

From the Captain
Mike Hayhurst



The Men's Invitation Day was an excellent day, although with smaller numbers than we had hoped. The weather was great, the course, a joy to behold and to play on, with very fast greens, and the food was very good, even by Alan's high standards - especially the beef. If you were not there you missed a treat.

The medal on Sunday 5 September was well supported. Many had reasonably-paced rounds but some found it too slow. We do need to improve our golfing etiquette and not hold up the players behind us any more than necessary. The article below suggests some ways in which we can improve the pace of play without having to feel that we are rushing.

Ideally, everyone should be in threes, unless the course is quiet. Two balls don't get round any quicker and take up more space on the course. The ideas we have tried over the last few weeks to avoid hold-ups on weekend medal days have not been entirely successful, speeding up play for some, but still leaving others with problems. We will try to find a simple, effective way and will let you know if and when we can.

As a different kind of initiative, we now have towels for sale for those, especially visitors, who have forgotten to bring one with them. They are available from the bar for £5. There are notices in both changing rooms.

On Sunday 26 September we are holding an Open Day for anyone interested in becoming a member. There is a special deal for the day of £599 for entry fee and golf until 1 May 2011, which includes the swipe card payment. Committee members will be there to greet visitors and there will be an opportunity to play the course for those who have not played here before. If you know anyone who might be interested, please bring them or get them to come along to see what we have to offer.

The Rules of Ready Golf

We all know what Ready Golf is, don't we? It means playing our shots when we're ready. Right? Wrong! Ready Golf means **thinking ahead so that you're ready when it is your turn**. Ready Golf applies everywhere on the golf course - on the tees, on the fairways and on the greens. If you are not keeping up with the group in front, you must let through the group waiting behind you.

On The Tee

The player with the honour should **be ready to hit first** - not filling in the scorecard; not chatting to someone; not looking for something to eat or drink. If the player with the honour is not ready, only then should someone else hit first.

On the Fairway

Golfers should go to their balls as soon as possible and get ready to play their shots. While waiting to hit, players should survey their shot, select their clubs, take

them from their bags, and stand at their balls ready to step up and make the shot when it is their turn. If you can safely walk forward towards your ball, don't always wait behind the next person to play.

Helping to Find Lost Balls

It is important that everyone tries to help to find a lost ball in order to keep play moving. But players should do so after hitting their shots, not before. How often do you see four players searching for a lost ball, while none of them is getting ready to hit?

Entering and Exiting Greens

Leave your clubs where you will least delay those behind you or on neighbouring holes, usually at the back or side of the green closest to the next tee. It's annoying to watch players walk to the front of a green to retrieve their clubs after everyone has putted out. If you have to leave your clubs at the front to play a shot, move them while someone else is putting and don't stand around chatting and writing down scores either. After the group has putted, go to the next tee, so the group behind can play their shots.

Speeding Play on the Greens

Get **ready to putt before it is your turn**. Players should assess their putts while other players are putting, so they're ready to putt when it's their turn. If you miss a putt by a foot or so and have a stance to make the next putt, you should make the putt instead of marking the ball and waiting for another turn - unless it is a tricky putt and you want extra time to survey it, or match play, in which case you must wait your turn. Ready Golf does not mean rushing. If you prepare in advance to putt, you can take your time and play Ready Golf. Take your time, don't waste it.

Farthest From the Hole

There is no reason why Ready Golfers can't play in the order of who is farthest from the hole. In Ready Golf, the person farthest from the hole should be ready to play first.

Summary

Ready Golf means being ready to play, not playing when you're ready, and especially keeping up with the ones in front, not just ahead of the ones behind. Here are some simple rules.

1. Walk towards your ball as soon as possible, so that you can choose your club and think about the shot in advance, not when it is your turn. Never play in a caravan, moving in a group from ball to ball.
2. Buggies are not necessarily quicker. Unless you need to both ride all the way, let one walk and the other ride when your balls are in different places.
3. When a ball is lost, hit your shot first and then help look for the lost ball.
4. When on the green, assess your putt before it is your turn, and putt out immediately instead of marking, if you are not on someone else's line.

If you are already doing all of this, congratulations! Now try to get all your playing partners to do it as well.

**From the Lady Captain
Cynthia Hayhurst**



Jane Bennett has accepted our invitation to be the nominee for the role of Ladies' Vice Captain for 2010 - 2011 to join Linda Hyam as Ladies' Captain.

In the coming weeks we have the Bardswell and the and the Ladies' Invitation.

In recent weeks we have had Away Days to Essendon and Caddington golf clubs. Both courses were new to most of our ladies and we experienced being a society at another club. It has made me very aware of what I expect from other clubs and even more appreciative of Mid-Herts. Alan and his team have given us buffet-style meals which offer a varied menu much enjoyed by all our ladies, Jody has given us a course with fairways like carpets and greens in excellent condition.

Many thanks to all our staff who show we are a friendly and caring club.

Our Autumn Meeting was another great success with over 60 competing for prizes in a medal competition in the morning and a fun Texas Scramble in the afternoon. Liz Thomas won the overall Woldancer trophy, (presented by Hannah Burke), with a net 69, a great score in very windy conditions.

We are nearing the end of discussions on changes to the Ladies' red card, including reducing our par to 71 to match the SS and a set of stroke indices, that better reflect the difficulty of each hole and the EGU recommendations. The final phase involves agreeing how we regain the yardage we lost following the accurate measurement of each hole. We hope to have this completed soon, so that we can have a new card and the new vertical wooden tee marker posts by the end of October.

**From the Chairman
John Ireland**

Earlier this year at the AGM, I was elected to the Board of Management and subsequently to be Chair - a prestigious honour indeed and I will do my utmost to secure the very best future for the club. I will always act in the knowledge that MHGC is owned by members, who have placed their trust in me to guide and steer the management of the club over the next four years.

I have been in the post for a few months now and have been settling in to the role. I now have a much better understanding of the challenges of managing the club and even more appreciation for the issues that our past Chairman faced and the excellent work he did. Although I have personally thanked the past Chairman, John Sefton, I would like to publicly thank him for his unstinting dedication to the club during his term of office. The changes that he chaired have ensured increased security and enjoyment for the future. Thank you John.

To those who give their time to the club, either as paid employees, officers or volunteers, I thank you for what you have done and hope that together we can continue to build for the future.

Everybody is acutely aware of the need to account for every penny of expenditure, so we have to offer value-for-money to keep our membership to the level necessary for the club to function appropriately. We are making a concerted effort to increase the number of visitors and green fees. Visitors will only return if they find the experience an enjoyable one that they want to repeat. To this end, I ask all concerned to continue to welcome visitors and make them feel comfortable when they use our facilities, particularly as paying guests.

I believe we have to make Mid-Herts the local club of choice. We have been fortunate to see substantially improved tees, fairways, bunkers and greens over the last few years and we would like to continue this good work, and expand it to improvements to the woodland areas, the border environs and the pathways.

In line with previous budgets, plans for resurfacing of roads and car park are in their final stages and work should start this year. While this is going on, we will need to redirect vehicle movement and parking, and I would ask for your compliance and patience during this period.

Areas of our club house are becoming tired and less than attractive. I want to make our front entrance more visibly appealing. Our bar/lounge furniture and carpet need a reappraisal, as does the wet area of the men's changing room - all necessary work, but we have to be able to afford it. This, of course, is on top of ongoing maintenance of items such as central heating systems, sewerage pumps, redecorating and keeping our course equipment updated. I also want to offer our staff further training courses to improve our professionalism in all areas, especially in dealing with the public.

I want to review CASC during my time in office. I am aware that, like some other clubs at the time, Mid-Herts members voted against CASC a few years ago. Some clubs have reviewed their initial decision and subsequently voted to accept CASC. I want to assess whether members are still opposed to the scheme, which would benefit the club by around £32,000 per year, as well as other financial benefits. I will only carry out this review with full consultation and communication with members.

Finally, I want to improve communication in our club. I would like everyone to have the opportunity to know what is going on, and not find out about it when it has happened. To this end, I am open to input into how we can improve our club, and build it into being 'the local golf club of choice'.

Meanwhile, may I wish you all, good golfing.

News from the Course

Paul Dugdale

All is well with the golf course as you know - but we have many things under way to make things even better.

During September we will cut the hedges around the course. You will notice we have cleared some of the pond on the 13th. We are sorry it looks a mess but we

cannot clear it all, as we need to leave some of the vegetation to re-colonise and keep the natural wildlife there.

We have decided we will get new marker posts. The first ones to go in will be for the Ladies with their new yardages and stroke indexes.

Heather regeneration - if you look closely at the areas we have worked on you will see considerable new growth, especially on the 15th. Heather is slow to germinate and grows slowly so what we have is reasonable success for what we did. We will persist with these areas and hopefully in the next two to three years we should be able to take away the ropes and make these playable areas once again.

As always, we have the return of various areas of perennial weeds, brambles and thistles etc. During September, we will consider these areas and spray some and take what we believe will be more permanent action on others - that is dig out and spray so that they do not return for some years. You will note we have removed the silver birch from among the cherries on the 15th and I am sure you will agree this improves the look of the course.

Operation Bumblebee to improve the playability of rough areas has been a success and will continue. We will be some of the first people to have the benefit of the results. A pamphlet will be published on the results and the future of this project, which will be made available in the Clubhouse.

SCRATCH TEAM

Nik Smith

The Scratch Team has, unfortunately, finished this season by being relegated to Division 2. Without some of their best players who enabled them to get to division 1 and stay there, they were always going to struggle to continue in the top division. They did however, win away at South Herts and gained a half against Welwyn Garden City, in both cases against lower-handicap opponents. Well done to Nik Smith as our new Scratch Team Captain for organising and motivating the team so well. Nik wishes to thank the team and congratulate them for their performance often against the odds. We wish them good fortune in next season's games

FROM THE SENIORS' CAPTAIN

David Houghton



As our season draws to a close, we can look back at some very successful results in our matches against other clubs. After a slow beginning, we have already managed to win 13 of our encounters.

Throughout the season it has been a pleasure to play on a course in such wonderful condition. Our thanks go out Jody and his excellent and hard working staff. It was, however, just a few weeks back, when we were experiencing a drought, that the Seniors really came into their own. With the ball running a mile,

I saw our elder statesmen with smiles on their faces, when they finished up on the fairway, in positions they had not experienced for many years.

At the time of writing, we are looking forward to a gladiatorial fight for the Seniors' summer singles trophy between the lithe Leslie Jones, who is in his 89th year and the sprightly Paul Donegan, who after going to the gym regularly, has lost two stone in order to be ready to face his opponent.

During the season we have had an excellent turnout for the matches with the Ladies, which is no surprise as they are a very enjoyable occasions. There are also some Seniors who are meeting the ladies on a Tuesday evening to take part in 'Yoga for Golf'. Club dress regulations have been relaxed for these sessions so you can enjoy the sight of Glenn Morton and friends in their leotards and loin skins! It is hoped that many more will come to these yoga lessons to improve their fitness and well-being.

With the help of Alan Green a new competition was started against the Junior section, where a selected team of eight Seniors took on a team selected from the best Juniors. Though we were beaten, we were not disgraced and a good time was had by all.

Next season there will be some important changes to the Seniors' section. The intention of this change is to encourage all Seniors to take more interest and an active part in the running this very large section of the club. In so doing it is hoped that many more will put their names down for the very enjoyable matches that we play against top county clubs and the various competitions and matches we play with the Ladies and Juniors.

To make the changes, a new small committee will be formed to run the Seniors' Section. One of its tasks will be to appoint match captains and organisers for the various events and fixtures during the season. Though still in its early stages, I would be very interested to hear from any Senior who would be interested in helping me formulate these changes.

In the meantime I hope that all Seniors, who in the past have not put their name down for the club matches because they felt they had very little chance of being selected, will do so when the entry list for next season goes up on the notice board.

Finally, all Seniors are welcome to come to our very popular end of season meeting on the Wednesday 13 October and join in the fun at the *Christmas Cheer* on Wednesday 8 December.

JUNIORS

Mid-Herts Juniors win the East Herts League

Alan Green



Congratulations everyone. The Junior's competitive match season is drawing to an exciting climax. They have had a tough nine-match season in the East Herts League, with the league title being in doubt until the very last match, when Mid-Herts Juniors just pipped Moor Park for the title.

Though many of our matches were very tight, consistent play throughout the season saw

the team achieve seven victories from their nine matches and the league trophy residing in Mid-Herts trophy cabinet.

Ver League finalists

The Juniors have also reached the final of the Ver League Shield, where they meet Whipsnade Park over a two leg final. The first leg was held at home on Sunday 12 September, which the Mid-Herts boys won 6-1. Having won the Ver League Shield in 2008 and lost in the final in 2009, the team hopes 2010 could be its year again.

Herts Boys are English County Champions after win over Cumbria



The Hertfordshire team, including our own Will Chambers, are English Boys County Champions for the first time since 1993. They beat Cumbria 6-3 at Goswick Links, Berwick, on 26 August to take the title with a maximum 6pts from three matches.

"I'm overwhelmed," said Chris James. "The boys were terrific. They have shown their true character from the time they won the south east qualifier through the recent South East Foursomes which they also won. That gave them the confidence to win in Berwick."

The Hertfordshire team with Manager, Chris James



**Back row from left to right: Ben Smith, Nick Ward, Luke Colgate, Sam Cutting, Tomasz Anderson
Front row from left to right: Callum Shinkwin, Will Chambers**

HANNAH TO PLAY IN WORLD AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ARGENTINA



Three internationals, Hannah Burke, Holly Clyburn and Kelly Tidy, will represent England in the women's World Amateur Team Championship in Argentina from 20 – 23 October. The championship, for the Espirito Santo Trophy, will be played at Olivos and Buenos Aires golf clubs.

As you will know from our last issues of Mid-Herts Golfer, Hannah Burke, 22, is the Irish Open strokeplay champion and was England's top player at the European Ladies' Championship. This season she has also won the Astor Salver, helped Hertfordshire qualify for the finals of the English Counties' Championship and reached final qualifying for the Ricoh Women's British Open.

She has also scooped a host of honours on the US Women's College circuit during her four years as a student at Baylor University, Texas.

NEW MEMBERS

We would like to warmly welcome the following new members:

Frances Arnold
Paul Bishop
Matthew Bunyan
Josh Emerton – Junior
Luke Goodrum

Sam Homer
Patrick Mills
Tom Moxham
John Rambotas
George Wells – Junior

SOCIAL DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

A few members have suggested that we should publicise social events earlier to give members more time to plan their diaries. The new mini-screen on the bar enables us to do this and social events will be advertised on-screen as well as in The Mid-Herts Golfer, posters in the clubhouse and in the weekly diary bulletin. It would be a great help if members could book their places for the various events as early as possible.

Soul Music Night – 18 September



Don't forget the Soul Night on 18 September when you can dance the night away to the fantastic sounds of Tamla Motown, Stax & Atlantic records with music by, amongst many others, The Four Tops, The Temptations, The Supremes, Smokey Robinson, Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Aretha Franklin, Carla Thomas, Wilson Pickett & Marvin Gaye played by the fabulous Soul Agents supported by a disco. Southern American style food will be provided buffet-style and dress is as casual as you like - or maybe dress as a 'Mod'! Book with the office. Tickets are £20 each and are now on sale.



September 2010

Sporting Dinner Evening

On Friday 19 November we have arranged two speakers and a dinner. This is NOT a gentlemen's evening. Ladies are more than welcome and should find the speakers as entertaining as do the men. The compere for the evening is Ian Richards, a former Captain and Chairman of the Comedians' Golf Society, who has a single figure handicap, and as a comedian has appeared all over the world.

The after dinner speaker is Andrew Murray, a senior golf summariser for radio 5 Live and Sky Sports analyst. Currently, Andrew is coach to the Cheshire County team and in his golfing career has played in over 400 European Tour events, winning five, lastly the 1989 European Open.

The dinner will be something special and the menu will be published in the near future. Tickets are £35 each.

Advance Warning – Children's Christmas Party Saturday 18 December

On Saturday 18 December, the Clubhouse will be overrun by up to 60 children in the Children's Christmas Party. It was a great success last year and we have the same entertainer. It is not in the club diary so put it in yours and your children's / grandchildren's diaries.