



MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2008

Welcome to the summer edition of the newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone who supported and helped me organise my recent Captain's Day which I hope you thoroughly enjoyed as much as I did. I would particularly like to thank all those who so generously made financial contributions in aid of the Save the Children Fund which I pleased to say raised the magnificent sum of £2500.

Our best wishes go to Lady Captain Cheryl Donaldson and hope that she has an equally successful Captain's Day on Saturday 2 August.

Jimmy Crooks
Captain

Membership. Since March we have welcomed some 50 new members to the Club.

Full – George Armstrong, Dese Dundee, Gordon Fullerton, Andrew Henry, William Cowden, David Jamison, Richard Livingstone, James Elliott, Colin Longstaff, Paul Stewart, John Woodside, Stewart Matthews, Mark Conway, Chris Welsh, Mervyn Kane, Robert Elliott, Mike Jackson, Neil Seymour, Darren McQuestion, Jonathan Duff, Derek Russell, John Toan, Samuel Gilham, Kristofer Gilham, Derek Higgins, Robert Henry, James Montgomery, Philip Campbell, Darrell Swann, Ian Cunningham, Stephen Boyd, Ray Cahoon, David Quinlan and Craig Stephen.

Lady – Linda Armstrong, Linda O'Neill, Claire Moore and Brenda Cahoon.

Juvenile – Jamie Henderson, Matthew Grimason, Stafford Lynn, Gareth Heron, Stephen Hamilton, Ben Wilson and David Whyte.

Student – Mark Jackson, Tim Jackson, Richard Moore, Simon McIntyre and Graham Montgomery.

House – David McClelland

As you may know, like most Clubs in the area Council decided to temporarily waive the initial joining fee which has had the effect of attracting new members over the last number of months as indicated above. We acknowledge that there is never a right or wrong time to take such a decision and that some members who joined previously may have felt disadvantaged but such decisions have to be taken for the greater good of the Club based on the situation at the time. We have now reached the point where we have reached our maximum capacity of full members and a waiting list has now been drawn up against any future vacancies that may arise. In addition the last AGM gave Council authority to consider introducing a limited number of 5 day (Monday-Friday) memberships once we had reached our full quota and the detailed arrangements are currently be worked out.

Changes in Council membership.

David Brady and John Moore have recently resigned from Council and we would like to thank them for their efforts and giving up their time over the last 2 years to work on your behalf. Max McConnell has been co-opted to Council as the new Greens Convenor and his new Greens Committee includes Barry Armstrong, Billy Steele, Alastair Moore and Colin Lyttle. Billy Millar is taking over the business development remit whilst Michael Stone and Colin Lyttle will be temporarily looking after public relations matters.

Business Priorities

You will be aware that Council has identified 3 main business priorities - course improvements (particularly the greens), clubhouse refurbishment and construction of the driving range. Our financial situation is now such as to allow progress to be made on all fronts and you will hopefully see the physical changes being made. Greens staff have been given a detailed work programme to follow for the remainder of the year which will be carefully monitored on a week to week basis. We are grateful to all those who completed the course condition survey in the Spring and a lot of useful ideas and suggestions have been passed on to the Greens Convenor for implementation where possible. We will also be purchasing a new top dresser for regular use on the greens and tees – we will expect to see a significant improvement in both these playing surfaces to meet members' expectations for this and subsequent years. Several members already voluntarily sponsor and maintain tee box areas which have added to the general presentation – if you have some free time available and would like to do likewise, please contact Max McConnell direct.

We have long term plans to refurbish the clubhouse under the direction of David Lynas. Speed to progress will of course be dictated by overall available resources but we have commenced with refurbishment of chairs in the main bar areas and priority attention is now being given to upgrading the first floor toilet areas as a matter of urgency. Other improvements will be taken forward within an overall interior design theme. Some members have also made very useful suggestions which will be considered by Council as part of the overall programme of improvement. You may also have noticed that some new external signage has been erected in the entrance areas and we are indebted to Trevor Mairs for doing such a fine job.

We are determined to have the new driving range in place for the start of the winter and are at final costing stage. It is unfortunate that this scheme has been delayed but you will appreciate that are a number of important health & safety conditions that need to be satisfied otherwise the Club could be liable for potential claims for negligence or injury. We share members' frustration that this much needed facility needs to be moved forward as quickly as possible as it has been a recurring source of complaint for many.

Competitions

At the time of writing the Ulster Cup, Pearce Purcell and Holt Shield Teams are still flying the flag for Ballyclare and we wish the Team Captains and players all success as they reach the final stages of the respective competitions.

Restaurant

Many of you will have from time to time dined in our restaurant and hopefully have received both an excellent meal and standard of service. The Caterers and Catering Convenor have asked me to remind everyone that if ever you have any cause for complaint, to raise the issue at the time to give the Catering staff the opportunity of trying to rectify matters to your satisfaction. If you still remain dissatisfied you should pass on your concerns in writing to the Catering Convenor – hopefully this will not be necessary.

I would like to remind everyone that new tea and coffee facilities are available at the bar – why not give it a try.

Coaching

Our professional Colin Lyttle is running a series of coaching clinics for juveniles, male and female members – see his notice board for details and places available.

On course refreshments

Colin has also opened his new permanent on course refreshment facility at the 11th where you can purchase a wide range of drinks and eats – it is hoped to have this available throughout the winter league programme – please give it your support.

Finally – the wee guy on the front page has not been identified but we reckon he bears an uncanny resemblance to one of our Council members who has recently changed his area of responsibility – the clue is in the newsletter.

JH