



## **February Association Meeting Report / Newsletter**

In attendance at the Association meeting: Dave Ottewell, Paige Townsend, Paul Todd, Jamie Dyer, John Hussey, Jacqui Brinicombe and Julian Worsdale

On Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February we had our February Association meeting which covered topics such as a course maintenance update, membership renewals and loyalty cards, upcoming social nights, competitions, and handicaps etc. We were pleased to welcome senior captain, Julian Worsdale, for the first time since taking on the mantle.

This association report/newsletter includes the following:

- Course update
- Membership renewals
- Future plans and investments
- Loyalty cards
- Social nights
- Competitions
- Seniors
- Ladies
- A kind request from Paige
- Information sources

The course has dried out really well and the improvement in the weather has allowed us to proceed with our Winter/Spring maintenance program, in preparation for the upcoming golf season. The greens have been sprayed with a disease protection fungicide and foliar feed. This is to protect the greens from any diseases encroaching and to promote healthy growth. A micro prilled fertiliser will be applied in February if the weather continues to improve. The greens are also being rolled regularly to improve the playing surface and once the warmer weather arrives the cutting height of the greens will be gradually reduced, to help produce fast true greens. We have also verti drained the greens, this process consists of inserting tines 12 inches deep through the soil profile. This breaks up soil compaction and the holes allow oxygen into the soil and the greens to drain properly, making room for aeration, which also assists in the break up of thatch layers. This promotes better root growth and improves the soil structure, thereby encouraging better healthy playing surfaces during the golf season. The fairways will continue to be rolled whenever necessary and possible to do so as part of the remedial action to repair the crow damage. We have also applied a prilled fertiliser to the tees and fairways to encourage early Spring growth, which will be important to aid the grass to recover from the crow damage. We have also commenced early Spring maintenance work such as cutting all the grass on the course, fairways, greens and tees etc. We will be assessing the need and timing for improving the drainage on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> greens. We have in the meantime already felled some trees around the 6<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> green to allow more sunlight and wind etc. to aid the greens in drying out and encourage the grass to grow. We have also been slitting all the fairways to relieve

compaction in the soil and to improve surface water drainage. It also allows air into the soil and encourages deeper, healthier root growth which improves the grass sward.

As we approach Spring the bunkers will have a maintenance program consisting of spraying the edges and weeds etc. in the bunker, raking and removing stones etc. followed by any additional sand where required. This work will take a lot of man hours and any volunteers for stone picking etc. would be very much appreciated. The tees will also have an ongoing maintenance program which includes wherever possible levelling out, and in extreme cases may necessitate a digger and returfing.

### **Membership renewals**

We sent out a membership renewals price list to give you an idea of the cost well in advance, and to avoid confusion with the new extended membership offer prices. We have received a lot of interest already from potential new members and hope our members will help us to encourage new members to join as it is vitally important to attract new members whenever possible for the future economic viability of the club. As an example, the budget green fee, which is our most popular category, has increased for NEW members from £250 to £300 for the year. Our renewal price is £275, which offers a discount from the price for new members. I have added a copy of a membership breakdown which outlines the average cost of each membership using 2 variables: how often you play per week, and how many weeks out of the year you play. This is a useful guide to determine which membership category is most cost effective. We understand cost of living has grown exponentially, and unfortunately, we are not exempt from that, with our electricity bill doubling, reaching a surplus of £2,500 per month and the cost of everything we use increasing too, including, but not limited to, utility bills, labour, fertiliser, chemicals, fuel for both the golf and the Falconer. We also have to pay golf union fees per member and VAT out of these membership fees too (which equates to approximately £65 from the budget membership, leaving us with a net income of £210 per budget member). An increase of £25 we believe is very fair considering that won't cover our overheads and will greatly impact both our operating profit margin and net profit margin. We want to make golf as affordable and accessible to everybody. The budget/green fee memberships make it very difficult for the business to predict the cash flow ahead and any future investments within the club. We are only increasing the price in line with inflation with our huge increase in operating costs which will potentially result in us losing money to try and retain as many of our membership as we can. These green fee memberships are unique to Welton Manor members as we are not aware of any other affiliated 18-hole golf courses offering the same membership scheme. Please remember not all clubs include affiliation fees of around £20 within their membership fees. Also, many clubs have become very exclusive by introducing joining fees of £300-£750. We want to continue to be inclusive, competitive, and affordable by offering good value for money golf for our members.

### **Future plans and investments**

We are committed to investing into the business whilst we continue get the financial support from members and visitors etc. We are currently awaiting delivery later this month of a new greens mower and fairways mower which will improve the quality of cut and presentation of the greens and fairways etc. These investments cost over £50,000 each, with the sole aim of improving the quality of the course, clearly showing our

commitment to reinvest capital into the club. We also have a new electric buggy that we purchased over the Winter ready for the season to start. We now have 2 electric buggies and 3 petrol. We are also due to purchase a new fertiliser spreader in February to use on the fairways and tees etc. We are planning to rejuvenate the patio outside in Spring with hanging baskets, flowers, a water fountain, a speaker to play some music outside, a water feature and some water lilies etc. for the pond on the 18<sup>th</sup>. We are also planning to clear out and extend the pond on the 1<sup>st</sup> hole into the fairway to create a signature hole making it more challenging, particularly off the white tees.

We are looking into offering food to our members whenever possible whilst The Falconer restaurant remains closed. We are hoping to have regular food vans for when the course is busy such as competition weekends in the warmer weather. Also, there is a local butchers located at unit 3, Ryland Bridge, Welton, LN2 3RP called Lakeside Butchers that you can stop by for breakfast rolls and baguettes/sandwiches etc. Alternatively, if there are more than 4 of you, we are happy to take a pre-order at the golf reception, to eat either before or after your round, and collect these for you time permitting. The prices are as follows:

Bacon Sub roll	£2.99
Sausage Sub roll	£2.99
Sausage and Bacon Sub roll	£3.99
Add an Egg	50p
Sandwich Sub roll	£2.99

Open Saturday 8am – 2pm

Open Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm

### **Loyalty card**

The introduction of the loyalty cards is to encourage you to use The Falconer at Welton Manor, and to reward those who support the premises. This helps toward the escalating running costs of the business. You require nine stamps to fill the card, which initially sounds a lot, however, once you've bought a round, your card could be half full or more. 3 drinks per week and it will take you less than a month to fill your card. Attending the social nights will likely lead to your loyalty cards filling quickly. Loyalty cards are never used by businesses with the intention to fill within one week, they are usually applicable for over a month etc. but you may well fill it a lot quicker than you realise! You are not limited to the number of cards per person – once you have filled one, we will issue you another. We have received these today, so please ask us at the golf reception from Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February for one and we will gladly distribute them. The accrual of drinks equating to a free drink average at approximately a 10% discount, which is better than the previous 5% members discount. The card has two sides to it, one is for hot beverages and soft drinks from The Falconer, and the flip side is for alcoholic drinks including draughts, bottled alcohol, and spirits. How it works is when you order your drink, we will stamp your card for however many drinks you have ordered, or one per card if each person in the group is a member and has their own card. When this is full, bring it to the bar and we will give you your free drink and issue you a new card. Additionally, we are exploring the possibility of having a pool table at the club either in

the alcove or on the raised area, to attract more customers and improve the ambience in The Falconer. If you have any suggestions on ways we can improve the use of The Falconer, please get in contact with us, or alternatively, we will shortly be putting anonymous suggestion boxes, for any ideas or matters of concern regarding the golf or the Falconer, in both the male and female changing rooms that we will check every couple of weeks. Any suggestions or questions in there to be addressed will be answered on a word document and posted on the management team noticeboard, subject to management discretion. Alternatively, if you have any suggestions or questions, you can email anything to the management team for a quick and personal response and possible discussion.

### **Social nights**

Our social nights have proved a great success, despite the controversial American states picture round in the last quiz - Paige will be banned from future quiz rounds! The last quiz night raised money for both the captain's charity, Prostate Cancer, and the Senior's Captain's charity, Dementia UK. Thank you so much to everyone who attended, we had a lovely event! A special thank you to Vice-Captain Jamie Dyer for being a great quiz master and producing some fantastic questions.

#### *Upcoming race night – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March*

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March we are hosting a fun, virtual race night starting at 7:30pm. The format will be run where each bet per horse will be £1 and you can bet on as many horses as many times as you like. Prize money will be split between winners, with a portion of the takings going toward our Captain's charities. Tables are not limited to size, so if you would like to book a table, please let us know either by email, phone or at the golf reception and we will book a table for you. You can dress up for the races if you fancy! Roco BBQ will be here again serving tacos, loaded fries and nachos from their food van – you may either pre-order beforehand or order food on the night. Alternatively, you are welcome as usual to bring your own food and follow in the footsteps of the Crayston's with a cheese and biscuits platter etc. or bring a take-away!

#### *Quiz night – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March*

Our next quiz night will be held on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March so make sure you pencil it in your diary! Details to be confirmed so keep an eye out on our Facebook page for more information.

### **Competitions**

Heading into the Spring the competition season will be starting soon, with an invitational Texas scramble on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February which already has nearly 50 people entered, followed by a bingo bango bongo on the 4<sup>th</sup> March. There is still time to enter the Texas Scramble so be sure to get your entries in!

#### *Winter league*

The winter league will be coming to an end soon, there are some players who still have matches to play so please arrange to play these prior to the end of 31<sup>st</sup> March. I have attached an up-to-date league table provided by John Hussey with the current scores. The winter/summer league noticeboard can be found to the left of the main club noticeboard next to the door so please read the rules etc. before teeing off.

### *Summer league*

The winter league has proved every success we expected it would, so we are really pleased to say we will be running a summer league from 1<sup>st</sup> April until 30<sup>th</sup> September. Entry is open to all members with a handicap (you still have time to put 3 cards in to get one!) and the entry fee will be £5. Players will be placed in a handicap league similar to their own, and men will play off the white tees and ladies off the red. The format will be a non-qualifying matchplay scored over holes 1-9 and 10-18, so if you lose the front 9 you could still win the back 9! A trophy will be presented to the winner of each league and a fun final round day will take place. Entries close the 30<sup>th</sup> March so get your entries in as soon as possible – the entry sheet can be found on the main club competition noticeboard, alternatively you can email the management team and we can add you on.

### *Easter weekend competition*

There will be an individual Easter competition held in a stableford format over the Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday as a roll up competition. There will be vouchers and easter eggs up for grabs, so we hope to see many of you entered – especially with the flexibility of a 4-day roll up competition!

### *Main Club VS Seniors*

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July, we have a main club vs Seniors competition which we anticipate will be an exciting event! Please support your sections by taking part. Thank you to Julian and Jamie for organising this event which we are hoping to run on an annual basis as used to be the case in previous years.

### **Seniors section**

The Senior section has been out in force throughout winter, battling all elements week in, week out in the pouring rain and harsh winds of a typical British winter. The senior section is continuing to grow, with a recent influx of new members adding to the group of approximately 80 members, with roughly 60 regular active members. The senior committee, particularly their secretary Richard Johnson, has done a fantastic job putting together the senior section website, newsletter, and journal that gets distributed on a monthly basis. Dave has begun a column in the seniors newsletter called 'Dave's diary' which keeps the seniors section up to date with any goings on at the club or on the course. If you are interested in reading the seniors newsletter you can access this on the seniors website: Welton Manor Seniors. Moreover, if you wish to join the seniors there is plenty of information on their noticeboard or their website.

Senior Captain for the coming season, Julian Worsdale, has elected Dementia UK as his chosen charity for the section to support, and they have their Seniors dementia fundraising competition on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Any support will be gratefully appreciated. Julian can be contacted at [Juljul@ntlworld.com](mailto:Juljul@ntlworld.com)

### **Ladies**

The ladies section continues to go from strength to strength with the monthly Saturday socials proving to still be a success despite the poor weather. Mandy is organising a

ladies clothing/kit rail in the changing rooms that can be purchased for a donation to the Captain's charity. Additionally, they are hoping to have a team together to enter a ladies open competition in Cleethorpes in July. If you are interested in joining in with the ladies, or know anybody who is, please contact the management team and we will point you in the right direction.

### **Grayham Lidgett**

A special thanks goes to Graham Lidgett, sponsor of the 18<sup>th</sup> hole for his boxing day golf competition for charity and donation from CWGS totalling £300 to go toward the Captain's charity. A great effort between you all, your support is greatly appreciated.

### **Paige**

I am currently studying business and management in my final year at Lincoln University, and I have my dissertation to submit. My thesis is based on how climate change affects consumer behaviour toward the travel and tourism industry in relation to other factors. Effectively, how much climate change influences our actions as a consumer regarding travelling compared to other influences such as Covid19, inflation, work/family commitments, and whether we are consciously or subconsciously influenced by climate change. I have a short questionnaire that I would really appreciate being answered. It will only take about 5 minutes and will be a huge help for me! I have added a link to this email for you to complete it. The questionnaire is completely anonymous so unfortunately, I cannot thank you in person (unless you tell me you've done it), so thank you in advance to anybody who completes it!

### **Information sources**

We have a WhatsApp group for the purpose of disclosing information to members about day-to-day information about the course, including updates on the condition and having a platform to arrange golf with other members. If you would like to join this, please contact Paige at the golf reception. Any information about the club can be found either on our website, Facebook page, through our emails, or on our noticeboard. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact one of the management team; Dave, Paige, or Hayley directly by email to [info@weltonmanorgolfcentre.co.uk](mailto:info@weltonmanorgolfcentre.co.uk) or by phone on 01673 861888.

We hope to see many of you back at the club and in the Falconer bar/patio as the weather is warming up, and the hours of daylight increase. Please remember to continue to call the golf reception on 01673 861888 to book your tee time. This becomes more important as we get busier over the season to avoid disappointment and a possible wasted journey.

If you wish to contact anybody on the Association, the contact details are available on the noticeboard and on the website.

Thank you for finding the time to read this report and we hope you find it interesting and informative!