attended a Mid Amateurs match against the Vets at Richmond, we all sat down to a two

course meal in the club house and I realised how far we had come since the start of the season.

My first major event of the calendar was “The Championship”. This was held at Ilkley, with no supporters and no entry into the club house unless you were running the event. If I said it was raining it would be an understatement. The club worked exceptionally hard to keep the greens from flooding and the river was inches away from bursting its banks. We did get the event played and ended up with an excellent final between Nicola Slater who was at Lindrick and Hannah Holden from Huddersfield. Nicola became our County Champion, a worthy winner as she has always put Yorkshire golf high on her list. At this stage I would like to thank my selection committee for turning out on three horrible weather days to view the players ready for selection for Northern week. To help us achieve this task Helen Lilley and Jane Bramwell stalked all the players to log their results so thank you. Also thank you to both Carolyn Acroyd and Terry Ann Whitley for going the extra mile with the covid conditions. My thanks also to Daphne Ledger for helping the team get to grips with Golf Genius.

My next task was preparation for Northern Counties week at Alnmouth. This event was always going to be different with no Caddies but it didn't stop our usual supporters labelled the “Green Army” coming to support the team. It also involved many lateral flow tests to confirm we were all healthy. The President Ann McMullen decided she had had enough of me after the team photographs and decided to fall down a pot hole and break her metatarsal before a ball had even been struck.

It really was a wonderful week and the team and the coach Lysa Jones are to be congratulated for a clean sweep beating all 5 Northern Counties. It was not the exciting finish where you win on the 18th hole on the last putt as in Heather Muir's year but it was still brilliant.

Not even time to recover from such a busy week came the Challenge Bowl at Oakdale golf club. I was beginning to feel a little unlucky when on the first morning it did look touch and go with the weather. After a delay of about an hour play commenced. The winner Sadie Wilyman was a very worthy winner. Anybody wishing to win this competition should set up a meeting with Sadie, who has won this event on 3 occasions. I congratulate her.

My Captain's journey continued with my attendance at the Junior Championship at Garforth Golf Club. It was held on the one scorching Sunday in July where temperatures reached 80 deg. In the first round Abigail Taylor from Headingley scored a gross 70 and went on to be crowned the Junior Champion. Abigail then went on to compete in the Justin Rose Telegraph competition, not this year in Portugal <because of covid> but instead at Walton Heath. Abigail although not the winner, shot the lowest score on the final day. The Junior Championship was followed closely by the Junior Jamboree. All my predecessors will all tell you that this is one of the nicest events you will attend. This year it was held at

Wynard in Durham. The only drawback to the event I could possibly find was that for 2 days you live on burgers and pizza!

I decided that this event was probably the only event that I attended where winning wasn't everything! It was more about giving the youngsters a new experience in their golfing journey. I give credit at this point to Karen Fellows and her junior team Barbara Taylor, Lesley Mather, Jo Peace and Vicky Holden for all the work that goes on during the year to produce our stars of the future.

It was now onto my home club Wetherby who hosted the Alison Nicholas Am Am. This is an event that every Captain of Yorkshire is delighted to host and I was no exception. The event raised over £3600 which will be used for junior girls for Bursaries, equipment or tournament fees. It is appropriate at this stage to publicly thank Wetherby for allowing me free access to the course both during my Vice Captaincy and Captaincy, for Yorkshire events.

By now I am well into August and although I have a very busy couple of months coming up I still found time to attend the Curtis Cup at Conwy North Wales. This event would usually be played earlier in the season but again had changed its date because of the virus. Excitingly we had a Yorkshire player playing, Charlotte Heath from Huddersfield Golf Club and currently studying in the USA.

After a great start on day one for GB & I it was not sustainable and the USA was too good and defeated us. Charlotte was also part of the winning England side who won the Home Internationals. We are delighted that Charlotte has accepted the County's invitation to be an Honorary Member of the YLCGA in recognition of her achievement.

Having returned from the Curtis Cup I looked in my diary to see it was still full of new events. It was now the turn of the Interclub finals. It is something very dear to my heart but I will let Marlene read the results in her report. It is fortunate that the President and I live 3 miles apart as there was much travelling to be done to these finals, all 6.30am starts. Out of all the competitions that we ran this year in the virus, this was certainly the most challenging, firstly because of the duration of this competition and secondly because of the number of players that play in it. My thanks must go to Marlene Dixon and also Linda Bemrose for not only the Finals but also constantly adapting to government guidelines and taking an extraordinary number of calls during the summer. It is testament to both of you that almost all the matches were played.

Interspersed with interclub finals were my preparations for Denham in Buckinghamshire for County Finals.

We were to face a new format which all the other counties had previously experienced, but we did not have that luxury.

As is often the case I lost my County Champion Nicola Slater who was away representing her university, and by this time Lily Hirst one of my strongest players had left for America to

study. This however did allow several new youngsters such as Abigail Taylor, Amy Staveley and Cherry Marley the opportunity to make their debut in the County 1st team.

The practise round went well on the Thursday and we were all poised for the Competition to commence on the Friday. However I had not legislated for one of the team to wake up to a positive covid test and in addition for another member of the team to be sick.

With true Yorkshire grit the remaining players rose to the challenge and beat the host team Bucks in the morning. Sadly in the afternoon we lost to the eventual winners Surrey by one game. On the Saturday I must mention Cherry Marley who was a non travelling reserve but who got up at 4am to travel to Denham and be playing her first match at 2pm for the 1st team with Abigail Taylor <a pairing untried in foursomes> and they won. Fantastic performance from two 15 year olds. On the final day the team beat Lincolnshire to end up a very creditable 3rd place. They never lost any match more than one game. It certainly summed up my Captaincy of "living with the virus".

On other performances of the Elite squad, it was a great pleasure to go to Moortown golf club and see that in the English Amateur Championships we had 5 Yorkshire players reach the matchplay stage of the last 32 and they were Charlotte Heath, Hannah Holden, Beth Norton, Lily Hirst and Mia Eales Smith. Mia Eales Smith progressed through to the quarter final beaten by the eventual winner.

Amy Staveley won The Northern Counties Championships U16 with a magnificent 13 under over 4 rounds of golf.

Whilst all this activity has been going on Alison my Vice Captain has been running the 2nd team and Dawn Clegg the Mid Amateurs, thank you to both of you for your excellent organisation.

You will be pleased to hear that I am coming to the end of my report but for those of you sat in the audience thinking I'm never going to another AGM again there is someone in our audience <there are probably several> who has sat through at least 25 of these <please bear in mind she can never get that time back> and the person I am referring to is our retiring President Ann McMullen. Ann has spent the last 25 years doing something for the YLCGA and for that we thank her. Ann has been President for 4 years and I am sure she now deserves a rest and her husband Toni deserves to see more of her.

My thanks are nearly done but it would be remiss of me not to mention the Executive who spend hours on your behalf making sure County business is taken care of. Of particular note has been Alison Tracey my Vice Captain who has always gone the extra mile for me.

My best wishes go with the people leaving the Exec and they are Heather Muir, Marlene Dixon, Barbara Taylor, Pat Williams and Jane Schofield

As I don't have a husband or partner to thank I should like to thank the bottle or should I say bottles of gin that kept me sane!

It has been a truly memorable couple of years and an honour, so thank you to all the people that made it possible.