

## AMPLEFORTH COLLEGE GOLF CLUB ([www.ampleforthgolf.co.uk](http://www.ampleforthgolf.co.uk))

NEWSLETTER – 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019

### FROM THE CHAIRMAN

At this time of the year, it is always a bit depressing as we consider Winter approaching.

Leaves are falling, the days are getting shorter, the temperature starts to drop and worst of all, our golf season nears an end for the year.

It is therefore, an opportune time to reflect on what has happened during 2019, (many good things) and what lies ahead for our Club.

First off, as always, I have to remark on the Course. It is so easy to overlook the work that goes in to maintaining a golf course, especially one as challenging as ours and especially when it is done with reduced staff. I know that we, the members thoroughly appreciate all that Miles and his team do throughout the year and I know this because you all tell me from time to time. What you may not know are all of the good comments that Ian and I hear from the visitors who use our course. Their praise ranges from the aesthetic beauty, to the appearance of the fairways but especially to the standard of our greens. Indeed, we have recently gained a new member who gave his primary reason for joining as the **condition** of the greens. We are lucky that we have such beauty to enjoy as we play golf and the dedicated staff who present it to us each week.

Next I would like to praise our Captain this year, Keith Holloway for the excellent programme that he has provided. Our competitions have been well attended, our Club Matches have been a revelation in the numbers wanting to play and he has brought variety, (note the target golf) into certain competitions which has been well received. We have Andy Arthur as Captain for the 2020/21 season and I can promise you that he will be carrying on with the same level of commitment and innovation that Keith has shown.

Our number of members has held up this year, boosted most recently by the addition of five new members, well 4 new and 1 returning. To do this in the face of a declining market is noteworthy and due to a number of new efforts by various members. We now have an active page on **Facebook**, which I invite all of you to please use for **comments and likes**; we have had two banners mounted all summer outside the Fairfax Arms and we have been promoting our Club in as many ways as possible, including a Nine hole, Scratch club match in West Yorkshire where we were represented by Andy Bucklee, John Bergin and Matthew Gray. This match was attended by 12 other clubs and organised by The Yorkshire Golf Union.

With regard to the sale of Gilling Castle and the surrounding grounds, there is nothing new to report. The College is still unable to gain the licence that it needs in order to move the children from the Castle and thus facilitate the sale, and at the moment it would appear that this will not happen this year. So, we carry on as normal, safe in the knowledge that we have a lease that will carry us through until 2030.

Your Committee is constantly striving for new ideas on how we can grow the Club so any suggestions are always welcome. Our Social events have been well attended during the year and we are aiming to introduce something special for just before Christmas. The Orangery at the Fairfax has been booked for the Saturday afternoon of the 7th of December, after the competition, when we intend to provide a two course meal for

members and partners and of course announce the competition winner. More details will be going up shortly but please give this your full support.

In mentioning the Committee, I would like to invite more of our members to join. We do need more representation from all sectors of our membership and both Ian and I would be happy to discuss this with you.

Finally, I would like to mention the work that Ian Henley does for us throughout the year. A number of others are most worthy of mention, like our Handicap Secretary who ensures results are known and works so hard on the course, like our Social Secretary who organises so much behind the scenes and many more whose efforts go unsung but, and this a big but, Ian has carried on with his work during a long and debilitating illness that we hope he is now on the road to recovery from. His value to our Club is priceless and I am sure that I speak for you all in thanking him and wishing him well. now and in the future. I look forward to seeing you all over the winter and then into the Spring.

Regards and best wishes to you all.

Ken

### **FROM THE HANDICAP SECRETARY**

As many of you know, clubs in the UK and Ireland are scheduled to move to the new World Handicapping system (WHS) next year, and we now have a likely date of 2nd November. England Golf are planning to centralise the handicap data (so it will no longer be the property of individual clubs) and restrict access to it, so it will likely disappear from club websites, including ours. Whether we need to continue to run HandicapMaster at club level remains to be seen - it has some benefits in organising competitions and keeping track of past results as well as the mandatory function of tracking handicap updates. As Handicap Secretary I will watch the process with interest, as well as making a few preparations to maintain our own records (much of which I already do) just in case the new software has the usual run of teething troubles.

Adrian

### **FROM THE MANAGER**

This year, there has been a marked reduction in the number of visitors playing the course, which has reduced significantly our income. Fortunately, the Abbey Trustees were generous enough to reduce the amount we pay them for the use of the course, so we should end the year breaking even.

We have reduced green fees for the winter (October to March) to £10 and winter membership is only £120. We have also introduced a scheme whereby visitors, if they provide their email address, get a free round after playing and paying for four rounds. So far, 25 visitors have signed up. We need more members and visitors and urge you to help in this.

Our Captain for next year has several plans relating to matches, competitions and attracting more golfers, which he will communicate and action in the New Year. However, if any member is short of someone to play with, give him, Ken or Keith a shout (contact details on your membership card). You can also contact me and I will be pleased to assist.

We continue to man the clubhouse on Saturday mornings and provide bacon butties. We also provide bacon butties, when possible, for shotgun starts. The in-clubroom refreshments consist of Mars bars, bottled water and diet coke. If there are other items, which you would like please let me know. The Flavia coffee machine continues to work well, fresh milk in the fridge.

Miles advises that the heavy end of season greens renovation was completed successfully with minimum impact. This will help in giving us healthier, stronger, better draining greens throughout the winter months.

We are always seeking ways to generate funds for the Club and any suggestions would be most welcome.

There will be a Quiz Night in the Clubhouse on 4<sup>th</sup> December. Further details later.

The 9-hole Open Competitions will continue throughout the Winter on Saturday mornings. Details are on your membership card. Do compete, it is fun, and you may win a cash prize. If you have any queries, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Finally, my thanks to all of you who have supported me with prayers and good wishes during my illness. Hopefully, I shall be back playing golf soon.

Ian