



# Ups & Downs

Pyecombe G C

## Newsletter

March / April 2014

No 136

Editor Alf Bickham

### CAPTAIN'S REVIEW

I would describe the first 5 months in the Captain's chair as an analogy, like this; I'm the lucky designated driver of a formula 1 racing car. Through, the earlier months "Team Pyecombe" have had a few practice sessions (wets only), tweaked a few nuts in the Clubhouse & idled behind the safety car (in the Bar). March arrived and we followed the safety car in a low gear, April came... 5 green lights **"and there they go!"**

Almost no time to think straight (no change there), so therefore it's very comforting in the knowledge that we are truly blessed to have a brilliant official team of ex-teachers, accountants, inspired younger minds along with various wise sages within our membership who help & guide as necessary.

**ON THE GOLF** – Mike Willmott aka "Wilmy the vice" has been well organised by "Mary the vice" Barnard, forming a great partnership and guiding the early season mixed teams to some notable victories and enjoyable matches. The vets, seniors, exclusive, Sunday mail, Colts, ladies, not forgetting the MSL teams have all been doing battle with some success. Meanwhile our Scratch team are chomping at the bit after getting a bye in the first round so when the Littlehampton away match arrives on Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup> it would be welcomed if we can support the boys on the day. Also good luck to the "Pitcher" team when they travel to Cowdray Park for the season's opener on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May.

Congratulations to Reg and the "president's men" (and ladies) on your victory over the Captain's lot. "Honestly, who picks these teams"?

Thanks to Reg as well for my introduction to the Sussex Captains at the Nevill Golf Club and this time on the same team we had a great day just missing out in the spring sunshine. "two more pars should do it" said Nick Lee on the 17<sup>th</sup> Tee ensured we finished bogey, bogey for third place, Dohhh!

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Well played Reg

### MEMBERS CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Leave in the Office with the Secretary or in an envelope in the foyer marked for the attention of Alf Bickham / Newsletter or send Alf an Email message to his Email address of: [alf@abickham.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:alf@abickham.freeserve.co.uk) or to make contact by telephone, call him at home, **Tel. No. 01444.242101**

## CAPTAIN'S REVIEW (Continuation)

The Captain & Pro series has kicked off, and I must say it is a very interesting & enjoyable way to spend 3 & half hours. Not only do I get to meet & play with all sorts of lovely & different members but I get to know our Pro. Observations to date:

- 1) takes 4 holes to warm up
- 2) loves his tennis
- 3) hates losing (but)
- 4) gives generous putts
- 5) likes a beer
- 6) loves "pork scratchings"
- 7) Regularly gets out-driven (ouch!)
- 8) Flop shot specialist

Results to 30<sup>th</sup> April: – Half – Lost – Half – Won



**The Young Faldo**

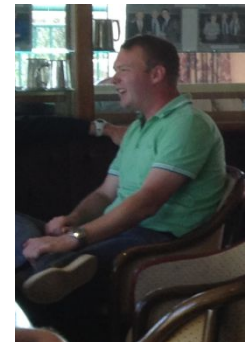
Meanwhile Alfie (on left), our shining light on the junior stage continues to impress at home and away with a recent winning performance in his age group at "Princes" Sandwich, while at the other end of the age spectrum our very own "Great uncle Alan" ventured north of the border to play in the national secretary's competition picking up third place at Castle Stuart Golf Club. Keep flying the PGC flag.



**The Old Master**

## SOCIAL –

The Clubhouse has been buzzing & the bar and catering staff have been working hard making sure that members and visitors alike enjoy their time at the club. There has been some really encouraging feedback from the new members & visitors which is hopefully perpetuating a bright future for Pyecombe Golf Club. Thanks to George Eves, Doreen Shafer, Roy & Cherry Aitken for putting on the Quiz Night & St Georges entertainment & a special thanks to Shaun Marchant for his work on the Audio system & other "techy" stuff going on in the clubhouse at the moment.



**Thanks Shaun**



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## CAPTAIN'S REVIEW (Continuation)

**REFLECTION** – Sad indeed to have to say good-bye for now to two beautiful ladies.  
Alison Baker & Pat Dossetter always in our thoughts.



Much respect to all from the Captain

*Colin Kemp*

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## VETS SECTION

The Vets matches have started with more away events than home and this is reflected in the following results:

Royal Eastbourne	drawn	3 - 3
Highwoods	lost	3½ - 4½
Worthing	lost	2½ - 5½
Dyke	lost	2½ - 5½
Copthorne	lost	1½ - 6½
Crowborough	drawn	4 - 4

ALL OF THESE MATCHES ARE MOST ENJOYABLE AND ARE PLAYED IN A GOOD SPIRIT  
Our next event is our invitation on May 15<sup>th</sup> where a club member plays with 3 members from other clubs, a good way of meeting new friends.

I would encourage any vet to put his name down to play in the matches a great way to meet new people and to get involved,

*Brian Langley*  
Vets Captain

## LADIES SECTION

Well the season is certainly proving to be very busy.

1. Daily Mail Foursomes took place at Lindfield, we lost but it was a hard fought battle.
2. The Mail on Sunday teams have now played three rounds, against Hassocks, Mid Sussex and Seaford, all at home. The fourth round will be played on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May against Lewes – another home game – good luck team.
3. The Morrice Fours team played their second round match against Mannings Heath away on 28<sup>th</sup> April – the team fought hard but lost out to Mannings Heath. Well done ladies for all your hard work.
4. Division 1 have now played three home matches, against Chartham Park, Chichester and Singing Hills and won all three.
5. Division 2 have now played three matches. They lost against Brighton and Hove and beat Littlehampton, result of the third not known at this time.
6. Division 3 have played two matches, both away. They beat Littlehampton, but lost to West Chiltington. They are due to play Singing Hills at home on Friday 09 May.
7. Sam Wakefield won the Val Mackay Medal with a magnificent net 63.
8. Aileen and Alison V played in the Scratch Foursomes at The Nevill on Thursday/Friday 10/11<sup>th</sup> April and after a very hard fought battle over 36 holes on both the Thursday and the Friday, they came third. The result was 1<sup>st</sup> Bognor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Highwoods, 3<sup>rd</sup> Pyecombe and 4<sup>th</sup> Royal Ashdown. Our girls lost to the overall winners. The Lady Captain and the Vice Captain supported the team on Friday and our thanks go to Joanna and Jamie for caddying for our team on the Friday.
9. Jamie and Abby won the Australian Spoons and go through to the next round.

Our thanks go to all those taking part in the various competitions – keep up the good work.

Sadly, we have had two funerals from within the Ladies section over the last few weeks - Pat Dossetter and Alison Baker. They shall both be sadly missed and our thoughts go to their families at this time.

*Sandra Staynes*  
Lady Captain

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### **The Brighton and Eastbourne winter league.**

Pyecombe finished second in the Brighton and Eastbourne Seniors winter league for the third consecutive year. This year we lost out to Willingdon by two points. Finals day held at Pyecombe on the 25th April was very well supported with all players expected, turning up and playing in very wet conditions. Willingdon showed why they did well in the league with a pair winning the away prize with 43 points. The home prize was won by Tim Gleave and Roy Lawson with Peter Charman and Andy Munday second.

After three years failing to win the league I feel it's time for a new organiser, so next year's Captain will be looking for a volunteer.

*Neil Beard-Neilson*





## Pyecombe members in Swaziland

The aim of the holiday was to provide a truly authentic African experience whilst playing some top quality golf courses. The first stop was at Mlilwane game reserve where the group stayed in beehive huts, ate on the restaurant balcony overlooking the Hippo waterhole and woke in the mornings to Zebra and Antelope at the door. Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary is Swaziland's pioneer conservation area and a beautiful, secluded sanctuary situated in the Kingdom's Ezulwini Valley.

Royal Swazi Golf Course is only a short drive from Mlilwane bush camp and the group managed to fit a round in most days. It's on the circuit for the Sunshine Tour and boasts Ernie Els as a previous winner. The course sits at the foot of a beautiful escarpment and winds its way through a huge array of native trees. It has a colonial feel to it and caddies were provided for each round which everyone agreed was invaluable to provide some information on local customs. George even threatened to bring his caddie back with him but unfortunately his luggage allowance wouldn't allow.

The group spent the first four nights at Mlilwane and then moved on to the second stop at Hlane Royal National Park. Hlane offers the largest herds of game in the Kingdom and is home to Lion, Elephant, White Rhino, Giraffe and a whole host of other species. Hlane is also blessed with an abundant and diverse bird life, including the highest density of nesting white backed vultures in Africa. The group stayed in authentic Rondavels overlooking one of the many waterholes and sat out in the evening under an African sky listening to the sound of the Lions in the distance. On one walk they got so close to a Rhino that you could almost touch it. Magical experiences.

The African adventurers then moved on to a four day stop at Nkonyeni golf resort which was designed by highly regarded course architect Phil Jacobs. The course is simply stunning. It winds its way in and out of a game reserve and provides some panoramic backdrops to tee shots. Each hole is brilliantly designed and the round culminates with a par 3 over a river onto an island green with the clubhouse overlooking. The group stayed in villas dotted around the course, each one with its own pool and had 24 hour access to buggies to get around the resort. Some pampering was available at the spa on site and I ran early morning golf lessons and clinics on the picturesque driving range. A couple of the group even decided to brave the quad bike trail!

Our stay at Nkonyeni culminated with a match against a Swaziland select team sponsored by the tourism board to mark the inaugural UK golf tour. The press came out to cover it and were doing interviews on the 10<sup>th</sup> tee. Unfortunately the silver platter didn't come home to the UK. A return match will be arranged!

The final stop was at Mkhaya game reserve. Mkhaya is the recent recipient of the AA's 'Travellers

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Value Award for Top-End Leisure Travellers' and is home to 4 of the Big 5 including Black Rhino. Visitors can also spot the pure Swazi Nguni Breed of Cattle, Tsessebe, White Rhino, Elephant, Giraffe, Buffalo, Hippo, Crocodiles and exquisite birdlife including the elusive Narina Trogon to name just a few of the wildlife highlights. Accommodation is in stone huts with walls that are partly open to the elements so you can go to sleep with the sounds of the bush singing in your ears. The peacefulness of Mkhaya has to be experienced to be believed.

I would personally like to thank the entire group for putting your faith in my sister and myself and booking yourself onto the first Golf and Safari trip to Swaziland. We will shortly be providing dates for a return trip next year so watch this space!

## **Equipment corner - Gap wedge**

A gap wedge is a type of golf club used to hit a shot with higher and shorter trajectory than a pitching wedge and lower and longer trajectory than a sand wedge.

### ***History***

Over time, the loft of irons has been reduced for multiple reasons, including improved designs and the desire to advertise longer hitting golf clubs. This has affected long and short irons including the pitching wedge which is now lofted at about the same as an 8-iron from the 1960s. This is generally about 48 degrees but can be as little as 44 degrees. However, sand wedges have not changed because they must have a 54 to 58 degree loft to be effective in the sand. It is now popular for golfers to carry a wedge in the 50 - 54 degree range to fill the gap; these are typically referred to as a "gap wedge".

### ***Design***

Generally the gap wedge has less bounce than a sand wedge, typically around 8 to 10 degrees. Don't be fooled into going for a wedge with very low bounce, thinking that it will be easier to nip the ball off the surface. Too little bounce creates too sharp a leading edge and can cause the club to dig into the ground. Going for a club with a bounce angle of around 10 degrees will make the club more forgiving.

### ***Overall wedge specifications***

The loft angle between each wedge should not be less than 3 degrees, or more than 6 degrees. This way the golfer always has a club for the distance in question and they'll never have to over hit a wedge, a practice which can destroy wedge accuracy.

A good mix of wedges would be either having a 52 degree and 56 degree wedge based on your pitching wedge being 48 degrees. You can add a 60 degree wedge if required. As mentioned earlier, some pitching wedges can be as little as 44 degrees and then a more appropriate mix of wedges would be a 49 degree gap wedge and a 54 degree sand wedge.

Always, have the lie angles of your wedges adjusted dynamically by noting the point of impact with the ground to the sole. A lie angle that is 2 degrees out can result in your wedges consistently missing the target by up to 4 yards. It might not be your fault!

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We offer a complimentary wedge check and fitting service. We have the equipment required to check and change the lie and loft of your current clubs and the Flightscope Launch Monitor is perfect for learning your exact distances achieved with each wedge.

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*Jason*

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