

REASEHEATH GOLF CLUB

Spring Newsletter – May 2003

The two newsletters in the summer and autumn of last year were well received. Unfortunately, due to work and other commitments this issue has been in the process of editing since February! However, there are many items that should be of interest to most members, and a few comments to which all members should pay attention!

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Warm welcome

A warm welcome to all new members of the Golf Club. We hope you enjoy playing the course and also the social events that take place. Keep an eye on the notice boards in the clubhouse.

There are a few vacancies for all classes of membership at the present time. If you know of someone who would like to take advantage of the playing this excellent little course at very competitive rates, please contact either Chris Bishop or Geoff Willows. Contact details are on the fixture card

Your Captain and Lady Captain for this year

Lady Captain—Janet Orgill

The Club is very pleased to welcome Janet Orgill as the Lady Captain for 2003. Janet has been a member of Reaseheath Golf Club since 1990.

Besides being well known in the Ladies section at Reaseheath, Janet is a past member of Hill Valley and Alvaston Golf Club. She has had several spells on the Ladies' Committee at Reaseheath.

In addition to golf, Janet enjoys swimming and keep fit. Janet and her husband Brian (past gents captain) enjoy caravanning, particularly in Scotland. Janet also has the distinction of having had an influence on the design of the approach to the 9th hole at Reaseheath, but you will need to ask Janet about that! I am sure that all members will wish Janet a very successful and enjoyable year.

Gents Captain— Dave Farnell

Dave joined Reaseheath Golf Club in 1998, having only taken up the game the previous year. He has been a member of Queens Park and has since joined Crewe Golf Club.

Dave plays regularly in the Reaseheath GC league team and in most competitions.

He was born in Nantwich. In his early sporting career he played a lot of soccer, captaining a number of local sides. He played squash for Crewe and Vagrants for over 20 years, and was captain at Crewe Squash Club for 10 years and represented Cheshire.

Dave works as a quality manager for an American Global Company (Rockwell Automation).

Dave is looking forward to his year as captain, meeting the members. As with Janet, he hopes that club members will give their support to the events and functions during the year.

Captain's and Lady Captain's Away Day—29 May at Vicars Cross Golf Club. Open to all members. Put your name down on the list in the Clubhouse!

Your new committee for 2003

As most members will be aware, there have been several changes to the committee this year. The following took up office following the AGM.

The new Treasurer, Melvin Johnson is someone that most members will already have had contact with. Melvin is head of the engineering section at Reaseheath College. He joined the Golf Club five years ago and regularly plays in competitions.

The new Handicap Secretary is Phil Sowden. Phil has been a member since the early days of the club and will be well known to most members. A regular player in all competitions and a member of the North Staffs league, Phil will be able to keep a close eye on players. It has already be noted that players don't boast quite so much about their game in the post golf banter that takes place in the Red Lion most Sundays!

Eddie Jackson has agreed to carry out the duties of Competition Secretary, working closely with Phil Sowden. Eddie has had experience on the committee of other clubs and so can be relied upon to continue the traditions that Geoff Willows started by regular disqualifications! Make sure that you put your name on the starting sheets, sign your card etc etc!

Barry Faddes takes over from David Witty as Midweek Secretary. Barry, too, enters most competitions and regularly plays for the North Staffs League team as well as in most friendly matches.

Josie Willows is the new Junior Secretary, taking over

from Mick Moss. Josie initially covered the post on a temporary basis but has since volunteered to carry out the duties on a longer term basis. Already she has made several initiatives and we can look forward to an active Junior Section under her leadership. A past Lady Captain of Reaseheath, Josie has also been a member at Hill Valley and Onneley.

Geoff Willows was re-elected as Membership Secretary and Brian Drakeley as committee member. The other new members on the committee are Dave Stanistreet, and Brenda Cotton.

Dave took up golf and joined the club six years ago, having been an active sportsman in other areas including rugby. Often accused of being a bandit, he regularly plays golf with the new Handicap Secretary so he should be nobbled in the near future!

Brenda Cotton has been Ladies Competition Secretary for some years. She has been Lady Captain at Alvaston.

As well as the Captain, Vice Captain and Lady Captain, other members of the Committee are Allan Sproston (President), Chris Bishop (Secretary) and Richard Chapman (North Staffs League team Captain).

Thanks are due to the retiring committee members for all their contributions in the past. The best of luck to them, whether they continue to be members of Reaseheath or have left us to join other clubs.

Our new head greenkeeper

Our new head greenkeeper, Richard Murray has been with us since the beginning of December and we have already seen some of the beneficial effects of his work. Members might be interested in finding out some more about him! On leaving school, Richard became an apprentice gardener in the local authority and became a trainee at Cheshire College of Agriculture, as the college was known then. He studied ornamental horticulture. Having had further experience and training, he worked on the grounds at Reaseheath for two years around 1980. He then ran his own landscaping and tree surgery business for nearly ten years.

In 1990 he joined Vale Royal Borough Council and became team leader of the grounds maintenance section, that included Knights Grange Golf Course. He moved to Sandbach Golf Club in 1992 and soon became head greenkeeper. In 1997 he moved to Isaak Walton as head greenkeeper and course manager.

He has two main objectives at Reaseheath, namely to develop the course to a very high standard and to play a major role in educating youngsters in greenkeeping and sports

turf management.

Richard claims to hack the ball round the golf course but is determined to become a better golfer. He enjoys keeping fit, cycling and weight training. He also enjoys reading and collecting old objects of interest! For

Reaseheath Sportsturf Event

The inaugural Reaseheath Sports Turf Event is being held on 9 July. This will involve several major machinery manufacturers and other commercial companies within the industry. It is hoped that the event will lead to closer involvement with

these companies and benefits for the College and Golf Club in the future. All members are invited to attend the event.

Unfortunately, the course will be closed from midday on 8 July and all day on 9 July.

£2,400 raised for Macmillan Cancer Relief

At the Annual Dinner a cheque for £2,400 was handed over to the Chairman of the Crewe & Nantwich branch of Macmillan Cancer Relief. This was made up of £1,700 from the Auction of Promises, £350 from the two quiz nights, £130 from other raffles, Captains' Drive in etc and £220 from individual contributions. Many thanks to all those members that helped in any way to that. This year's Captains raised £44 at their drive in on 9 February, also for Macmillan Cancer Relief.

Course etiquette and dress code

All members are reminded that Reaseheath Golf Club is like most other golf clubs in insisting of certain standards of dress on the course. Details are on a notice board on the end of the clubhouse.

Please observe the normal rules of golf etiquette. You will find some of these on the same notice board and also in the front of the 'Rules of Golf' booklet. If you want a copy, please see the club secretary.

Course Developments

As we approach the middle of May, the construction of the 6th green is complete. Whereas the original green had a superb putting surface, the new green should alleviate the safety problems and speed of play concerning the 4th, as well as providing a much more interesting green.

Thanks are due to members for their patience with the temporary 6th green. Major construction jobs usually take more time than many anticipate to fit in with student practical sessions. The adverse weather conditions during the winter have also held the job up. However, good quality turf was laid in mid March and the green should be ready for play for the Vintage Open.

Another major project will be landscaping the approach to the club and the front of the clubhouse, including the area around the putting green. After completion, all members will approach the course via the front of the clubhouse and hopefully more members will go inside, read the notices and generally play a more active role in the competitions and social life of the club.

The practice bunker is also complete after much discussion at committee! Players are asked not to play in the direction of the putting green, for fear of hitting the clubhouse! Other smaller developments will be a path through the trees to the left of the first green.

Members will have noticed how much better the drainage on the greens has been this winter. The fairways also stood up well to the wet conditions in the earlier part of the winter. Much of this improvement has been due to the verti-drainer, purchased last year. The more regular appearance of small holes on the course has aided drainage and soil structure.

The new winter tees mats have also improved facilities. These have been purchased by the Golf Club for the benefit of the course and are an example of how your subscriptions can directly improve the facilities on offer.

The condition of the winter greens attracted criticism in the latter half of the winter. However, the aeration achieved will benefit play in the longer term.

10% discount for Golf Club members at the Greenway Shop and Garden Centre. High quality Reaseheath-produced plants, dairy produce, etc

Looking for someone to play with? A common problem for new (and some established members) is that it is difficult to arrange matches and join in competitions if you don't know any members. For a trial period 9pm on monthly medal days (Saturday and Sundays) is being 'reserved' as a teeing off time for such members who would like to enter competitions. Just turn up at that time and you will get a game. A member of the Committee will be there to help.

Peter Dale — 1951-2003

The club lost one of its founder members recently when Peter Dale died after an illness lasting several months, bravely borne. Peter was librarian at Reaseheath for well over twenty years and as such was a great fund of knowledge. He would have been a fantastic 'phone-a-friend' on that well-known TV programme.

Peter was a very keen sportsman. His dogged determination as an opening bat for the Reaseheath staff cricket team was legendary. When golf took over in the mid 80's, Peter took up the sport with similar determination and played in most competitions, often with Geoff Oakes and Tony Hirst as his playing partners. Peter was also an avid follower of Stoke City FC and would have been delighted to see them reach safety in the first division after having seen them suffer for most of the season.

Peter's mother has asked that he be remembered by a trophy named after him. The committee are considering an appropriate competition and will introduce it for next year.

Club communications-We are doing our best to communicate with members!

Course mobile phone

A couple of years ago we purchased a mobile phone that members could ring to hear a recorded message on whether or not the course was open. There have been a few hiccups but it works well most of the time! The number is on the fixture card.

Events and offers files

Details of Open Events and other competitions away from Reaseheath are put in a file that stays in the clubhouse. Whether gent or lady, senior or junior, you will find events in there to suit you. In addition, there is another file that contains offers of golfing holidays etc that are sent to the secretary.

Club newsletters

Last year, regular club newsletters were introduced, of which this is the third one. It is your newsletter and articles, news items etc from members will be included (space permitting!). Contributions should be sent to Chris Bishop, preferably in electronic form (Microsoft Word) by email. 'Snail mail' will also be included! By the way, if anyone wishes to become editor please contact Chris Bishop. Some expertise in word processing and desk-top publishing would be an advantage!

Club Website

Just before Christmas, a Reaseheath Golf Club section was introduced to the Reaseheath College website (www.reaseheath.ac.uk/golf). It is in its early stages but will be developed. Once more, it would be really helpful if someone with the necessary skills volunteered to be responsible for maintaining the golf club website. Volunteers please!

Emailing

Lastly, and perhaps letting myself in for a lot of aggro! If you have an email address and would like information sent directly to you, it is the intention of setting up an emailing list of members. Hence, details of course bookings, closures and other information could be sent to you. Experience will show if this is a good idea. However, if you want to be included, please email me at chrish@reaseheath.ac.uk so that I can add your email address to the list.

Junior Section

As all Junior members should now know, Josie Willows has agreed to be the Junior organiser. In the short time that Josie has been doing the job she has been very active in a number of ways, as follows:

- ◆ Friendly matches have been arranged with a number of local golf clubs
- ◆ Coaching is being organised. Andrew Poynton, who has been associated with the Juniors for a couple of years, is to continue to run coaching sessions for the Junior Section.
- ◆ Junior medals competitions are to be run on a monthly basis. They will be on the same weekends as the main club medals, but will start at 2pm. Juniors with official CONGU handicaps (i.e. 28 or less) will have the option of playing in the main medal or the junior competition.
- ◆ Two new trophies are being donated to the Junior Section. Josie and her husband Geoff are donating one and our honorary Vice-President, Edith England has offered to donate another. Discussions are taking place on which competitions these trophies will be attached to.
- ◆ A Good Friday competition was held and the turn out was good, with 18 players.

As can be seen, the Junior Section is very active and it is an excellent opportunity for young players to develop their skills. Please keep an eye on the Junior notice board on the right of the door as you enter the clubhouse. Josie can be contacted on 01270 650663 if you want to discuss Junior Section related matters.

North Staffs and District League Report

A mixed start to the new season! The club has lost some of the regular players of last season. Nevertheless, the vacancies have been ably filled and we look forward to success. Unfortunately, at the end of March we lost our unbeaten home record in the league with a narrow 5-7 loss to a strong Wychwood Park side, newcomers to the league. However, captain Richard Chapman and Phil Sowden were notable winners in their match by 4&3. We were much more successful in our first match against Greenway Hall, winning 9-3. This win included a massive 6&5 victory by Dave Randell and Paul Griffiths, closely followed by a 6&4 win by Brian Skellon and Jeremy Foster.

League latest—unfortunately the latest two results have been very disappointing. The visit to Astbury resulted in a 0-12 loss, losing all six four ball matches. Astbury away is always a difficult fixture but the team has picked up a few points in the last couple of years. Even more disappointing was a 5-7 loss against Creda at home, our second ever loss at home and against one of the so-called 'weaker' sides of the league. Whilst everyone in the side is trying their hardest, we are no doubt missing some of our lower handicap players from last season.

On 6 May, we played in the scratch knockout against Astbury. Unfortunately we lost 1-4, with a notable win by Richard Chapman. As you can imagine if you know Richard, he is very reluctant to talk about it! The Astbury side had a scratch player and the highest handicap was 6, so we would have done exceptionally well to have won it!

All club members are eligible to play for the league team and the policy is to pick the strongest side available. If you wish to be considered for the side, put your name down on the sheets posted in the clubhouse 2-3 weeks before the league fixtures.

Friendly matches start soon so keep an eye on the notice board to put your name down. The first match is against Queens Park on 24 May.

Ladies Section

The ladies have had mixed success in the three matches played so far. Having lost at home to Malkins Bank Ladies, we then halved the match against Alvaston Hall, played at Alvaston. This was followed up by a good win against Aldersey Green. There are a number of friendly matches coming up (see fixture card) so please contact Janet Orgill if you wish to be considered for selection to the team.

Wednesday morning is ladies morning! A friendly competition is organised for all the ladies that turn up. This is a great way for new lady members of the club to meet other players, so just turn up or give Janet Orgill, Lady Captain, a ring. There was a good attendance for the April Bring and Win competition, with 18 players taking part.

Rumour has it that the ladies' handicap system is being changed yet again, to a system somewhat like the American system. On 11 March, local representatives from the Ladies Golf Union measured the course and assessed the degree of difficulty. We are yet to hear their findings but any information will be passed on to the lady members as soon as we have it.

Extension for competition entry—Mixed Foursomes—Please read

Please note that due to the very poor response so far, the deadline for entry to the mixed foursomes knockout competition has been extended to 8 June. If you wish to play but don't have a partner, don't be shy! Put your name down on the sheet and gents and ladies will be matched up. Couples will be able to play together if they wish! Please support the club and enter the competitions!

Odds and Sods!

- ◆ Complaints procedure — recently a member was quite abusive to the assistant greenkeeper about an aspect of the course maintenance. This is totally unacceptable. If member's wish to complain, this should either be through the committee or directly to the head greenkeeper, Richard Murray, or Chris Bishop
- ◆ Difficult situations and emergencies — there have been occasions when members have faced difficult situations with abusive 'visitors' on the course. Rather than approach these visitors, there is the option of ringing the college warden on duty, either by dialling *352 on the courtesy phone or 07789 216789
- ◆ The club has signed up the Equal Opportunity Policy of the English Golf Union. A copy is available on request from the secretary
- ◆ There are lots of entry details to 'Open Competitions' at other clubs in the file hanging from the notice board in the clubhouse. Also, there are details of 'offers' both in the UK and abroad in a file on the shelf
- ◆ All members can help themselves to the magazines available in the entrance to the clubhouse
- ◆ Members may put 'lost and found' notices on the appropriate place on the notice board in the clubhouse. All other notices e.g. adverts, should be put up only after approval has been received from the committee.
- ◆ Throughout the season a few other organisations use the course. We will try to ensure that adequate notice is posted in the clubhouse.
- ◆ Adult male members are reminded that Cheshire Cards are available from the secretary at a cost of £18. These cards enable the holder to play most courses in Cheshire for half the normal green fee. Life membership of the Cheshire Golf Union is £40, after which the annual fee for the Cheshire card is £12.

Feedback - Hopefully you will find this newsletter helpful and informative. If you have any constructive comments please address them to a member of the committee. What else would you like to see included?

Chris Bishop – Editor

