

NCLGA Council Meeting

10.30 am Monday 14th July 2014 at Beeston Fields Golf Club (NG9 3DD)

Participants.

NCLGA Council Members and Ladies Secretaries from 24 Nottinghamshire clubs.

Agenda

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Gill Stump, Kilton Forest, Springwater, Retford, College Pines

2. Minutes from last meeting. Agreed as a true record and signed by the Captain.

Matters arising.

Meals after Interclub matches.

There has been some confusion possibly caused by the Notts Union's decision to not share a meal after Mixed and Mens interclub matches.

It is appreciated that there are some difficulties such as stewards day off, differing standard and quality of food etc but The general feeling is that after Ladies interclub matches the host club should continue to supply a meal and the teams should take the opportunity to eat together and socialise.

The meeting was asked to discuss this with their members and match secretaries and we would discuss this again at the next meeting if required.

Meals after League matches.

The main problem seems to be the differing standard and quality of the food on offer and each club has its own way of paying for meals for the team.

It was suggested that a meal such as lasagne and salad and a drink is acceptable.

The meeting was asked to discuss this with their members and match secretaries and we would discuss this again at the next meeting if required.

As each match is played home and away it was felt that this could be sorted out mainly by the match secretaries at the meeting at Mapperley on Tuesday 7th October at 7.30pm.

3. Captain's Report

We are well into the golfing season now so time for an update of what's been happening so far this year.

We started in April with the County Waltz at Stanton on the Wolds with a full field of 31 entries – 93 competitors. Thanks to the generosity of the Members of Stanton who gave us courtesy of the course and to those that played and supported the raffle an amazing £1360 was raised.

Within the same week came the annual Sheffield Union match. This is considered the forerunner to the start of the season and it was our turn to host the match. Coxmoor kindly allowed us to play and despite the early season conditions there was a marvellous atmosphere with old friendships being renewed – Gay Palmer former Notts. County Captain turned out to play for the Sheffield Union. However, despite this no sympathy was shown and Notts. ran out the winners 3 matches to 2.

Next came the County Championship at Beeston Fields in May. I accompanied Maureen Clarke (our Chief Referee) on a visit to Beeston about 3 weeks before the championship and was a little worried – the course was really suffering (as were many) due to the very wet Spring. However, the Head green keeper and his staff pulled out all the stops and what a wonderful championship we had. Thanks must go to Beeston Fields Members and employees for the marvellous welcome and way we were treated over that weekend. Put simply it they were tremendous.

I will report all the details of who won what at the AGM but we were treated to some great golf of the highest standard with Alex Peters ultimately becoming our County Champion for the third time in a row – well done Alex.

This year we tried a new format for the Spring meeting and held an 18 hole competition – it was quite well supported and appeared to be well received and feedback seemed to indicate a support for this new event by those that took part. It enabled many players who have previously supported the championship but are no longer wanting to play 36 holes or qualify to be part of it. I think all considered it a success and we hope to repeat it next year when the spring meeting and championship will be at Coxmoor.

As part of our commitment to review and revisit events, the championship format is currently being considered by the Executive Committee and we plan to report to you on our findings at the October meeting.

I elected not to undertake first team coaching/training this year. We are blessed with some very good golfers all of whom have their own coaches and swing guru's so instead I opted to spend some money on an additional get together and practice rounds at The Leicestershire GC in advance of County Week.

On 2nd June we travelled to Newark Golf Club for the Coronation Foursomes where 48 pairs took part. The course was lovely and the weather beautiful – the Newark ladies I'm afraid spoilt us rotten with a wonderful half way house.

The eventual winners of the cups were Alison Harold and Bernie Barton from The Nottinghamshire with a rather good 41 points.

I must also make a note of the fact that the raffle held in aid of Breast Cancer made a magnificent £202.

On 8th June we travelled to The Leicestershire. I had high hopes and expectations for our efforts at County Week. We decided this year not to take our full quota of 12 players because availability turned out to be better than expected. We took 8 players for the large part of the week with Lianna Bailey joining us for 3 days.

We started the week with new uniforms – red cardigans – I've brought a photo to show you how smart our team looked. Thanks to Colette who sourced the cardigans and made sure we were probably the best turned out team!

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday saw great wins and we were flying. Thursday saw us take on our main rivals Lincolnshire. It was a great match with some wonderful golf. We had three games all square playing the last. Unfortunately 2 went Lincolnshire's way and we halved the other. So they won our match. It was so close that had we managed to halve the games we would have gone through as we had more games won.

I think it's now very significant and testimony to the strength of our team that I stand here before you slightly disappointed to come home as runners up. I think we all thought that this year would be our year to go through to the national finals but not to be – Lincolnshire hadn't read the script – at least not the one that I had written.

I've brought the plate to show you – I know Kathryn and Pam are inheriting a great bunch of girls and I really believe they can do it next year.

Special thanks for all the cards and messages and to those that were able to come the support was welcomed by all.

Also need to mention Gillian's efforts in keeping the website up to date. Several of you have mentioned how good it was and easy to use.

Next came the Summer Meeting at Worksop and yet again a new format – has anything remained the same since I appeared? We combined the Summer meeting with the Vets. I had great fun working on the desk with our President Joan asking if people were vets or super vets which no doubt made me very popular!!

Net Winner was S. Nickless from Southwell and Gross winner Carol Wild from Notts. Ladies in both categories.

Pippa Handley (a super vet) from Wollaton Park won the Dorothy Payne Trophy.

In my full annual report to the AGM I will supply details of the scores for all of the competitions but felt you wouldn't want to hear it twice.

Don't forget that at the AGM we will be presenting all the winners with their trophies.

Unfortunately due to a lack of support we have reluctantly taken the decision to cancel the stableford arranged for 4th August at Springwater. I know some of you have been disappointed but we had to make judgment call on the numbers of entries –v- costs involved for example prizes and the course facility fee and on this occasion it just wasn't sustainable.

That leads me on to the Autumn meeting on 4th September where again we are little concerned about the numbers of entries so I want to encourage you to enter. No excuses about you not having a County card or not using the website - I've brought some entry forms with me for you all to take away and fill in – please!

Further meetings are to be held with the County Golf Partnership and Notts. Union to develop "Nottinghamshire Golf" and to determine the best way to spend the grant of £4000 that we have received for our joint endeavours on coaching and the development of Junior Golf. More information will follow once these meetings have been concluded.

As you will appreciate there have been massive changes in the way the County is now running County Golf. I feel I have been particularly blessed to have the support of many individuals who are working so hard to ensure that everything is running smoothly and that I remain on track – we have a marvellous team spirit with everyone being prepared to take on virtually any and every task thrown at them.

For example, Maureen Clarke took over the Waltz arrangements. Gillian Stump continues to work tirelessly as our Junior Secretary and we have a Treasurer prepared to do draws and buy prizes. We have members of the Executive helping out with Juniors – by the way if anyone is interested in helping or who would like to become our County Junior Organiser please let us know. We have broken the role down into more manageable proportions so as to make it not quite so onerous. Emma Howie has been a real gem in making all the team arrangements.

President Joan is still prepared to sit on the desk and oversee competitions to let others play – wonderful thank you.

Scary moment of all though must have been me accompanying General Secretary Lynn to a junior match at Nuneaton where Lynn was the designated "responsible adult" – now that's worrying.

I have to say I was extremely worried at the prospect of losing so much experience last year although those that retired have been more than helpful when we have needed a bit of advice. However, I feel what we might have lacked in experience we have more than made up for with enthusiasm.

We have tried many, many different things and so far so good. No moans, no groans just everyone being prepared to dig in and help and support each other.

I thank everyone concerned but simply you have been great.

Good days – good times.

The next big event is County Captain's Day on 28th July at Coxmoor Golf Club. I thank all of you who have entered – it proved very popular and was full within 10 days of the forms being released.

I know some of you who didn't get in are disappointed – I'd like to think it's due to the popularity of the Captain but on balance I've conceded it's due to the course!

People have again been generous and all Par 3 holes have been sponsored so good luck to those of you playing and thank you to my sponsors, Sean Musson, Glenn Newton and John Fowler.

My old friend Andy Tyler from Coxmoor has also again agreed to sponsor our teams by providing 10 dozen Pro VI golf balls – thank you.

We will be holding a raffle and all the monies raised on the day go into the pot to help fund next year's events and Captain – so if you can spare a prize and buy some tickets both Kathryn and I will be grateful.

Thank you ladies - continued good golf to you all for the rest of the season.

4. Vice Captains' Report

The second team matches have now started.

The first match was played on 30th June at Sleaford against Lincolnshire.

The weather was fine and sunny but lack of local knowledge was a disadvantage as there were quite a few dog-leg holes to negotiate.

There was a good friendly team spirit and the players fought well.

Caron Harrison was our savior gaining the only point for us by winning her singles match with some masterful putting.

Unfortunately Nottinghamshire lost 8 - 1 to Lincolnshire.

The team consisted of Emily Cheshire Caron Harrison Carol Houghton Amy Oxbury, Glenys Priestley and Rosemary Skill - it was Amy's first appearance for the team.

The return match at Sherwood Forest was played on Sunday 13th July.

Again the weather was fine but windy and the course was in excellent condition.

Local knowledge proved to be an asset as everyone remained unbeaten.

The only points to be conceded were in 3 halved matches and 2 of these matches required birdies on the 18th by Lincolnshire to hold them to a half.

Nottinghamshire gained their revenge by winning 7.5 to 1.5. and so have everything to play for in the matches against Leicestershire.

The team consisted of Emily Cheshire Esme Hamilton Caron Harrison Carol Houghton Emily Lyle and Amy Oxbury - it was Esme's first appearance for the team.

The remaining matches against Leicestershire are being played at Wollaton Park on Sunday 20th July and at Longcliffe on Thursday 24th July. Any support would be most welcome.

5. Handicap Advisers Report

Madam President, Madam Captain, Ladies

Most of the points I make today are because of queries I have received throughout the year. They also re-iterate some items in my February report.

If a player's handicap has been lapsed for more than 12 months, the player shall be allotted a new handicap after submitting three 18-hole cards or the equivalent in 9-hole cards. The Handicap Committee of the Club must then consider the player's previous handicap, the best net differential of the scores submitted, and take into account any health issues. The handicap allocated should be somewhere between the previous playing handicap and the best net differential. This ensures it is a fair handicap for competing at her Club, within the County and elsewhere.

When the Annual Review of all members takes place the scores achieved throughout the year can be considered along with the Annual Review Report and the handicap can be increased or decreased accordingly. It is not usually necessary to increase or decrease a handicap by more than 2 strokes at the Annual Review. A high level of uniformity can be achieved if all parties honour their obligations by observing the spirit and intent of the system.

The Handicap Committee should be comprised of a minimum of three persons with the majority being Members who have the required knowledge of, and expertise, in the Unified Handicapping system. It should not be a Committee of one.

Most Clubs have had Alternate Day Competitions in place for many years but there was some confusion with regard to England Golf Medal Competitions which may not be run as Alternate and Main Day Competitions. As all England Golf Medals are open to all players whatever day of the week they are played, these rounds must not be merged on the club software but merging may be done by hand for the Club trophies or prizes.

Where possible the Alternate Day (which will be a Club Medal, Bogey/Par or Stableford Competition) should be arranged within 7 days of, and prior to, the Main Day so the competition is closed at the end of the Main Day. The Main Day should be the day when most players play their golf which is usually the weekday and not the weekend.

A separate Competition Standard Scratch must be calculated for the Alternate Day and the Main Day and handicaps adjusted accordingly. The results can be combined electronically for allocation of prizes.

Whenever a player plays in a Qualifying Competition it is the responsibility of the player to return the card, even if it is a No Return, and it is the responsibility of the Handicap/Competition Committee to ensure all cards are returned and, if one is not, entering it as a No Return. Players must reduce their handicap themselves if they do a good score. If they do not know their Exact Handicap they must work it out from .5. For example if playing off 16 they must treat their Exact as 15.5. Players must not increase their handicaps themselves.

Some players will have noticed that the EG News May 2014 issue No 69 contained some questions and answers on Handicapping and one was:-

Question - Can a Club Committee declare a Competition Non-Qualifying?

Answer - Yes, as long as the Club ensures that an adequate amount of qualifying competitions are played during the year, and that it is understood by all competitors that no handicap adjustments can be made - neither up nor down.

However, all County Handicap Advisers and Club Handicap Secretaries have been advised that it is not within the spirit and intent of the system to adjust the terms and conditions of a competition deliberately so that it is rendered non-qualifying on a technicality by restricting the number of Clubs, changing the Measured Course, or imposing a handicap allowance limitation of, for example, 7/8 ths.

The CONGU Handbook states that in exceptional circumstances only, or with the authority of the Union, the Committee in charge of a competition may declare it a Non-Qualifying Competition before play commences and must advise competitors before they commence play. All players should be made aware that if they play in Non-Qualifying Competitions their handicaps cannot change, and Committees that run them will have to take the flak from someone who has a good day and cannot reduce their handicap. It is, therefore, strongly recommended that most, if not all, competitions should be run as Qualifiers bearing in mind that all Qualifying Competitions must be played off the Measured Course.

It has been mooted that the handicap system is not encouraging to new golfers and members are being lost because of it. CONGU and The European Golf Association are currently examining the possibility of simplifying the handicapping system for players in Category 3 and above.

Too many handicap queries are going straight to England Golf when they should first come to the County Handicap Adviser. Regional Handicap Advisers are to be appointed to reduce the work load on England Golf. Clubs that have a handicap query must first approach their County Handicap Adviser who will only take advice herself if she is unable to answer the query with 100% confidence. So remember I am your first port of call if you have a handicap query and I am always happy to hear from you and to help.

6. Financial Report Treasurer Helen Maber

I am pleased to report that our accounts are in good order

General Account: £6,395 –but with expenses for Autumn Meeting still to be paid.

All Affiliation Fees with the exception of one club are now paid

Captains Account: £6,637 –but with expenses and meals for County Captains Day still to be paid

Junior Account: £5,864 with ongoing coaching expenses to continue

Reserve Account: £12,124. This account is earning a massive £1.50 per quarter interest!

Accounts: Currently, as you can see, we keep four separate accounts in the bank. Consequently, I receive four bank statements each month, each of which needs to be reconciled. I have four sets of paying-in books and four sets of cheque books, each with different signatories, and often payments are made from incorrect bank accounts, necessitating transfers from one to the other to keep the books straight. We have discussed this within the Executive and propose to simplify the system by closing the Captains and Junior Accounts and to hold just one General Account and a Reserve Account. This should mean that we can hold a larger sum in the Reserve Account and hopefully benefit from a little more interest. I trust this has the agreement of the meeting?

We have also considered several other points within the accounts which we would like to take to the AGM for approval:

Honoraria:

Historically, members of the Executive have been given honoraria payments in recognition of their duties on the Council. We are aware that payments such as these do not fall strictly within hmrc guidelines and that it would be better practice to cover officers' expenses rather than to pay an annual fee to individuals.

It is important to ensure that our officers are not out of pocket as a result of their roles within the County, but equally they should not be earning untaxed income. You will have heard Jane refer to the excellent team spirit that exists within the group, and very often there is a substantial overlap of roles as we often act together to organise events and competitions. It is therefore more appropriate and fairer to ensure that all sensible expenditure on County business is reimbursed to individuals and we propose abandoning the honoraria system with effect from the next AGM. We would like to bring this motion to the AGM for approval.

Affiliation Fees:

Currently our affiliation fees are £3 per lady member. These fees go towards the running of the County section, supporting the development of our Juniors, providing kit for our representative golfers and in running County Week, together of course with ancillary expenses for attending training sessions and keeping up with developments in England Golf.

Unfortunately, in line with the national trend, the number of lady members in the County is dwindling. Since 2010 within the County there has been a drop of nearly 20% in the number of affiliation fees paid. This drop has been exaggerated by the difference in treatment of home and away players. Ladies who are members of more than one club used to pay a fee at each of their clubs and now only one fee is paid to the home club within the county, so the drop in fees is not quite as significant in membership terms as the numbers imply. However, it is substantial enough to make a noticeable difference within the accounts.

In addition, there are fewer ladies taking part in our County competitions and we have to be prepared to cover a potential loss on certain competitions. We would also like to play our competitions at the more popular courses to encourage participation – but facility fees for these courses do tend to be higher. A real Catch 22 situation!

The last increase in affiliation fees was in 2007 when the fee was raised from £2 to £3. A survey of neighbouring counties shows that we are out of line, with fees ranging from £6.50 to £10.

As you have seen from the accounts, we do have a good sum in reserve, but this is essential for our forward planning. We need to ensure that we have sufficient funds to provide for our Nottinghamshire Ladies achieving their aim of getting to the County Finals – and we really need to budget for this and ring-fence funds to cover the pleasing thought of managing this over two consecutive years.

With the meeting's approval we would like to take a proposal to the next AGM to increase the Affiliation Fee from £3 to £5

The meeting agreed that the points raised by the Treasurer should be put to the AGM

7. Midland North Report

Part of the role of the Midland North Rep, is to organise regional competitions.

Each of the 6 counties take it in turn to organise 1 competition a year.

This year it was the turn of Nottinghamshire to organise the Regional Final of the Australian Spoons Competition.

This was held at Wollaton Park on June 27th-- a day when the sun went in, the rain came out, with an

added threat of thunder and lightning -- just what you need when you are organising a competition! Fortunately it did not rain heavily all the time, and the thunder and lightning was warned off by our referee Maureen Clark who turned up with her own klaxon.

Most of the competitors enjoyed the day despite the weather. The winning pair, with a score of 41 points came from Kilworth Springs in Leicestershire. They will go through to the National Final at Belton Park. My thanks go to Wollaton Park, and to everyone who helped make the day a success.

Since then I have been to a meeting for Voting Reps at Woodhall Spa. Although it was my 2nd meeting since I took over, I had to go to an induction meeting--introducing us to all aspects England Golf.

Also there was Lauren Spray from Stanton. She had just started a new job there, as Women and Girls Participation Manager, and was on her 2nd day. We wish her well in her new role.

The main content of the meeting was the Strategic Plan which had been sent to counties for comment. This was passed, so giving England Golf a framework in which to act.

The key aims of the plan are:- more players, more members for clubs, stronger clubs, winning golfers, outstanding championships, improving image, and excellent governance. All of these can be worked towards at club, county and national level.

The funding that England golf gets from Sport England, depends on the number of people playing golf each week, so therefore it is important to try and get more people into golf. There is still concern that the number of golf club members are dropping. It was passed at the meeting that funding would be given to a pilot study. This would be of 3 counties where Clubs, Unions, Associations, PGA, County Development Officer, County Golf Partnership etc, would work together to try to increase membership, and if a way forward can be found in the pilot study, then this can be rolled out across the country. Everything seemed very positive, the only downside being that affiliation fees to England Golf are going to be raised by £1 in 2016.

8. Junior Report

Junior Report for the Council Meeting 14.7.14 – from Gillian Stump, Junior Committee Secretary

Since we are still without a County Junior Organiser, their workload this season has been shared between the members of the Junior Committee and the Executive Committee. Thank you to all of them for taking on these extra responsibilities in addition to their existing roles.

The Mixed Am-Am was held on Sunday 27th April at Wollaton Park and it raised a wonderful £830 for junior section funds. Thank you to everyone who entered teams and to Wollaton Park for agreeing to host the event and for their continued support for county golf.

Junior Summer Coaching is now running from April to September at Rufford Park and Riverside Golf Centre. In the autumn we will be looking to try to align the junior girls coaching with that provided by the County Golf Partnership in order to cut out and duplication of effort.

In 1st March the lower handicapped girls were invited by the NCLGA, to a practical workshop by former tour professional Kitrina Douglas, held at Ramsdale Park. The girls all found the day very interesting and informative.

League Team training was arranged for Sunday 23rd March at Rufford Park, with John Vaughan and Phil Edwards. It included a short game skills session followed by 9 holes of on course training.

The Girls Championship was held at Retford on Sunday 11th May and, for the first time, a Notts Intermediate Championship, for girls up to age 30, was run in conjunction, funded by a grant from the

County Golf Partnership. It was a showery and very windy day but some excellent golf was played. The U18 Championship and the Open Scratch Salver were won by Lianna Bailey with an excellent 73 gross. Annabel Bailey won the U16 Scratch with a gross 76 and Charlotte Hazelwood won the U18 Handicap Cup with a nett 64. She also won the U14 Scratch. The Intermediate Championship was won by Lauren Spray with a gross 74.

The League Team started their defence of the Midlands North League title with their first match of the season on 6th April, at Hollinwell, against Lincolnshire. The result was an excellent 6 – 0 win. The second match was just a week later against Leicestershire at Longcliffe and this resulted in another brilliant 6 – 0 victory for the scratch team. The handicap team also won 3 – 1. Their third match against Staffordshire was at Trent Lock on 29th June and the girls carried on their winning streak with a 5 – 1 victory, despite the showery weather. Their final two matches will be played towards the end of the season. Congratulations to Jessica Bailey on being awarded her Junior Colours.

There have been 3 mid-handicap Friendly Matches this season. The higher handicap girls played a match against Mapperley Ladies on a beautiful day in April and won 3 – 1. Thank you to Mapperley Ladies for hosting this event again and for providing the meals. The experience gained is invaluable for these girls. Two further Friendly Matches in June resulted in a 5 – 3 victory for Yorkshire at Newark and a 5 – 1 victory for Notts against Warwickshire at Nuneaton Golf Club.

Well done to all the girls so far this season - excellent results!

More information on all of these matches is available in the Junior Section of the County website, which hopefully you are all getting used to using now.

9. Webmaster's report

The web site is being widely used and all the feedback has been very positive.

The website continues to be updated on a regular basis and during and after county events.

10. Secretary's report.

I have represented you all at the National conference of county secretaries and at several England golf and Golf partnership meetings.

As the captain said we are a new team and we have had several meetings to discuss Nottinghamshire ladies golf, not just in 2014 but in the future years.

These discussions have been very valuable to us all. I must pay tribute to everyone on the team for their constant support and encouragement and for fully taking part in these discussions and sharing ideas and experiences.

An example of improvement is from next year in the inter club competition the host clubs after the first round will be assigned to the matches after the previous round is completed.

This will mean that host clubs can be assigned on a more sensibly geographic basis where possible to reduce travelling time and cost.

The longest meeting included our response to the England golf questionnaire. We all feel it is very important to represent Ladies golf in Nottinghamshire so that England golf has the opportunity to include them in their future plans.

The web site has been a real success and I look forward to us extending our use of it. Gill Stump has been brilliant in being so effective and quick to respond to all queries.

One of the benefits of having an easy to use and smart website is that it advertises ladies golf in the county. I have also arranged with the Nottingham Evening Post that we will forward any county ladies news by noon on Monday for inclusion in their golf column published on Tuesday. We have taken

advantage of this several times this year – most notably during the Championships and County week.

I would like to thank all of you club secretaries for your patience and good humour when dealing with me and other members of the council. As you all know this year is a very steep learning curve, particularly for me, and your support is much appreciated.

I hope you enjoy the rest of this season. Thank you.

11. Golf Partnership

Matt Bloor introduced Alice Lowe who had recently joined the Golf partnership.

He also summarised the activities of the partnership with particular reference to the get into golf program with structured sessions.

820 people had taken part in these over the last 12 months and 55 in the university program.

Approximately 15% of people involved are female.

The golf partnership can provide funding, help and support to any ladies section who would like to get involved in this program with the aim of attracting new lady members.

Details can be accessed from a link on our NCLGA website to the Golf Partnership web site.

12. Any Other Business

Silver and Bronze league teams.

The number of teams in the bronze division is dwindling and there is concern that clubs will continue to struggle to field teams. The secretaries were asked to discuss the possibility of having 5 players instead of 7 in bronze league teams.

Silver league teams mostly do not have this problem but we need to keep watch on the situation.

What we do not want to happen is no league Bronze or Silver league in 5 years time.

The Captain thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 11.40.