



November 2019 Club Newsletter

FROM THE CAPTAIN:

Another golfing season has been and gone and dare I say it, they seem to be passing quicker each year - or is that just me? I hope you have enjoyed and made full use of your membership of our Club and trust you will all be back refreshed next season battling to reduce that handicap!

I am certain even the most discerning golfer amongst you will have had no criticism regarding the condition of the course this past year. I want to personally thank Head Greenkeeper Darren and his team of Trevor, Ewen and George for the work they have put in to raise the standard on our course and indeed, the profile of our Club. Visitors have been very complimentary but just as important are the favourable comments heard from our own members. The Winter Programme is now on display and as you can see, the staff are in for a very busy period. Well done all!

We continue to look at ways of improving and maintaining our policies and with the new lighting completed in all our buildings and the added insulation virtually completed we hope our electricity bills will be reduced and the expenditure recouped over the years to come. The budget for next year is nearing completion so needless to say the Council are aware of the need to keep our buildings in a safe and maintained manner.

On the matter of finance, I am glad to report we have again ended the year in the black and thanks go to our Finance Convenor and Vice-Captain, Tom Speirs, David Scrimgeour and of course Club Manager John Forbes for keeping matters in check once again.

The Northern Counties Cup was staged at Nairn Golf Club this year and although we were able to enter two four man teams, neither progressed past the first round. It is however heartening for our Club to produce eight players with a handicap of 3 or less including 16 year old Nathan Mackenzie who has been named North District Under 16 Order of Merit Winner for 2019.

Well done also to George Sutherland and Susan Campbell, who as winners of the Mixed Forbes Cup went on to play in a Ping sponsored Scottish event at Gleneagles and performed well. They returned home with a boot load of goodies which included brand new Ping golf bags - surely an incentive for more people to enter the event next year?

Our Juniors continued to perform well throughout the season and are a credit to our Club. They are the future but again I find myself appealing to our membership to give up

some of their time to assist our coach Bert Nicholson and his ever depleting team of helpers. No particular expertise of golf is required, merely your presence to ensure our juniors are supervised when at the coaching sessions. Please get in touch with either Bert or our Club Manager if you can spare an hour or so of your time. Remember, the more helpers we have on our register, the fewer times you will be asked to attend.

Our 15 months for 12 months membership advertising campaign has again proved successful with several new members now in place. The Winter Membership deal for £100 is also gaining members and remember if you entice someone to join, there is a £25 reward!

Prizegiving Night on Saturday, 26th October, went with a bang! Congratulations to all the winners and runners-up. The Clubhouse had standing room only and whilst that was great to see, the disappointing aspect was again the number of prizewinners who failed to turn up and didn't have the decency to send their apologies. This situation has been brought up at Council level and will be addressed in time for next year's ceremony.

The Council of Management has been working recently on the fixture lists for the 2020 season. The fixture lists are now available to view on the relevant noticeboards and also on our website. There are a couple of changes to next year's fixtures. Firstly the Gents Club Championships qualifying rounds will be played over a weekend with the 1st round being on the Saturday and the 2nd round being played on the Sunday. The draws for all Club Championship Matchplays will be made on completion of the Gents 2nd Round qualifying on the Sunday. Secondly, the Mid Week Strokeplay or Stableford competitions will now be open for both Gents & Ladies to play in.

I have been informed the ladies Christmas Lunch will take be held on Saturday, 7th December and they are hoping for a good response. I hope the gathering goes well.

As you will be aware Monica of Alexander's Caterers has decided to give up the franchise at our Club in the New Year. She will certainly be missed and a difficult act to follow but the Council have advertised the position and are in the process of seeking a replacement. You will be informed when there is an update on the situation.

My two year tenure as Captain will end at our Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 5th December. It has not

been without its challenges. My aim was to continue the work of my predecessor Allan Pollock and promote the profile of our Club to increase membership and visitor numbers against the ever receding tide of golfers leaving the game. This is a challenge facing every golf club but I am optimistic the future of Muir of Ord Golf Club is a positive one and thank all who have been a support during my term.

Hamish A. Milne
Club Captain

RULES OF GOLF – WINTER IS UPON US (Just about!)

With the course now set up for winter it may be useful to bring to mind some golf rules pertaining to winter golf.

- Preferred Lies - You can lift, clean and replace your ball (within 6" of its original spot no nearer the hole) if you so wish but please remember that this can only be done on the fairway (even in winter!). If you intend to take a preferred lie then you must mark your ball – preferably with a tee - before moving it.

If, for any reason, you drop your ball (knee height) then you can take a preferred lie afterwards – but, once again, only from the fairway.

- Loose Impediments – These are generally stones, loose grass, leaves, branches and sticks but can also be aeration plugs or worm casts. These are not considered loose if they are sticking to the ball – so if your ball is in the rough off your drive at the first and has a lump of muck on it you have to play it. There are some special cases i.e. sand and loose soil are not loose impediments (but can be removed on the green). Dew, frost and water are also not loose impediments. However, snow and natural ice (other than frost) are either loose impediments or temporary water, at the player's option. So you can't clear a path for your putt on a green which has dew or frost on it!

Loose impediments can be removed anywhere on the course.

Please remember to take your ball into the semi rough - nearest side and you can place it or use a mat from the fairway (available to purchase in shop)! Putting from any distance is allowed (except that – thanks to Mr Hexley – putting from bunkers is proving rather difficult since he decided to 'lip' them). Thanks for that Darren!

As always please feel free to call me should you require any help, advice or information regarding any aspect of the Rules of Golf (07857034163). I'll do my best to help.

Have a good winter's golf.
Allan Pollock

SNIPPETS

- An amazing achievement by member David Patterson who has topped the Scottish Blind Golfer's Order of Merit for 2019 and was part of the successful Scotland Team who won the Auld Enemy Cup against the joint England and Wales Team. Many congratulations David!
- A reminder that winter conditions are now in force on the course and balls finishing on the fairway between the tee and the white marker posts MUST either be played from a mat (available to purchase in shop) or moved to the semi rough prior to play.
- Alexander's Catering will soon be advertising their Christmas Menu so be sure to consider our facilities for any celebration or work's Christmas Party.
- The Saturday Winter Eclectic competition is now up and running and it is not too late to pay your £5 entry fee and join the fun.
- There are still Tickets available for the "200 Club" monthly draw. Remember if you win the £50 first prize it will cover the cost of your annual fee for four years!
- The Sports Quiz returns on Friday, 22nd November and entry forms are available at the bar. Teams will be of up to four people (one of which must be a member) and entry fee £10 per team.
- The Annual General Meeting is to be held at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 5th December, 2019.