



IN THE SWING

**Portarlington Golf Club
News & Views**

Issue 9

September / October 2005

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We have been receiving good feedback – if there is anything you would like to see in this publication let any committee member know. In this issue we have the following articles.

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AGMs

Yes, that time of year is quickly approaching and plans for next year and the short term future are being considered at present. If there are any ideas you have aimed at improving the club then now is the time to get your suggestions together. All proposals to be submitted to the committee by the middle of October for the Mens and Ladies Committees and by the middle of November for the Council.

Both of the present Vice Captains will be looking for committed hard working people to serve on committee with them so if you are interested I'm sure both Pat Carlyle or Ann Turley would love to hear from you.

Development Update

A few things to update the members on. Firstly, as you may have noticed for notices around the club, work is due to commence shortly on the shed where the buggies currently are housed. It is a bit of an eyesore at present and it will be overhauled more in fitting with the presentation of the club and course.

There are a number of quotes and options being considered for the repair and upkeep of the deck, as many of you will notice some of the boards are badly in need of replacement which the chipped paint is in dire need of maintenance. Keep an eye out for developments in this area in the months ahead.

The Head Greenkeeper, Paul Sheeran, together with the members of the course committee intend to meet over the coming months with a view to documenting a development plan for the course. This is intended to take in everything from Staff training and machinery requirements to course maintenance and general developments. It is a huge effort and will be a key component in the forward business planning for the club ... the more we can plan for the future the better positioned we will be as a club and a business.

Annual BBQ

The Annual BBQ returned with a vengeance on the 13th of August. Despite the inclement weather there was an excellent turn out with approx 120 members and guests attending.

On arrival everybody was treated to a glass of wine in the foyer, music and craic all night and food provided by Ger and his staff from the BBQ outside. The night was set up and everybody enjoyed themselves until the early hours of the morning.

A real team effort by the social committee and the staff in preparing for the night. The club was a hive of activity on the Saturday afternoon with the stage being lit, tables being put up, temporary bar being erected, BBQs being set up, car park being roped off etc etc. Too many people to thank specifically but needless to say with the selfless effort shown by so many on that day and night the future of the club can only be good.

Keep an eye out for more social events being arranged by the social committee between now and the end of the year. If it is anything like the BBQ they will be great.

SPONSORS

The following are the sponsors for competitions in September & October. As always the continued support of all the sponsors is much appreciated and your attendance on the presentation day is requested

Tullamore Cinemas (Paul Ward)
Patricia Cunningham (Lady Presidents Prize)
Dom Doody
McDonald Auctioneers & Valuers
Frank Kennedy & Co.
Oliver O'Connor
No.1 Boutique (Margaret Bradford)
Finline Furniture (Kieran & Bridget Finane)
Lyles Footwear (Lyle & Joan Goodwin)
Super Valu (Emmett McConville)
CPM Ireland Ltd (Frank Manning)
Andrew & Michael Turley
Turley & Kelly Solicitors
Portlaoise Windows (Seamus McCusker)
O'Riordan Financial Services (Ger O'Riordan)
Billy Moore
Brendan & Frances Grahah

A little bit of Humour

A couple met at Hilton Head and fell in love. They were discussing how they would continue the relationship after their vacations were over. "It's only fair to warn you, Jody," Bill said, "I'm a golf nut. I live, eat, sleep and breathe golf."

"Well, since you're being honest, so will I." Jody said. "I'm a hooker."

"I see," he said. Then, brightening, he smiled.

"It's probably because you're not keeping your wrists straight when you hit the ball."

.oOo.

Man blames fate for other accidents that befall him, but takes full responsibility for a hole in one.
Anon.

.oOo.

If you watch a game, it's fun. If you play it, it's recreation. If you work at it, it's golf.

Bob Hope

.oOo.

I'm in the woods so much I can tell you which plants are edible.

Lee Trevino

howdido.co.uk



We are now registered with this website and over the coming months you will be able to access details of competition results, handicap adjustments and upcoming fixtures through this site free of charge. Indeed for a minimal subscription it can provide you with a personalised handicap profile which can analyse your weekly scores and give you statistical feedback on your scores.

Michael Moore Cup Final

After six months of inter club competition the finalist for this years Michael Moore Cup have been decided. The holders Black Bush (who defeated our own team in the qtr final) will defend against Nenagh.

Black Bush overcame Ardee, who have been in the event ever since it's induction, in the semi final while Nenagh were victorious over Cill Dara in their semi final.

The final will be played here in Portarlington on Saturday September 10th and your support on the day for the teams involved, the organiser, Oliver Egan, and the sponsor Michael Moore would be appreciated.

Over the past years it has been an excellent day with good golf and healthy competition.



Congratulations to all the winners of Aidan Colgans recent President prize and very best of luck to Patricia Cunningham with her prize on Sept 11th.

Hole Naming & Sponsorship

A piece of work is ongoing at present looking at putting information boards on each hole. These boards will contain the detail of hole i.e. yardages etc and a graphic of the hole. The plans for this are at the very early stages and prices for various options are being sought.

The plan from there would also be to offer annual advertisement space on each board for a set fee with the possibility of extended advertising to be looked at.

One thing which has been muted for a number of years, and has previously happened on Captains & Presidents days, would be the formal naming of each of the holes. Some initial ideas around the names have included themes using the various course wildlife, naming holes after prominent trees on the holes or even using the heritage of the town and surrounding areas as a basis.

The very early draft of how these markers could look would be as follows :



Before anybody says anything this is just a fictional hole and is not one on our course !!!

It has been suggested that the markers be wooden with inserts for the graphics but the option of stone is also being considered.

If you have any suggestions as to how the holes could be named or if you the prospect of sponsoring a hole for a year grabs your attention please speak to the Hon. Treasurer. The costs of these sponsorship options are being worked on at present.

Keep an eye out for developments in this area in the weeks to come.

Congratulations

A couple of notable achievements over the past months which would be amiss of us not to mention.

Steve O'Donnell achieved the goal, of which most golfers could only dream, of becoming a scratch golfer. The quality of golf he has played in the last few months has been of the highest quality which was rewarded with a course record in the captains prize. On a course of the quality and difficulty of ours his achievement is especially notable ... well done Steve.

In our constant effort to improve the standards on and off the course we have supported Staff training and one person who has taken a firm grasp of this opportunity is Brendan Broderick. Brendan has recently passed his final Greenkeepers exams with flying colours. His newly learned skills have been put to work to the benefit and improvement of the course for all to see. Brendan has been working closely with Paul Sheeran and I'm sure his ears must have been burning with the compliments and praise he has received recently.

If anybody knows of notable achievements which would warrant a mention please let any member of the committee know.

100 Best Courses in Ireland

A recent Golf Digest article has asked for submissions to be considered for entry into the 100 best courses in Ireland. Now is our chance to get Garryhinch on the map. There are notices around the club on how you can vote for the club so please take some time to find out more and submit the club for consideration. For years we have known we have a great club .. now it is time for everybody else to be told the same.

Rules Corner

1. A player is three down after three holes of a match. Before playing from the fourth tee, he discovers that he has 15 clubs in his bag, breaking the 14-club limit. What is the ruling and the status of the match?
2. On the putting green, a player marks his ball with a coin, lifts the ball, cleans and replaces it, and ensures that the ball is at rest, but leaves the coin in place. As the player walks to the other side of the hole to look at his line of putt, a gust of wind moves the ball two inches closer to the hole. What is the ruling?

Answers at the bottom of page 6

20 Golfing Laws

As everybody knows the rules of golf are complicated at best but there are those unwritten rules everybody understands !!

LAW 1:

No matter how bad your last shot was, the worst is yet to come. This law does not expire on the 18th hole, since it has the supernatural tendency to extend over the course of a tournament, a summer and, eventually, a lifetime.

LAW 2:

Your best round of golf will be followed almost immediately by your worst round ever. The probability of the latter increases with the number of people you tell about the former.

LAW 3:

Brand new golf balls are water-magnetic. Though this cannot be proven in the lab, it is a known fact that the more expensive the golf ball, the greater its attraction to water.

LAW 4:

Golf balls never bounce off of trees back into play. If one does, the tree is breaking a law of the universe and should be cut down.

LAW 5:

No matter what causes a golfer to duff a shot, all his playing partners must solemnly chant "You looked up," or invoke the wrath of the universe.

LAW 6:

The higher a golfer's handicap, the more qualified he deems himself as an instructor.

LAW 7:

Every par-three hole in the world has a secret desire to humiliate golfers. The shorter the hole, the greater its desire.

LAW 8:

Topping a 3-iron is the most painful torture known to man.

LAW 9:

Palm trees eat golf balls.

LAW 10:

Sand is alive. If it isn't, how do you explain the way it works against you?

LAW 11:

Golf carts always run out of juice at the farthest point from the clubhouse.

LAW 12:

A golfer hitting into your group will always be bigger than anyone in your group. Likewise, a group you accidentally hit into will consist of a football player, a professional wrestler, a convicted murderer and a tax agent -- or some similar combination.

LAW 13:

All 3-woods are demon-possessed.

LAW 14:

Golf balls from the same "sleeve" tend to follow one another, particularly out of bounds or into the water (see Law three)

LAW 15:

A severe slice is a thing of awesome power and beauty.

LAW 16:

"Nice lag" can usually be translated to "lousy putt." Similarly, "tough break" can usually be translated "way to miss an easy one, sucker."

LAW 17:

The person you would most hate to lose to will always be the one who beats you.

LAW 18:

The last three holes of a round will automatically adjust your score to what it really should be.

LAW 19:

Golf should be given up at least twice per month.

LAW 20:

All vows taken on a golf course shall be valid only until the sunset of the same day

Hole in one

I don't know if it the sponsorship by Donoghue wines focusing the attention of players but the number of Holes in One scored during the year must have exceeded previous years by now. Anyway all these Aces prompted me to look for a dictionary explanation of the term.

Ace - A hole in one. Like an ace in a deck of cards, though not quite so common. Completion of a hole in a single stroke. The odds against this happening are about 45,000 to 1- somewhat worse than the odds of finding a brand-new ball lost in the rough (27,000 to 1) but considerably better than the odds of hitting a perfect drive off a crowded first tee (1,195,000 to 1).



Christmas Parties

Okay sorry to bring up the topic of Christmas this early in the year but like it or not it is only a few months away. We will yet again have to face into the prospect of buying presents, selecting the turkey and organising Christmas parties.

This is where we can help. With the Garryhinch room fully operational now it would be ideal for your office or works Christmas party. You will have a room to yourselves for food and drink and without fear of impacting on any activities which may be going on in the main bar at the same time.

If you want more information speak to our Bar and Catering manager Catherine who will be happy to discuss menu and price options with you.



Junior Coaching

The developments in Junior golf in the club over the past few years has been excellent. With the enactment of recommendations in the Junior Charter under the direction of our Junior Officer, Frank Smith, and his committee this progress has taken on new focus.

The latest thing to be looked at in this area has been around junior coaching. Two differing approaches have been made to this. Firstly a large number of junior members have been taking lessons in the Heritage which is receiving excellent feedback. These lessons have been for the golfers with some experience and have been showing benefits already. The second area is to look at how we can give coaching ourselves to the juniors with a focus on the beginners. Recently we were due to welcome a junior officer from the GUI for a day long course on how to coach junior golfers – unfortunately due to illness this did not happen but will be rescheduled. If you would be interested in being involved with this initiative then give your name to Frank Smith or any of the Junior committee.

Group Text

If we have your mobile phone number you should be receiving your first group text message within the next few weeks. Of course if we have your email address you will have received this newsletter by email and future news notifications by this manner also. If we do not have either please let us know either by jotting down the details and dropping them into the office or by sending an email to portarlingtongc@eircom.net.

Courses of the world – The K Club & PGA Ireland

We have looked at Pebble Beach, Augusta and Pinehurst so far. In this instalment of reviews of the great courses of the world we move a little closer to home and have a look at two of Co. Kildares finest, the home of the Ryder cup next year - the K club and the newly opened PGA National course at Palmerstown House.

Some of you will have had the pleasure of playing either or both of the two championship courses in the K club. The Smurfit and Palmer Courses both offer different challenges but both as challenging and visually pleasing as the other .. the jury is still out on which is the better course and I'm sure the debates will continue for years to come in club houses up and down the country and I'm sure, after the Ryder cup exposure, all around the world.

The facility was the brainchild of Michael Smurfit and while the two courses, designed by Arnold Palmer, are the undoubted centre of attention the K club offers much more than that. The 5 star hotel and spa offers service and quality second to none, the golf clubhouses – one each for both courses - are top quality yet surprisingly relaxed, the best of everything is on show but yet not in your face .. just the right balance has been found. Along the walls are golf memorabilia which golfers and non golfers alike spend time perusing, comfortable areas to sit and relax talking about the round, excellent friendly service with little evidence of the airs and graces which would be associated with other clubs of lesser stature.

Both courses were designed with golfers of all standards in mind. Both are courses which have their fair share of long holes but also many holes which call for accuracy and not distance off the tee. The greens are large and generally receptive while the better placed shots will eliminate many of the vicious breaking putts. The design of the courses cater for the spectator also with generous mounds which offer the view of a number of holes at once. But for me it is the full package which makes the K club truly a wonderful facility, hospitality and service, relaxing surroundings and quality golf courses mean that it is a facility you will not visit just the once ... one taste and you are hooked.

The second of the courses is the Christy O'Connor jnr designed PGA National course at Palmertown House. Recently I had the pleasure of playing the course and it was indeed a pleasure. The course is laid out around the mature Palmerstown estate and the natural water, which is abundant on the course, is used to the full. Mature trees and planting of literally thousands of plants and shrubs makes this a visually spectacular course.

All around the course you are presented with new challenges, par threes which demand medium to long irons, the par fours are generally 400 yds plus and the par fives are proper golf holes and justifiably command the low indexes on the course. The fairways are contoured around the natural water and some massive bunkers but not in a way which will punish good golf shots – it is rare these days to find a fair but challenging golf course and that is exactly what we have here.

At times you are only a matter of 100 yards from the main N7 at Johnstown but this does not impact on the beauty and serenity of this course. There are a few rough edges to be tidied up and building work is ongoing in areas of the estate but you would never mark this course down as a new course .. indeed it is difficult to believe that it is less than two years since it was first laid out.

The changing facilities are some of the best I've seen with large comfortable changing rooms which even incorporate a sauna to relax post round. It is a golfers golf course with the player rather than the spectator in mind and it will be a big hit in the years to come. The biggest compliment you can give about any golf course is to say that you will play it again and this course is one, I for one, will most definitely be marking down as one to revisit in the not too distant future.



Rules Corner Answers

1. The player would be 5 down after three holes, with a maximum deduction of two holes applied to the status of the match.
2. The ball must be played from its new location.