



Dumbarton Golf Club Newsletter

Autumn 2017

In this issue:

- Introduction (Mo Graham)
- Greens (Ian Simpson)
- Match and Handicap (John Stirling)
- Juniors (Kenny Lyons)
- Seniors (Alan Kerr)
- Ladies (Ann Shanks)
- House (Jim Kenney)
- Events (Mhairi Giles)
- Clubhouse and surrounds (Tam McLean)

Introduction

I hesitated to refer to this Newsletter as the "Autumn" edition, because a) it's already November and b) it's Baltic!! My golfing buddies all know that it is unheard of for me to play golf unless it's 10 degrees or more, but thanks to my new kidney, I no longer feel the cold to the same extent as before. I played in 7 degrees last week, with zomph winds! My new kidney is doing me proud. I'll just use this opportunity to thank everyone from the Club who supported us when we did the Bridges Walk for Kidney Research UK in October, including our two Captains, and thank you to everyone who donated to our JustGiving page. Once again, the generosity of the members of this Club is simply overwhelming.

I've spoken to various people to ask for their contributions for this Newsletter, and I've included their names in the Contents list, so if you've any questions about the information included in the Newsletter, please contact them via Margaret Crawford in the office. Her email is margaretc@dumbartongolfclub.co.uk

One thing which was mentioned by every single contributor to this Newsletter, was the effect that the terrible weather has had on everything this year. Statistically, this has been the ninth wettest summer on record since 1910. June was wetter than average with some places in Scotland exceeding twice their average rainfall for this period. It doesn't help to know that every other club in the West of Scotland experienced similar problems to us, but I think we can all agree that in order to enjoy our golf to its best, the weather plays an important part, particularly when it causes so much damage to the course. Fingers crossed for better conditions in 2018. Some of our lady members know what to do regarding having a word...

Greens

This year, we appointed Steven Rennie to be our greenkeeper, and he has worked alongside our existing greenkeeper, Graham Stuart. Steven comes with a wealth of experience from Wentworth, the Carrick and the Vale of Leven golf courses. We made use of temporary greens staff during the summer months, with one temp being employed for the whole of the summer. Currently we are working with Stevie, Graham and an apprentice, with the intention of taking on more temporary staff next Season.

As has been already mentioned, the weather has taken its toll this year. The ground is extremely soft, and in fact this

has caused some issues for the greens staff. On one occasion recently, the cutting machine was cutting back the rough, but three times in one day got stuck in mud, and had to be hauled out by the tractor. It's a pity the weather has made the ground so soft, but as always, we would ask people to use common sense and play for the conditions. A common reply to requests not to use buggies and trolleys on parts of the course is that the Greenkeepers equipment churns up the course too. It may be so, but the greenkeepers are not constantly going over the same areas, and this is where most of the damage occurs, particularly around tees and greens, because the ground does not get a chance to repair itself. Earlier this year we implemented a policy whereby the Greenkeepers would decide whether it was reasonable to restrict the use of buggies and electric trolleys on the course during and after periods of inclement weather. It seems likely that there may be prolonged periods when these restrictions may have to be implemented for the sake of preserving the course. Please watch out for notices from the Greens staff. During these periods, only non-electric trolleys may be used.

There's no doubt that heavy trolleys, and particularly buggies cause problems when the ground is so soft, and we would ask people with trolleys and buggies, not to use them on already damaged areas. Please do not use shortcuts if it means taking your buggy/trolley through mud. And if you need to use the right-hand side of the eighth tee, you should go around the long way, i.e. round the back of the seventh green. Recently a buggy owner cut across the actual tee and has done some serious damage there. PLEASE USE COMMON SENSE!

We would also appreciate it if gents would not use the bolt on the back door to leave the door open when they're out on the course. This door must be kept closed at all times. Often there is only one member of staff in the clubhouse during the winter, and we have to ensure that security is maintained at all times. It seems some of our gents turn up without their access card, and so pull the bolt over, for ease of access coming back in. Please, if you don't have your card, come around the front and come in that way, removing your golf shoes first, of course! If you've lost your card, see Mhairi or Margaret and they'll sort you out a new one. We cannot compromise our staff's safety under any circumstances.

Our aim during the winter is to tidy up the course, and it is our intention to resurface all paths. In Spring we will cover them with blaes. Hopefully this will alleviate some of the problems we are currently experiencing with soft, muddy areas. In particular, we want to create a path between the

tees at 7th, and at the 12th beside the greenside bunker, since people seem reluctant to use the previously created path through the trees.

As part of our winter programme we intend repairing the greens at 5, 9 and 10. The 6th green needs new drainage, so we will be lifting half of that green. Again, for drainage purposes, there will be a new ditch across the fifth fairway, roughly from the fairway bunker on the left, across to join the ditch on the right of the fairway.

In general this winter, our work will be concentrating on getting the course looking better, with work being done on greens, fairways and tees.

Clubhouse and surrounds

A huge thank you must go to our unsung heroes who are working so hard to improve the surrounding area of the clubhouse. Tam McLean, Frank May and Jim Crossan are working tirelessly to make the back of the clubhouse usable and presentable. Also, let's not forget Peter Deeney who is our unpaid mechanic, and regularly fixes and maintains machinery. The back of the first tee has been tidied up beyond recognition, and the BBC were asked to remove the shrubbery from behind the fence. This has opened things up very neatly. Tam has painted a very clever mural on the wall at the back of the clubhouse. They've installed a bike-shed, somewhere for cyclists to secure their bikes if they cycle to the club. A trolley shed has been installed to keep the spare trolleys tidy. If you use one of the trolleys from here, we would ask that you pay £1 for the privilege by using the honesty box behind the bar. Also, it would be appreciated if the trolleys could be replaced neatly, rather than just thrown in to the fenced off area, please. The net at the practice tee has been renewed. Additionally, the guys have fashioned three boxes, two of which will be used by the chefs to grow our own vegetables, and the third for our own herbs. The guys are grateful for members who have donated some tools and materials, and plants. However, the work is never-ending, and these three members are working here without being paid by the club, other than the occasional cup of tea etc. They're doing it because they want to improve the club and surrounding areas. If you find yourself with an hour or two to spare at any time, Tam and co would really appreciate your help. If you can do it on a regular basis, all the better, but if not, please feel free to turn up any morning, and you'll find the three stalwarts working away. There's a lot of weeding, planting, landscaping and general tidying to be done, and it's hard going for three retirees!

Seniors

So, while we're on the subject of retirees, we've decided to include some info about the Seniors Section. Any gent over the age of 60 may join the Seniors Section. There is a fee of £20 to join, and this includes entry to all the competitions, AND a Christmas dinner. For some people I know, (ahem), this is the best part of the membership. In fact, some people I know don't even play in any of the many competitions, but are happy to pay the money for the privilege of attending the Seniors Christmas dinner itself. Must be a great day... Throughout the season, the Seniors Section runs 12 Stablefords, on Mondays, 10 medals on Wednesdays, and 2 three-man scrambles. Additionally, there is a Greensome for the Scriven Trophy. Members can compete in the Singles Knockout – this year won by **Jim Goodwin**, and also the 4 ball – this year won by **Peter McFall and Archie Mitchell**. All the fixtures for the Seniors Section are entered into the Club diary. The competitions during the summer are 18 holes, and are played off yellow tees. However, there is a facility on the Club System which allows scores to be entered as played from yellow tees, so handicaps are adjusted accordingly. Similarly, winter competitions are played over 14holes, again with handicaps adjusted accordingly. Additionally, there is a Winter stableford competition which runs every Monday from November to March, and the best three aggregate scores is the winner. I guess these seniors are getting great value for money. The prizes and any incidental costs for running the section comes from any profits made in the Seniors Open, which is usually held on the Tuesday after the Gordon Shield.

The Seniors McIntyre consists of members over the age of 60, however, it isn't necessary to have joined the Seniors Section to play in the league. Criteria are that members must be over 60, and not in full-time employment. Twelve people play in each match, in pairs. Only four matches count for the league, with one reserve and one courtesy round. Participants are asked to pay £5 per match, which goes to the club to subsidise the team meals. Points are awarded as follows: 1 point for a home draw, 2 points for a home win, 2 points for an away draw, and 3 points for an away win. This year, there were a few cancellations because of the horrendous weather we had on several occasions. The team did well on their away statistics, with the same number of away points as the eventual winners, Hayston. However, home games proved costly. There is to be an EGM shortly to discuss the way the league operates, so there may be some changes before next year. Watch this space.

Juniors

The success this year has undoubtedly been the response we've had to Clubgolf. Our coach, Barry Campbell cannot be praised highly enough for his enthusiasm and professionalism. We had 41 participants taking part in the junior Clubgolf programme, which is hugely encouraging, and it is hoped that many of these children will go on to start playing in some of the competitions. So far, about 7 or 8 of them are playing regularly in medal competitions. Once again, the weather played its part in trying to sabotage things, but thankfully this is where our simulator came into its own. It has been a Godsend, and Barry was able to use it on days when it was too wet to take the children up on to the practice area. We have volunteer coaches who help Barry out, and all of them have been PVG checked. I've volunteered to be the Child Protection Officer for Dumbarton Golf Club, and so we're organising training for the coaches, and making sure all their paperwork is up to date. Very important in this day and age. However, additional to the actual coaches, we could do with a few more volunteers to help with the Clubgolf. In essence, this would involve greeting children and parents, and moving equipment back and forward, and perhaps taking children up to the practice ground. It encourages both the children and their parents if we have a "greeter" to meet them and make them feel comfortable. If you would like to help, please get in touch with anyone involved, Kenny Lyons, Tony Ferrie, Iain Swan, myself, or Mhairi or Margaret will pass on your interest. It's a simple case of getting your PVG paperwork checked, and then you're good to go. We'd really appreciate some more support, and in particular if some of your own family is involved.

Our Junior section championship was won by **Lorna McClymont**, who beat **Ashton McLean** in a hard-fought battle. Lorna also won the Ladies Championship. And Ashton, not to be outdone, went on to win the Charlie Green Trophy, which is the Juniors equivalent of the Shanghai (handicap) trophy. Ashton beat **Liam Kane** in the final. We're hoping that some more Junior members will be in a position to take part in the competitions next year.

Ladies Section (Gina Coleman)

Like every other section, the weather this year played a big part in our competitions. We had to cancel our Tri-Am because of horrendous weather, which is unfortunate. This was due to be played in September, but having previously had problems about playing it at this time of year, we intend to bring it forward by some weeks next year, in the hope we can at least get the competition played. It's a very

popular competition, and in the past, we've had some very positive feedback from visiting ladies. We also received positive feedback this year from the County Ladies. They elected to play their Championship here over three days, and the ladies were most impressed by the course, the catering and the hospitality they received at Dumbarton. So much so, that they have decided to use Dumbarton again next year for one of their County Medals. Dumbarton Ladies feature strongly in the County, with **Ann Shanks** being asked to play in the West Vets (shhh) team against the East Vets; happy to report West Vets won 5 games to nil. And of course, congratulations to **Karen Haggarty**, who won the County Silver Order of Merit; no mean feat in the face of some fierce competition. Well done, ladies.

Our own competitions were played, and completed on time, despite our struggles with the elements. Young **Lorna McClymont** won the Championship for the second year in a row. Ladies Rosebowl was won by **Iona Newton**. Centenary Cup was won by **Karen Haggarty**, and the 125 Trophy was won by **Liz McLean**. Good to see that not one person is winning everything. Well done, again, ladies.

Another success this year was the celebration we had for 50 years of playing for the Rockvale Shield. The Shield is a friendly competition which we play for every year against the Vale of Leven Ladies. We play a home and an away match. It's always good fun, and we've come to regard the ladies from the Vale more as our friends, rather than opponents. This year marked fifty years of playing, so we celebrated in style at Dumbarton Golf Club with a meal and some home-made entertainment. The ladies were once again impressed with our catering, and our hospitality. Many thanks to Mhairi and her team for helping us get the place organised. As always, her attention to detail helps make things so special. What a great night we all had. Much reminiscing, and much hilarity. We realised, of course, that none of us will be around to celebrate it in another 50 years for the centenary, so we've decided we might just celebrate very five years. Any excuse to get together with great company. As if an excuse were needed.



Ladies from Dumbarton and VoL at the recent Rockvale celebrations

On a personal note, as Lady Captain I'd like to pass on my sincere thanks to my Committee and the Ladies section for

all their help in my first year of captaincy, not forgetting our Gents Captain, Kenny Lyons, and the gents, whose help and advice has been invaluable.

My main hope for next year is that the weather is a bit more conducive to playing some decent golf. Dry would be good.

Gina Coleman

Lady Captain.

Match & Handicap (John Stirling)

We had a very difficult year due to adverse weather conditions with several competitions either postponed or cancelled. Eventually we managed to complete the fixture list with 35 Saturday competitions, 15 Wednesday Medal and newly introduced 6 Sunday Medals. A total of 54 competitions.

Very special thanks to Greens Convenor Ian Simpson and his Greens Staff for the hard work keeping the course open.

The Order of Merit was won this year and was decided on the last day by **Lee Milligan** with a total score of 123 points

New competition R, Clifford Tour Championship, top 32 from Order of Merit qualified, played in Sept. Winner with a 65 **Jim Campbell**.

We introduced a fun competition this year through Howdidido, The Birdie Tree and the winner with a total of 44 birdies **Craig Bissett**.

Once again, we had great success with our Charity weekends with the ever-popular Greens v Blues & Charity Tri-Am with over £1500 raised for Prostate Cancer. Many thanks to all who took part.

A new course record was set this year by our very own **Andrew Campbell**, scratch 61. This took place in the D. Gray Cup in June. Many congratulations to Andy.

Team Matches

McIntyre League

The Scratch League was won by Clober Golf club for the first time in 38 years with a total of 30.5 points. All matches went to the final day. Dumbarton finished in 2nd place with a creditable 27.5 points

The 5-8 Knockout League, Dumbarton lost to eventual winners Hayston in the semi-finals.

The Senior League. This is a very competitive league with 17 matches played throughout the season. The winners were Hayston Golf club with a total of 28pts. Dumbarton finished in 6th position with 21 pts

Past Captains' Trophy

This year's competition took place in Clydebank & District Golf club with Dumbarton winning- represented by Alex McLean, Franny Docherty, Mick Doherty & Derek Duthie. Well done lads.



Thomson McCrone League

Dumbarton just lost out to the semi-final stages on a count back, eventual winners were Bearsden Golf club

Finals day in September was another great success with all matches played in great spirit.

Many Congratulations to all winners

A few notable winners. Gents Club Champion for the first time **Iain Swan** beating **Brian Campbell** in an excellent match Iain winning at the last hole.

Lorna McClymont once again winning Ladies & Junior Club Championships.

An excellent number of entries for 2, 4 ball & Shanghai.

2 ball first time winners **Danny McKinley & Jim Leitch** winning at the 19th hole.

4 ball, also first time winners **John Stirling & Rab Gray**.

Shanghai Cup went down to the last hole with **Nicky Bell** winning against **James McGroarty Jnr**

Dumbarton Golf Club scorecards have now been updated with the new yardages including the 2nd, 5th & 7th holes amended. New yardage for the course is now 5991 yds. There are no changes to pars or stroke indices, except for the ladies cards. Stroke indices were in need of being updated and this has been incorporated into the new cards.

Also amended is the rule regarding Distance Measuring Devices.

For all play at this course, a player may obtain distance information by use of a distance-measuring device. If,

during a stipulated round, a player uses a distance-measuring device to gauge or measure other conditions that might affect his play (e.g. elevation changes, wind speed, etc.), the player is in breach of Rule 14-3. Breach of this rule will lead to disqualification. So, for clarification, these devices can be used for measuring DISTANCE ONLY

Finally we have introduced our Winter Stableford for 2017/2018, starting last week running every Sat & Sunday until 11th March. £5.00 to enter. You can enter as many scores as you wish.

Best 3 accumulated scores will win. Scoresheet will be updated every week.

All details on the main notice board.

Many thanks to all for your support and looking forward to next season.

John Stirling

Match Secretary

House

Lots of things are going on around the Club, proving that this is definitely more than a Golf Club. The **Poker nights** have now started. These will run every Wednesday until the Golf Season commences. Everyone is welcome, starts 19.45 sharp.

We're also starting the **Winter Simulator Competition** mid-November. Entry sheets are on the notice boards in the Hall. It's a two-man, four-ball competition, and information can be obtained from Jim Kenney or Brian Campbell. Last year's winners were Jim Campbell and his brother Paul. A great way to enjoy golf without getting cold and wet, on the outside, anyway.



Paul and James Campbell

Our first two cabarets of the Season were well received. Next on the agenda, after the Presentation Dance will the **quiz on Friday 1st December**. Many thanks to Paul Watt

who has been chairing these evenings for the last few years. Our new hosts will be the inimitable J.P. McGroarty and his wife Liz. I'm sure our members will make them feel welcome, and come along to support. This is usually a great night, great fun, with some serious, and some not-so-serious competition. If you haven't been before, please come along and enjoy the fun. Honestly, it'll be £3 well-spent. We also run a raffle, so if you don't shine at the quiz, you can still potentially win a prize! We usually try to run the quiz nights on the last Friday of each month, or the nearest available one, if the function room has been pre-booked. The **Christmas Quiz** will be on 22nd December.

Our **Christmas Dance** on Saturday 16th December, and tickets for this are priced at £6. Again, this is a popular night, and great fun. Be sure to buy your tickets from the bar as early as possible, first come first served.

At **Hogmanay** we'd like to invite you to join us to celebrate bringing in the New Year with a bang. Tickets are available now from the bar. The cost for Hogmanay is £20, which includes your entertainment, and a buffet. This is always a sell-out, so make sure you get your tickets early. Again, first come, first served.

We will be offering festive **Christmas lunches** during the month of December. Bar staff will be happy to provide menus. Feel free to come along with friends and family. Please pre-order your lunches so that we can provide a speedier service. Amazingly, our **Christmas Day lunch** is fully booked. This has proven to be extremely popular, and once again is offered on a first come basis.

Our Seniors Christmas lunch is on 7th December. Please choose from the menu on the notice board if you have not already done so.

Staffing wise, we wish our Amy much success with her new job in childcare. Amy has been a great asset to the club during the last five years, and we wish her well.

There are plans to make improvements to the members' lounge in the coming months, and once again, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank Tam, Frank, Jim and Peter for their hard work in and around the clubhouse.

We'd also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our main sponsor of the last 6 years, **Colin Vance**. Not only has Colin been a fantastic sponsor, he continues to support the club in many other ways, and that is most appreciated. There are still sponsorship packages available, so if you know of anyone who may be interested, please contact Frank McCartney in the first instance.