



Members Newsletter

March 2010

Taunton Vale Golf Club, Creech Heathfield, Taunton, Somerset TA3 5EY
<http://www.tauntonvalegolf.co.uk> e-mail: tvgcnewsletter@talktalk.net tel 01823 412220

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** Captain's Comment
- 1** Reciprocal Green Fees
- 1** Who's Who – Ladies Section
- 2** Captains' Report
- 2** Lady Captain's Report
- 2** March Competitions
- 3** Seniors Report
- 3** Juniors Report
- 3** Vice Captain's Report
- 3** Message from Steve Welch
- 4** Social Committee Report
- 4** Handicap Committee
- 5/6** **Special Feature –**
“The English Golf Union
and the Somerset Golf
Union”

Who's Who

Ladies Section 2010

Ladies Captain – Lyn Gridley
Ladies Vice Captain – Jackie Woodman
Hon Secretary – Pat Campbell
Hon Treasurer – Sue Baker
Handicap Secretary – Terina Marney
Competitions Secretary – Beryl Richards
Match Secretary – Patricia Brown
Social Secretary – Carole Paterson
Committee Member – Stevie Foster
Committee Member – Cindy Saunders
County Representative – Val Russell
Seniors Representative – Joy Jordan

Captain's Comment

Winter golf? The wet weather in February followed the cold weather and snow in January. Unfortunately, both courses were closed at times and some competitions had to be cancelled. Spring is just around the corner!(So they say)

Thanks for everyone's comments on the first edition of the members' newsletter at start of February which was well received. We currently have about 70 email addresses (10% of the membership). Please get your friends to sign up. Any ideas for future features gratefully received

John Beer

Reciprocal Green Fee Deals

Did you know that we have the following agreements for all Taunton Vale Members to play at these Clubs & hopefully with more to follow...so watch this space!

Members must call the Club in advance asking for the reciprocal & reserve a tee time.

- **Long Sutton GC - £15.00 (Monday - Thursday)**

Proof of Membership required

- **Orchardleigh GC - £15.00 (Monday - Thursday)**

Proof of Membership required

- **Mendip Spring GC - £15.00 (Weekdays)**

- **Mendip Spring GC - £25.00 (Weekends)**

Proof of Membership required

Members are able to take guests to Mendip Spring

- **Wells GC - £10.00 (Monday - Friday)**

Proof of Membership required

Reports



Club Captains 2010:

(left to right):

Seniors Captain – Bob Pascoe

Juniors Captain -Ros McKechan

Club Captain – John Beer

Lady Captain - Lyn Gridley

March Competitions

Weds 3rd – Ladies

Stableford bonus ball

Weds 10th – Ladies Spring

Cocktail

Sat 13th – Avalon B vs

Minehead (A)

Weds 17th – Ladies

Stableford

Thurs 18th – Seniors

Stableford

Sat 20th - Avalon B vs

Weston-Super-Mare (A)

Sun 21st – Ladies Medal

Wed 24th – Ladies Medal

Saturday 27th - Avalon A vs

Avalon B

Sun 28th –Mixed Winter

Greensomes

Weds 31st – Ladies Blind

Pairs

Captain's Report

Three of us attended the AGM of the Somerset Golf Union at Burnham & Berrow on Sunday 7th February and members may be interested to know: TVGC had more members in 2009 than any other golf club in Somerset (697); subscriptions to SGU to go up from £6.50 to 7 pa; County Cards are available from the golf club (£20) and the AGM agreed a series of measures to improve communication between SGU and clubs and members (see special feature on pages 5/6).

I am delighted to confirm that the marines will enter a team in the “Help for Heroes” event on 24th July, and attend the presentation. I have agreed we would consider doing some fundraising on the day to support the local barracks (e.g. raffle, sweepstake etc).

I was delighted to attend the Seniors AGM on Wednesday 3rd February and was made to feel very welcome.

One of the weekend waitresses, Molly Bailey, is raising money to fund a charity expedition to South Africa in 2011 to support orphanages and schools. Over the next few months she may organise some fundraising to raise some extra money (Cleaning golf shoes? Golf clubs? Refreshments on the course? Car wash? Caddying? Selling second hand golf balls etc). Watch this space!

We have received the latest news on developments in the merger process between the English Women's Golf Association and the English Golf Union. The steering group has agreed five initial proposals, and has set up working groups to examine the detailed implications of the merger. A final proposal will then be drawn up and put to the voting members of each organisation.

PS. Special Congratulations to James Popham, who will be captain of Somerset U18's this year. James has just returned from a week's coaching in Spain!

Lady Captain's Report

The Lady Captain has confirmed that the Ladies Championship this year will use the same format as previous years.

The weather once again has curtailed the ladies competitions. Since the last meeting very little golf has been played. It seems to have rained nearly every Wednesday and Sunday since Christmas!

We have received the draw for the “Mail on Sunday” competition and are due to play Burnham and Berrow on the 14th March.

Venues for the Lady Captain's away day and away weekend are now finalised with East Devon for the away day - July 29th and Woodbury for the away weekend in October.

All we want now is for some sunshine so we can play some golf!

Seniors Report

February, weather wise was very poor, the section managed one Stableford even, the result being: Division 1: B McGinn 36 points, Division 2 M Watson 39 points.

The first section committee meeting took place at the Club on the 9th February, Mike Allen was co-opted onto the committee as the second members' representative, giving us a full compliment.

Our list of golfers wishing to play in friendly matches closed on the 18th February with 54 names - very encouraging. Cyril Griffin our computer man for competitions, was pleased to report that handicaps that had changed during the winter period have now reverted to the original. As golfers come out of hibernation so our paid up membership increases. Long may it continue!!

Juniors Section

There is very little to report this month as only two juniors turned up to our first half term competition, the reason being that most of our juniors were away with their school on a skiing holiday. The Junior Chairman would like to formally thank James Popham for the splendid job he did as the Junior captain last year, in spite of his Somerset County commitments, and would wish him every success for the future and in particular as Captain of the County under 18 team. The Junior Chairman would further like to thank Diane Gough for offering to take over the Juniors section in the future. The Junior Chairman has spoken to the Juniors and would confirm that once again they are prepared to undertake whatever duties might be required of them to do on The Musgrove Cup day.

Vice-captain's report re Musgrove Cup

We have had positive assurances from 17 sponsors for holes. Still seeking a sponsor for the 13th. Sponsorship is being introduced for the par 3's nearest the pin -We need two more sponsors to complete all 4 par 3's.

Following contact with the League of Friends and staff at the hospital, Rhys has decided to support the work in the Children's Palliative Care team (Compass). This team nurses terminally ill children (birth - 19) both in hospital and at home. We can support by buying Oxygen machines, drivers for injections, projectors for stimulus etc. More details to follow.

Reciprocal vouchers from 12 other Golf Clubs have so far been received- many thanks to the office staff for their help in this and to the club itself. Tee times are filling up well with non members - our own members need to book their tee times.

Mike and Marion Walsh have generously agreed to again put up their Villa in Florida as an auction prize. Thanks to the members who have donated Dinner, Bed and Breakfast at Castle Combe. Pynes the Butcher will give a meat donation

A "Musgrove Cup" newsletter has been prepared, is already on the club website and will be emailed out next week.

Message from Steve Welch:

"I am sure most have noticed the areas of moss that have gradually been encroaching on certain greens.

The reason that we did not spray it early November was due to the sudden saturation of the course. As conditions never really improved all winter, it became too late to kill, as grass recovery in the affected areas would have been non-existent.

As we are now into March when there surely must be an improvement in the weather, we shall endeavour to spray the moss.

Then, when it has died off we will scarify the areas prior to our April verti-drain/top dressing. There will be a few weeks when the affected areas will be lacking in total grass cover but with over-seeding, fertilizer and warmer/longer days the effects should be short lasting."

*e-mail us on
tvgcnewsletter@talktalk.net
with your comments and
ideas and get your friends
to sign up!*

Social Committee

The social week-end away at St Pierre has been well planned, the golfers pack will be available by the end of March so everyone will know the format and also the local information etc. Jackie Woodman has managed a deal that allows for quite a generous prize pot. We have also identified a disco local to St Pierre that will provide the evenings entertainment on Saturday.

The social committee has agreed to purchase the following:

- An outside water drinking fountain to be sited near the 12th/4th tee areas. Steve Welsh is working closely with us and he will assist the installation and provision of a patio area to enhance the fountain. The fountain is the result of some research with Tiverton Golf Club, who have three fountains, supplied and fitted by two members who are plumbers and builders. A site meeting is planned to discuss stone work and finer details, Social Committee members/Steve Welch will meet with the supplier John Pengelly.
- Benches: The committee have agreed to supply two quality teak benches, four seaters; to be sited with agreement with Steve Welsh at the 11th/13th area and to replace a collapsed bench at the 4th. We wanted

the benches to match and we wanted to provide extra seating, rather than replace one that has worn out.

- The committee has offered to make a contribution to a new/improved computer system to aide Handicaps and competitions section.
- We also plan to purchase a cloth for presentation evenings that has the club logo

Our next event will be the Cyril Hayes Trophy with a quiz night and a Mr & Mrs event. The committee plan to meet every two months and forward plan events well in advance.

Forthcoming Events - 2010

<i>17th April</i>	CYRIL HAYES MEMORIAL TROPHY Fun Quiz and Mr & Mrs Challenge
<i>23rd / 25th April</i>	SOCIAL WEEKEND AWAY St Pierre, Chepstow
<i>10th July</i>	SUMMER SOCIAL/RONNIEMEAD BBQ. Refreshments Entertainment - "Double Image" Piano and Disco

Handicap Committee

Since the first newsletter, there has been a lot of questions about active/inactive handicaps. The following summary is from the EGU website

During the winter of 2007/2008 the EGU toured the country to launch the new CONGU Handicapping System. One issue that was discussed was that Clubs wanted to have more control of their members' handicaps and players competing in Open competitions. The EGU and EWGA decided to launch a system that will identify the competitive nature of an individual. Approved and supported by CONGU, the "Active/Inactive Handicap" identifies (by the use of an indicator) whether an individual has competed in qualifying competitions and as a result returned information on their playing ability.

We have all heard of the so-called 'Bandit' who wins competitions with very low scores. These people generally avoid playing in qualifying competitions in order to keep their handicap artificially high. The Active/Inactive system will be able to identify whether these people have returned scores without the need to lapse a handicap.

The system was launched in January 2010 and requires all members with CONGU handicaps to have returned at least three qualifying scores each year to ensure they have an active handicap. It followed therefore that three qualifying scores were required in 2009 to avoid becoming inactive at the start of 2010.

Scores returned in 9 hole qualifying competitions and Supplementary Scores will be accepted as part of the player's qualifying competitions.

Those members not meeting the minimum number of scores will be identified with an "i" (inactive) that will appear on their CONGU certificate and handicap lists. Qualifying scores of less than 3 will not be carried forward to the next year. The "i" will be removed from the player's handicap as soon as three qualifying scores have been returned. An inactive handicap may still be used for social golf and the like and in competitions not stipulating an active handicap as entry criteria.

So what is the benefit of such a system? Well firstly and perhaps most importantly it will enable event organisers to run competitions, both Club and Opens, without the fear of players taking part who have 'false' handicaps. This can be achieved by Clubs adopting a condition of the competition that requires an entrant to have an active handicap. Clubs may adopt this condition providing it does not cover all events and that opportunity is given to players with inactive handicaps being permitted to return the three qualifying scores needed to ensure an active handicap. The system should also encourage more individuals to submit qualifying scores and this in turn will help to improve the accuracy of members' handicaps throughout England.

The EGU and EWGA will monitor the situation and review the number of scores required to maintain an active handicap at the end of 2010.



The English Golf Union (EGU) and the Somerset Golf Union (SGU)

It is not uncommon to hear the question around golf clubs, What is the EGU and what do they and the SGU do for me, and why do I have to pay a subscription to them? Well both organisations together form the governing body for the Amateur game of Men's golf in England. The English Golf Union was formed by the Counties in 1924, but most counties predate that event by some years. Somerset for instance was created by the clubs in Somerset in 1907.

The main objective of both organisations is to promote and further the interests of the game of golf in England and to represent the game, its members and golf clubs nationally. Over the years and in many cases through the introduction of legislation by successive governments, the responsibilities of the National body have grown and grown, and what was once a very small group of willing volunteers managing the game has now become a professionally run and administered organisation dealing on your behalf with the complex issues and responsibilities that today's environment brings on us all.

You could compare the EGU to the FA, the RFU, the ECB, and in fact most of administrators across all sports, all of whom represent their sport and manage its development. Golf, as is the case with many other sports, has developed side by side with a separate organisation controlling women's golf (English Women's Golf Association), and separate body governing the rules by which the game is played- The R & A. (The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews). There are discussions currently being undertaken to unite the men's and women's governing bodies to present a more sensitive and structured future for the game.

It is impossible in a few short sentences to describe in detail all the activities which your subscription (£5.00 to the EGU and £7.00 to the SGU) pays for so for that may we point you to their websites which are

www.englishgolfunion.org for the EGU
and www.somersetgolfunion.co.uk for Somerset

This is a summary of the major services undertaken on your behalf,

- The EGU represents and acts on behalf of over 1,900 golf clubs, and 700,000 golf club members
- Advice to clubs on Handicaps, Rules, Course rating (SSS), Ecology, Waste and Water management, Marketing, Junior Sections, Recruitment, Coaching and Child Protection.
- Recognition and accreditation to clubs who excel in providing facilities to Juniors through GolfMark.
- The EGU lobbies government to ensure golf clubs are treated fairly in any new legislation.
- A Central Database of handicaps for clubs - reducing administration for clubs
- The County Golf Partnerships provide funding for development initiatives such as Taster sessions for newcomers, The National Skills Challenge, Get into Golf Initiatives, and some Free Coaching for beginners.
- Provide a golfing guide to clubs throughout the country. www.egugolfcentral.co.uk as a one stop shop for clubs to offer their facilities to visitors. Golfers can search for membership availability, enter thousands of Open Competitions, find great green fee special offers and

book tee times online.

- We identify Champions and potential world beaters through a series of National and County Championships at all ages- for teams as well as individuals- from the club golfer to the elite player and provide them with the opportunity to excel at their chosen sport.
- Nowadays there exists a seamless transition from the Amateur game to the Professional ranks for those that have the talent thanks to the work of the EGU and County coaches.
- The EGU particularly actively searches for sponsors on a National scale to invest in our game and to promote its development.
- As a member of the England Golf Partnership, the EGU along with EWGA and the PGA receive and manage funding provided to golf by Sport England and this spend is predominately aimed at increasing participation in the game of golf and improving access to golf clubs for potential members of all talents and backgrounds.

It might interest you to know a few facts that relate to Somerset specifically,

- There are 31 clubs that make up the Somerset Golf Union.
- Collectively the clubs have approx 12,000 male members.
- 14 clubs have been in existence for more than 100 years.
- We annually hold 27 events that attract nearly 2000 players from our 31 clubs.
- We run 5 County teams- Senior's, Men's, Under 18's, Under 16's and Under 14's.
- Specific specialised coaching is provided to over 150 talented players of varying potential ability through the PGA registered Pro's at our clubs.
- We actively participate in the Somerset County Golf Partnership.
- We employ two people on a part time basis, namely Our Secretary and his Assistant.
-

The Executive Committee comprises 20 Volunteers who between them cover the management of our events in a highly disciplined and professional manner. These volunteers are ALL nominated by the clubs, and it is the clubs through their membership of the Union that decide on the future direction the Union will take.

Our Annual General Meeting is in February each year and we are always on the lookout for club members who want to become involved. Burnham and Berrow Golf club is our spiritual home, and has been for many years and the Union are greatly appreciative of all the support we receive from them.

If this has whetted your appetite and you wish to know more then please feel free to get in touch via the web site, or by e-mail, post or phone to any official. Your questions and enquiries are always welcome.

We hope that this short expose and your subsequent research of the web sites will convince you that your combined subscription of less than 25p a week is not excessive and is being well spent

Somerset Golf Union

"Tweedside", Goosenford, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8LJ - Tel: 01823 412510

Email: secretary@somersetgolfunion.co.uk Web: www.somersetgolfunion.co.uk