



IN THE SWING

**Portarlinton Golf Club
News & Views**

**Issue 7
May / June 2005**

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A few more people have been picking up the newsletter and the popularity is growing. In this issue we have the following articles

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Club Teams - The interclub match season is up and running and we have had Ladies, Mens and mixed teams already out representing the club. As always we aim to put out the best teams possible and have them well prepared for the match. To this end Pat Kitson has been appointed in the role to oversee the teams from the mens club to ensure, where possible, that there are no clashes of dates and that tee times etc are all co-ordinated.

Once the preparation has been done it is down to the managers and players on the day. Each manager will be looking for the best possible team for each match so keep an eye on the notice boards for details of the teams. The managers for each of the teams are printed in the fixture book so if you would like to be considered to represent the club contact the appropriate manager. There are handicap ranges and match formats to suit everybody so if you feel you are playing well enough put your name forward. If in doubt of the handicap criteria for a team feel free to contact any member of the committee.

Rules Corner

- Q1.** A ball is deflected by a direction post. What is the ruling?
Q2. May a player change clubs during a round if the grips become wet?

Answers are at the bottom of page 6

War Babies weekend away in June - check the notice boards for details

Smart Cards

Following a fair few requests we have looked into our options around the use of the smart card and we have come up with the following changes/enhancements to the facility.

1. Subscriptions

We have set up a “purse” on the smart card called Subscriptions where you can put money aside for next years sub. It operates the same way as present around putting credit on your card but the funds will remain locked in and will not be used for anything else and can be accessed next year for your sub or just for a rainy day.

2. Competition Entry

Entering competitions could be much easier in the weeks and months to come when credit can be deducted from your card to pay for the competition entry. This can be done either at the point of entry when the card is printed on in the golf shop when the till is fully set up – watch for developments on this front

3. Central Pool

The final and perhaps the most asked question is that around “why can’t I use credit from the bar in the restaurant?”. The initial reason for this was that it would be impossible to track income from Bar and Restaurant separately if a central pool was in operation. The good news now is that we believe we have found a way around it and the central pool of funds which can be used anywhere (Bar, restaurant and competition entry) will shortly be in operation.

If there are any more queries or suggestions in relation to the operation of the smart card or indeed any other area of the financial management of the club we would be delighted to hear from you to discuss.

Sponsorship – The sponsors are a critical and integral part of the operation of the club and their contributions to the running of competitions week in week out can not be under estimated. The sponsors for Competitions in May & June (including open week) are as detailed below – please support our sponsors and their businesses.

Philip Lyons & Marty Fitzpatrick	Leo Deffew
JM Grasscare (Ciaran Coffey)	O'Sullivan & Hutchinson
Phelan Hygiene	Matt Dunne Auctioneers
SIAC (Peter Kelliher)	Eamon Bracken Menswear
Webster Insurance (Matt & Valerie Moore)	
Musgraves	An Garda Siochána
Cullen Auctioneers	NBCRI
Anne Turley	Paraic & Kieran O'Dea
Central Stores (Martin Whelehan)	Super Valu (Emmett McConville)
Peter Watchorne	
Riverdrive Construction (Liam McMahon)	
Brereton Plumbing (Seamus Brereton)	
Lawlor Electrical (Ger Lawlor)	John Lawlor
John Maloney T.D.	Tom Slevin Electrical
Martin Turley	
Costcutters Mountmellick (Joe & Vinny Byrne)	
Finline Furniture (Kieran & Bridget Finane)	
Dominex (Christy Martin)	Flanagan Brothers (UK)
Colgan Stores	Michael Moore Car Sales
Portarlington Tyres	
Ramsbottoms Bar (Eddie O'Donoghue)	
Bank of Ireland	Sean Lane
Guinness Group Sales	Jerry & Noreen Savage
Tim O'Sullivan	McElee Chemist Mountmellick

Keep an eye on our web site www.portarlingtongolf.com where we have a page dedicated to our sponsors and the services they provide.

Useless Statistics

Some statistics supplied by Club systems, our new competition entry system supplier, gave an interesting insight to some of the scores from clubs in Britain and Ireland.

With more than 1.5 million rounds of golf recorded and hole-by-hole scores achieved at member clubs each week, this data is collated to reveal some very interesting facts

Did you know that on average you will get an Albatross every 6,584 rounds and you will get a hole-in-one every 1,665 rounds and the average number of strokes per round is 90.57. so if you are lucky enough to play every weekend of the year it will take you a little over 32 years to score a hole in one while the €200 on offer from Pat Carlyle for an Albatros will take you 128 years and 6 months !!!



“If I hit it right, it's a slice. If I hit it left, it's a hook. If I hit it straight, it's a miracle.”

Author Unknown

Courses of the world – This is the second look at the great courses of the world, last issue we looked at pebble beach and the resort it has to offer – this issue we look at Augusta National and it's relationship with the US Masters.

The tourist boom in the early years of the 1900s brought golf to Augusta, and a number of excellent golf courses soon sprang up. The courses attracted many, including a young Atlantan named Bobby Jones, who often came to town to play at what are now the Forest Hills Golf Club and the Augusta Country Club. Jones remembered Augusta fondly in later years when he and friend Clifford Roberts began to plan a special "winter course," suitable for play when most everyone else was shivering. Jones is said to have favoured Augusta over his native Atlanta because of its milder winters. In 1930, he persuaded a Scottish architect named Alister MacKenzie to design what would become Augusta National on a 365-acre site off then-rural Washington Road. It opened for members' play in December 1932. There was soon talk of holding a U.S. Open at the course, but Jones and Roberts thought it might be better to hold their own tournament. So was born The Masters - although for years Jones avoided calling it that. "We realized," Roberts later wrote, "that in order to build a tournament of stature that could survive Bob's eventual separation from the event, it needed to be operated in a better fashion and made more enjoyable than any other." Roberts, the club chairman until his death in 1977, and Jones, the club president until he died in 1971, succeeded magnificently. The Masters was, and still is, considered the best-run golf tournament in the world by fans and golfers alike.

Whenever you talk about Augusta it is the Masters which springs to mind and the traditions it represents. It has an exclusive membership with an extensive waiting list. A little known fact is that only three professional golfers are members of the famous club – Palmer, Nicklaus and John Harris who is currently on the senior PGA tour. To maintain the course it is closed for 5 months of the year June – October. You can only play on the course with a member so get working on those contacts.

JUNIOR GOLF IRELAND LAUNCHES NATIONAL COACHING PROGRAMME

An exciting new development in Irish Golf began today with Junior Golf Ireland (JGI) launching its Junior Golf Coaching Program.

Junior Golf Ireland which was formed in 2003 is a partnership between the Golfing Union of Ireland (GUI), the Irish Ladies Golf Union (ILGU) and the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) Irish region. JGI is sponsored by AIB and supported by both the Irish Sports Council and R&A Ltd.

The Junior Golf Ireland Coaching Program is a new skills-based program that has been designed to support the work of PGA Professionals and is structured using an 18 hole coaching format. The coaching program has been designed to cover all the necessary skills required to start, play and develop the game of golf for both boys & girls from the ages of 8 - 18 years old.

Junior Golf Ireland will support & supply PGA Professionals with a Coaching Program Package to allow all current & prospective junior members take part or become involved in a structured coaching program. The Junior Golf Ireland Coaching Program has been designed by a number of Irish PGA Professionals and Provincial Coaches, in conjunction with Junior Golf Irelands Regional Development Officers.

Speaking about the coaching program Helen Sweeney, JGI Chairperson, said that the JGI Launch has been a culmination of 12 months planning. "We felt that it was vitally important to provide a structured coaching program for all Golf Clubs in Ireland to assist in educating beginners and to create pathways for those children to become regular golfers at club and perhaps even elite level. We feel sure that the implementation of this program will greatly benefit Irish Golf at all levels in the years to come."

She continued: "JGI is delighted that AIB has agreed to become our partners with this initiative for the next 2 years. Their sponsorship of the Ryder Cup will offer opportunities for us to introduce and foster the game to a new audience before and after the event itself."

Billy Andrews, general manager, AIB, said that through this partnership with JGI the bank wished to leave a lasting legacy for Irish golf after the Ryder Cup matches 2006. "We felt that there could be no better way to achieve this than working with the governing bodies to expand the game at grassroots level. We are fully committed to the aims and the objectives of the philosophy behind Junior Golf Ireland."

The principal role of JGI is to bring golf to the widest cross section of young people and to implement the Junior Golf Development Plan. This plan includes:

- Establishment / identification of Junior Friendly Golf Facilities and the development of Coaching Programs for children who opt to learn the game at such facilities.
- Introduction of golf to Primary Schools, using Tri-Golf, a schools friendly golf program using modified equipment.
- Training of Volunteer Coaches in the development of Tri-Golf and in assisting Training PGA Professionals in the delivery of entry level coaching.
- Securing Club Membership for juniors who complete JGI Programs.

"Hit it hard. It will land somewhere."
Mark Calcavecchia



Restaurant – As we approach six month of operation of the restaurant under the control of the club things have bedded in well. The new menus have been agreed and implemented and input from members taken into consideration in what is included and in the costs being charged.

The chef Ger and the house manager Paddy have been working on many aspects of the operation and things have progressed. To say it has been a painless exercise would not be true but hopefully the operation and the club are stronger and wiser for the experience.

We are always looking for feedback so that improvements can be made and credit given. If anybody has any comments to make the house manager or any committee member would be please to follow up on it.

Rory McIlroy to play in Irish Open

West of Ireland champion Rory McIlroy, been selected by the Golfing Union of Ireland to compete in the Nissan Irish Open Championship which will be played over the Montgomerie course at Carton House Golf Club on Thursday to Sunday, 19th to 22nd May.

The sponsors of the Nissan Irish Open have very kindly invited the GUI to nominate three amateurs to compete in the Championship. The other two amateurs will be selected by the GUI following the completion of the AIB Irish Amateur Open Championship which will be played over the O'Meara course at Carton House Golf Club on Friday to Sunday, 6th to 8th May.

McIlroy, at 15 years of age, became the youngest winner of the West of Ireland Championship over the Easter weekend. The Hollywood golfer, who will celebrate his 16th birthday on 4th May, is also the reigning Nissan Irish Boys champion, a title which he won at Castlebar Golf Club in August 2004.

Mr. Gerard O'Toole, Executive Chairman of Nissan said: "We are delighted to invite the Golfing Union of Ireland to nominate three amateur golfers to play in the Nissan Irish Open and especially pleased that young Rory McIlroy has been selected. "We are very happy to be associated with the GUI in the development of Junior golf in Ireland through our sponsorship of the Nissan Irish Boys Championship and it is wonderful that the current champion now has the opportunity to play in the Nissan Irish Open at such a young age."

Golf Tips by Pat Dolan

Most golfers "mistakenly" believe the golf swing is the most important thing in golf. Please understand a good golf swing is important however it is NOT as important as many golfers believe. Their belief is understandable. Virtually everything the modern golfer sees, hears or reads about the game tells them the swing is everything. However, there is one thing that is far more important, can you guess what it is?

Sadly many of today's teaching professionals continue to promote the belief that the swing is so important. I confess, I too was guilty of it. Many of us teaching professionals had become nothing more than "swing specialists." In fact, my first comment to most new students was, "Hit a few balls so I can analyze your swing" rather than, "How can I help you?" This problem, in my opinion, originated with photography. Since photographs have been around they have been used to disprove, prove and improve things. Arnold Palmer's Graph Check Polaroid camera (circa 1960) helped promote that belief.

Using it, a professional could take a picture of the students swing and within seconds they could view and analyze that swing together. The pictures could even focus on specific portions of the swing like the back swing, the downswing or the follow through. The student would attempt to adjust their swing on their next shot and the new picture would be viewed to prove if they had or hadn't. Please note, the sad thing is everyone honestly believed that improving a golfers swing would make them a better player. While they were partially right, they carried it too far. This obsession of trying to get the students to improve their swings probably ruined the game for many of them. It may have even led untold numbers of them into quitting the game.

The truth is, a full "perfect" swing is used on less than half of all golf shots. Par on most 18 hole golf courses is 72 and to shoot it, you are allowed 2 putts on every green, a total of 36 shots. So with a par shooter exactly half of their game is on the putting surface. This is true of higher handicappers as well, as most of their additional shots are taken with altered or shortened swings like when hitting half wedges, chip shots, etc. Therefore a FULL "perfect swing" is NOT needed on those shots either.

Common sense tells you the golf swing can't be ALL important if it's only used on half of the golf shots. So why spend 90% of your practice time on something you only do on 40% of your shots? So what is it, that is far more important than your golf swing? It's your thinking or mental game. Thinking is required on all shots. There are plenty of legitimate questions which need to be asked and answered before hitting any shot or putt. You always need to think about and make decisions on things like which club, how much break, should I loft it or pitch and run it, should I gamble or play it safe, etc.

Just remember a perfect swing isn't worth a damn, "if it's used when trying to clear water and you're not using enough club." Wouldn't you agree that selecting enough club, may at times be more important than a perfect swing? You do !!! Great because now you're truly on the way towards improving your game. You will now be open to "looking for and listening to" alternative ways of doing it. Perhaps now you understand how students made remarkable improvements so fast, so easily and without physical practice.

An Appreciation

Richard (Dick) Motherway was a former Hon. Secretary from 1967-1969, Captain in 1970 and President in 1977. A Cork man by birth, a Dublin man by upbringing and a club man by right .. he was one of the true gentlemen of the club and we are truly a poorer place following his passing.



Those of us who had the pleasure in knowing him had been saddened at his diminishing health over the past years, but, at the same, time heartened by the fact that he never lost his chat or passion for life. He still had a smile which would brighten even the darkest room and had an opinion on most topics which he wasn't shy in giving. He was with the AIB in Mountmellick where his strong will and determination were traits that caused him to have run ins with a few people but he was a man of principle which earned him the respect of all.

Always enjoyed the social aspect of the club and his renditions of Drumcolloher and The Spanaird will be sadly missed. His lasting testimony in the club will be the Junior Scratch cup which he ran for may years as a 54 hole competition – he even developed the tag Mr. Junior Scratch.

Golf aside he was a lover of all sports and had the knowledge to match. Rugby was his other passion and he appeared on RTEs Know Your Sport TV show answering questions on the New Zealand All Blacks a few years back.

More often seen out in the rugby club in recent years it was with the help of some very good friends that he never lost contact with his loves of golf and rugby and at the same time with his many friends in both clubs. His funeral was a real who's who of both clubs from times past, a group he would have loved to be in the middle of exchanging stories and having a laugh - I'm sure he was there in spirit giving as good as he got!

Following a full life we pray that he is now reunited with his late wife Cecily in a better place. We mourn his passing but celebrate his life and contribution to our club - beannacht Dé lena anam dhílis.

Thanks to Tom Hainsworth for his input to this article

"These greens are so fast I have to hold my putter over the ball and hit it with the shadow."
Sam Snead

Socials - On St. Patrick's night there was a very enjoyable few hours of music with Dom Reddin which was later supplemented by the piano playing of Dr. Larry Fullam. This was the second effort of the social committee following the first table quiz earlier in the year. Following this another table quiz was held on Thursday April 7th where the turn out was smaller but an enjoyable night all the same.

The social committee met recently to look at the rest of the year and what can be done. The following draft schedule of events was arrived upon :

21/5	Spring Follies Show
11/6	1st Night of Open Week House Band 9-12
19/6	Last night of Open Week House Band 9-12:30 (Prize giving 10-11)
3/7	Captains Prize night The Four Jays
13/8	BBQ
16/9	Classical Evening
15/10	Concert Castlewarden (away)
19/11	Concert Castlewarden (home)

If you would like to be involved or help out in any way contact Dr. Larry Fullam, Noel Mc Mahon or any of the social committee.



Life Lesson

In 1923, do you know who was President of the largest steel company? President of the largest gas company? The greatest wheat speculator? President of the Bank of International Settlement? The Great Bear of Wall Street? Or President of the New York Stock Exchange? These men should have been considered some of the world's most successful men. At least, they found the secret of making money. Now almost 80 years later, do you know what became of these men? Charles Schwab, president of the largest steel company, died a pauper. Edward Hopson, president of the largest gas company, went insane. Arthur Cooger, the greatest wheat speculator, died abroad, penniless. Cosabee Livermore, president of the BIS, shot himself, The Great Bear of Wall Street, committed suicide Richard Whitney, NYSE president released from prison to die at home

In that same year, 1923, Gene Sarazen won most of the important golf championships, including both the US Open and PGA Championship. He played golf until he was 92 and died in 1999 at the age of 95... and was financially solvent at his death.

Conclusion: Stop worrying about business and start playing more golf!

Wednesday golf

As many of you will know the Mens open Wednesdays have started again and are picking up week on week. As a new initiative this year, the mens vice captain, Pat Carlyle, is running a 9 or 12 hole competition (depending on available light) in conjunction with the main 18 hole competition. The intention of this is to enable even those who can't get out until late the opportunity to play in a competition. So if you fancy a game on a Wednesday evening, even if you only get home late from work, there is an outlet for you .. and who knows you might pick up a golf ball or two in one of the four categories available.

Communication Channels

Earlier this year we issued invoices to members detailing their annual subs due and despite some initial teething problems it was generally well received. Included in this mailing was a sheet giving the details we had on file for each member and many people returned with updates which will shortly be applied.

The objective of this was twofold, primarily it was to do a general update of details onto our new system as most information had been out of date. The other, and more constructive, reason was to gather as many up to date email addresses and mobile phone numbers as possible to offer us alternative communication channels.

Primarily we will look at setting up an *email distribution list* where we can update members on competitions, events, results etc on a regular basis. A *group text* facility is also being investigated which will serve a similar purpose and allow information to be sent to members mobile phones. The whole objective will be to give regular updates of what is happening in the club to as many members as possible in the most efficient manner.

If you think your information is not up to date and would like to be included in this new communication process please let us know and we will update your details on the system.

Club Membership Closed - At a recent committee meeting a review of our current membership was undertaken and it was decided to close membership once the applications on hand had been processed. Once this has been done members will only be taken in when a space becomes available. Details of members will be posted following the next committee meeting.

Wildlife Update - Spring has sprung and the wildlife on the course is becoming more visible day by day. The swans are back and have been seen on the lakes around the course and they are nesting beside the 15th lake so fingers crossed the will get a chance to hatch this year. On the topic of the fowl the nesting season is in full flight for the ducks, excuse the pun, and we hope to see some young out on the course shortly. The pheasants can be heard around but have not been in view .. we are going to give the breeding pen another go and see if some will stay a round the course. The red squirrels can be seen around which is always good. We still have some mink around which is a bit of a worry for the ducks. Stoat, pine martin, hare and otter have all been seen on the course recently. Evidence of our neighbourly deer can be seen around in the bunkers and softer ground and there have been some sightings for the early morning golfers. The work continues and credit to Albert Mitchell and Frank Higgins for all their efforts in this area.

"By the time you get to your ball, if you don't know what to do with it, try another sport."

Julius Boros, a U.S. Open and PGA champion



Check out the web site www.howdidido.co.uk where you can view your current handicap and get analysis of your own scores, view competitions and results. The club has recently signed up to this facility and it is available to members free of charge for the first month and subsequently at a cost of £15 per year. There is a link to this website on our own site www.portarlingtongolf.com – Paddy Bates keeps this regularly updated and is well worth a look.



Rules Answers : **A1.** It is considered to be rub of the green and the ball must be played as it lies without penalty
A2. No, a club is only unfit for play if it substantially damaged