

Welcome

Welcome to the second issue of The Mid-Herts Golfer emag and thank you to all those who gave us feedback on our first issue. It would seem that most people like the new format and welcomed receiving a copy via email.

The regular emails from Martin have also been warmly welcomed. We are now sending out regular communication via email to over 500 members, which is proving to be a quick and cost-effective way of keeping members informed of what is happening at the club.

If you would like to receive a copy of this and other club emails, please make sure that our General Manager, Martin Bennet, has your email address.

We would like to have your feedback, so please do take the time to email us with your comments. Email to secretary@mid-hertsgolfclub.co.uk

Janet Biscoe
Editor

The New Captain Brian Woodward



Brian Woodward took up the reins of captaincy at the end of April from outgoing captain, Chris James. Brian is a well-known face in the golf club, having been a member for nearly 30 years. During that time he has served two terms on the MHGC board and served for four years when John Turner was chairman.

Brian was born in Nottingham, but has lived in Hertfordshire for most of his married life, having moved to St Albans when his children graduated from university.

A keen sportsman, who played league cricket and badminton in Yorkshire before joining Knaresborough Golf Club, Brian said, "I am proud and honoured to have the opportunity to be Captain of Mid-Herts. I am really looking forward to my year and to working with colleagues on the Captain's Committee and the Board of Management to support the plans to maintain Mid-Herts as one of the best courses in the area."

Brian's chosen charity for the year is the Grove House Hospice in St Albans.

He is married to Rita, who luckily for him, he says, is supportive of his golf interest, although she herself has no desire to play. Rita is a very knowledgeable and keen gardener, banishing him to an allotment to grow vegetables and flowers for cutting.

Joining the Captain's Committee are:

Mike Hayhurst:	Vice Captain	Mike Gadsden:	Greens
John Tanner:	Social	Chris Newsum:	Handicaps
Cynthia Hayhurst:	Social	Simon Best:	Matches
Dennis Merchant:	Competitions		

Annual General Meeting

The AGM took place on Sunday 26 April. The following is a summary of the Chairman's report.

Setting out the Three Year Plan

John Sefton, Chairman of the Board of Management, took the opportunity to outline the future direction of Mid-Herts and to set out how the Board plans to manage the club over the next two to three years. The details are set out in the Three Year Plan which was sent out to members with the AGM papers.

John's general message was one of confidence in the future of the club, tempered with a sense of realism. He said that the Plan seeks to address two concerns - firstly the economic climate, which will inevitably have an impact on the membership of golf clubs. Secondly, the changing face of golf in this country, which means that we are operating in a more competitive environment than ever before.

While the good news is that golf continues to be a growing sport, this is balanced by the reduction in the number of players who choose to take up membership of a golf club. "This is not a problem that is individual to Mid-Herts," he said, "but one that is affecting the majority of clubs throughout Britain and means we have to be more proactive in attracting new members and marketing the club."

The Board is fully aware of the challenges and is taking action to ensure the club continues to be attractive with a first class golf course. The driving commitment is to increase income - both through sustaining the membership levels and increasing the number of visitors.

Encouraging new members, visitors and societies

Though we lost 65 playing members at renewal time, we have since then recruited 20 new playing members, including eight from the very successful Open Day held in April. Since his arrival our General Manager, Martin Bennet, has been encouraging both individual visiting golfers, and societies. The results are positive and we have already seen an increase in green fee income. The position on societies is also good, with thirty societies signed up to play here and the majority of Fridays now booked.

John emphasised that this will be managed carefully so that the course will not be overrun by visitors. The good news is that we do not need dramatic increases in numbers to achieve our objective of increasing visitor income, from the low of £39,000 last year, to the Plan figure of £55,000 in 2011. This increase will still mean that no more than 10% of the capacity of the course is used by visitors. He asked members for their continued support for this policy. The sense of friendship and hospitality both on the course and in the clubhouse is always welcomed by our visitors.

The financial position

On the question of finances, the surplus forecast for this year is £4,898, which is comparable to that achieved in 2008. At year end, the cash reserves will be in the region of £40-50,000 - a considerably healthier position than at the start of this year and in line with the target proposed in the last Three Year Plan. Capital expenditure this year is minimal and well below that of the last few years - again this is as predicted, having invested considerably in the new irrigation system.

The aim is to increase expenditure substantially in 2010 and 2011, which is essential if we are to maintain both the course and clubhouse to the standard members expect. However, we do not envisage generating sufficient cash reserves to fund major projects in the clubhouse or for other improvements such as re-surfacing the car park areas. We would like to undertake these schemes and the only way forward is by tapping into another income stream, such as a levy on members. As a Board we are not in favour of borrowing in the current economic climate.

Feedback from members

Is this the best way forward? We would like to hear the views of members. Over the summer we aim to carry out a survey on a range of topics that affect the club and we hope you will take the opportunity to contribute your thoughts.

The course

"We are very aware of the strength of feeling about the rough last summer and let me assure you once again that your comments have been acted upon," John said. "We hope you will agree that the course is in splendid condition and is a great tribute to Jody and his team". The stated intention is to maintain the first cut at 1½ in. and the second cut not more than 4½ in. The aim is to enable you to find your ball - but be suitably penalised. This is the objective provided the weather is reasonable and the team is able to work as planned through the critical periods of late May and June.

Thanks

John concluded by thanking those who have helped the club. Mid-Herts could not have managed the difficult interim before Martin Bennet without the support of Robert Daley. He did a tremendous job and we as a new Board were very grateful indeed, and I think all members are very appreciative of his dedicated services to the club.

Geoff Proudlock has retired after three years as Treasurer and I would like to pay special tribute to Geoff's sterling work. He maintained the accounts in excellent order and guided the Board through difficult times.

John also paid tribute to Steve Foster who is retiring after service both to the Captain's Committee and the Board of Management. His contribution was very much appreciated and we would like to thank him and offer, on your behalf, our very best wishes in his fight with illness.

Finally he thanked all the staff who look after our interests both on and off the course. We would not enjoy our golf and social activities without their support and commitment.

Board Members

Two new members were elected and welcomed to the Board - Lewis Hawke and Phil Bunbury. They join John Sefton, Chairman, Janet Biscoe, Paul Dugdale and Su Hawke.

The Herts Salver

A Great Win for Jack Woods



The Herts Salver, a qualifier for the Hertfordshire County Championship was held at Mid-Herts this year on 9 May. Our very own Jack Woods won the event. He is pictured receiving the trophy from John Saunders, captain of the Society of Hertfordshire Captains, who sponsor the event. Jack's 70 was good enough to win by one stroke from Verulam's Louis Matamala and Welwyn Garden City's Tom Piggott, who both shot 71. The top 16 in the event automatically qualify for the County Championship at Ashridge on June 12.

Men's Competition Results

Captain's Prize – (Bogey Competition)	Albert Scurfield	+6
Coxon Sale Medal	Phil Bunbury	67
Texas Scramble	Paul Mayles, Scott Goodson Dave Forson and Dominic Tarrant	53.9
Horace Rawlins Cup	Mike Hayhurst beat Phil Blundell	
Winter Scratch KO	Chris Tingey beat Paul Mayles	
Moxham Trophies	John and Chris May beat Phil Bunbury and Russ Kemp	
Paulian Jugs	Trevor White and Michael Munn beat David Hartley and Derek Nash	
Mid-Herts Tankards	Neil Mawdsley and Sue Ludlow beat James Finlay and Rosemary Eberstein	
Captain's Day	1 st Team: Jeremy Day, Keith Allingham and John McIntyre Nearest the Pin 5 th – Mike O'Hara Nearest the Pin 2 nd – David Hartley Longest Drive Ladies 7 th – Anne Peacock Longest Drive Mens 11 th – Colin Howard	

Ladies Competitions Report

From Lindsay Murray-Gray

Our team continues its campaign in The Mail on Sunday competition with a close game against Verulam at home in the third round and then another tight home game against Dunstable Downs, fifth round here we come!

Alas success eluded the Pearson team this year and they did not qualify to the knock-out stage however we have had an extremely good run in this competition in recent years so there is no disgrace in letting someone else champion the cause for Hertfordshire this year!

Tuesday 12th May brought both sunshine and prizes for a number of the Mid-Herts ladies. Following a good day's golf and excellent catering from Alan and his team our new Captain handed out trophies, medals and prizes which have been played for over the winter months and on the day. Winners included:

Crystal Overall winners – Gill Gadsden, Monica Platt, Nicky Singer
January winners – Clare Dew, Jill Wood, Liz Ayliffe
February winners – Di Jackson, Anne Peacock, Jenny Bentley
March winners – Dianne Crowder, Pat Carnell, Jill Sheppard

LGU Medal Silver – Elizabeth Thomas
Bronze – Jenny Bentley

April Medal - Tuesday Silver - Pippa Legg
Bronze 1 - Sue Hailey
Bronze 2 - Sue Newman

April Medal – Sat Margaret Martin

May Medal	Silver- Maree Palmer Bronze 1 - Nicky Singer Bronze 2 -Kate Haddon
Winter Foursomes	Mary Liddell and Liz Ayliffe
Winter Singles	Janet Biscoe
Red Cross Eclectic	Silver – Sue Ludlow Bronze 1 & 2 – Jill Sheppard
Winter Bridge League	Jean Sefton and Margaret Pearce
Spring Meeting	Scratch – Rachel Keens Wolfdancer Trophy (best nett) – Sue Newman

On the course

From Paul Dugdale

Course Template

With many thanks to Mike Hayhurst, we have updated the drawings of the layout of the course and these show the template for each hole that we aim to have for the summer.

Copies of the drawings are available in the office if you would like to see them.

Tee Markers

As you will all have noticed, the tee marker blocks have been smartened up and are now looking much better. This is a temporary solution and we do feel that in the long term they will need to be replaced.

The cost is around £300 per hole and is not part of our current capital expenditure programme. For that reason we would be happy to hear from any members who have suggestions about how to raise this money to enable us to take the project forward. Individual members or companies may be interested in sponsoring a hole in return for some recognition. We would provide, for example, a “thank you” plaque on the hole for one year.

Juniors

Herts Schools Championship – Rose Bowl

Mid-Herts hosted the 2009 Herts Schools Championship for the Rose Bowl on Friday 3 April in which 83 competitors took part from over 20 schools - an entry record!



Will Chambers of Mid-Herts retained his title by virtue of a birdie 4 at the 18th and last hole to tie with Steve Jones and win on count back.

Will (pictured left) also won the Malcolm Reid Trophy for the lowest gross score for U16 boys at last Thursday's HGU Boys Championship at Letchworth along with Sam Cutting of Berkhamsted. There should have been a play-off but as both competitors had changed and the light was going they agreed to share the trophy.

Tom Shadbolt wins The Faldo Series 2009



The Faldo Series 2009 has teed off with the first of its UK Junior Golf Championships, held at Walton Heath Golf Club. The competition attracted some of the region's best young golfing talent, not least of all the eventual winner, 21-year-old Tom Shadbolt who returned an impressive seven under-par score of 137 for 36 holes.

As a result Tom, along with the other winners from Walton Heath, will join Nick Faldo at the Grand Final in Brazil later this year, where they will have the opportunity to meet and draw inspiration from the six-time Major winner.

Welcome to new members

We would like to warmly welcome the following new members who have joined the club in the last six months, since March 2009.

Mike Allibone
Chris Ashcroft
Peter Bailey
Charles Begg - JNR
Ann Bennet
Joseph Deacy - JNR
Daniel Dorans
David Espley
Jaimella Espley
Richard Heppell

Tim Ireson
Charlie James - JNR
Andrew Marshall
Scott Mumford
Joseph Nugent
William Lake
Matthew Luccock
Richard Ransley
Michael Ryan
Ross Tippett - JNR

Dates for your diary

Saturday 4 July – Jazz on a Summer's Evening

Saturday 11 July – Royd/Scrivens Jefferies

Followed by BBQ and disco