



# Ups & Downs

Pyecombe G C

## Newsletter

January / February 2015

No 140

Editor Alf Bickham

### FROM THE CAPTAIN

It now seems that the weather is at last changing for the better and hopefully competitions can resume soon.

On the Golf front it has been very quiet but we have managed to play in the following matches:

MSL – Played two matches, beat Worthing home and away which is the first time for a long while where we have achieved this and against Copthorne we halved our match even though they certainly put out a strong home team.

I was delighted to be invited to play in the.....

Colts Tankard, and thank you Alan Carter for the kind invitation. However, we only managed four holes before the greens flooded and we came in. The Tankard competition has now been re-arranged for Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May.

Good luck to everybody in all events that you play in and please do not forget the FUN(d) DAY which takes place on Bank holiday Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March.

The mixed events start on the 7<sup>th</sup> March and good luck to Alison and Andy plus of course all who take part.

I hope I have more to say for the next edition.

*Mike Willmott*

### LADIES SECTION

The ladies of Pyecombe had the very sad news on Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, that Elizabeth Green passed away peacefully in St Peter and St James Hospice. Elizabeth was a much loved and popular lady, who had a wise and sharp view of the world. She served the section very well, producing beautiful flower arrangements on all our 'big' days, and running our ball/bottle sweeps – always managing to produce a handsome profit to go towards the expenses of the day. She will be sadly missed by us all and our thoughts are with her daughters Heather and Judy at this time.

(Continued on next page)

#### 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**

## **LADIES SECTION** (Continued)

The weather has meant that we've played very little competitive golf since Christmas and the one event that was held did not have a successful outcome for the Pyecombe ladies. We hosted Brighton and Hove in our first round of the Mail on Sunday and fielded a strong team who put up a great fight against tough opposition but we lost by 3 matches to 2. Virtually all the matches went to the 18<sup>th</sup> hole with some of our players giving a lot of shots but they all fought hard and did their best. My thanks go to Angie Bainbridge for running the team and Lorraine Everard, Val Jenkins, Heather McGee, Annie Prior and Alison White for playing.

We play the first round of the Morrice Foursomes at home against Singing Hills on Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup> March, at 12.0 noon and we wish the team of Aileen Greenfield, Sam Wakefield, Alison Vermes, Jamie Blades, Angie Bainbridge and Val Jenkins with Sarah Godfrey as reserve, good luck.

***Mary Barnard***

Lady Captain

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## **ON THE COURSE (Jan-Feb)**

The work carried out to the edge of The South Downs Way dissecting the course has attracted much comment. This work has been carried out at the request and in conjunction with the South Downs National Park Rangers, who we work closely with and seek advice from on environmental issues.

The edge of the bridle path was becoming overgrown with brambles and scrub, with overhang to the bridle path causing a safety issue to horse riders and also stifling wildflower growth which the Rangers are keen to encourage. They offered to clear and maintain this bridle path border annually, at no cost to the club, but they would have to remove the existing fence, as it was severely dilapidated, to do this initial work safely. As we all know, we now need to replace the fence. As soon as holes are augered we will be erecting a post and wire fence back down the path, and the SDNP contractor will cut to both sides of this to maintain in the future. I am planning to join the green staff banging some posts in, 80 I think, in the near future and should anyone care to join me that would be of great help. (Watch the newsletter for details). I am sure it will be a good core workout which will add at least ten yards to your drive.

The Club recently acquired a refurbished greens mower of identical spec to our existing Toro machine, which will give us good back up, greater flexibility in use when greens mowing and add longevity to our existing mower. Hopefully this will be a sound investment.

One of our machinery acquisitions of last year was the new seed drill. This will be in action in the spring and autumn for over seeding the greens with fine fescue grasses to increase those species within the sward on our greens. An increase of 5 - 10% per cent in one year would be outstanding and would give a noticeable difference to green speed, trueness of roll etc. In the long run it also leads to a decreased input of fertiliser and pesticide use, promotes a hardier more drought tolerant sward, which leads to cost savings in future and fits PGC's environmental ethos. The seed drill will also give up to 90% seed germination rate, as against maybe 20-30% at best, with our old method of mixing with the top dressing and spreading on the green during verti draining and is a far less disruptive process. Within two or three years, if we can achieve these germination rates and good establishment rates also, we should see markedly significant results on our greens.

We realise courses are to a large extent judged ultimately on the quality of their greens, we do not intend to rest on our laurels, but seek continued improvement through investment in both machinery and technology in support of our green keeping team whenever finance permits.

Looking ahead to course development projects for next winter leads me to the exciting project to aesthetically remodel the green surrounds, bunkering etc, of the last three holes in the field, in as much accordance as possible, to the original Hawtree Architect plan drawings from the time, which Head Greenkeeper, Simon Wells, discovered some time ago.

More information soon, on this exciting three year project, promoted and supported by The Friends of Pyecombe. I hope that all sections of the club will rally together for “The Friends In The Field” Fund Day on Mon 4<sup>th</sup> May to support this project and raise enough funds to start the ball rolling and fulfil our plans to transform the 16<sup>th</sup> green surround next Winter.

In closing, a thank you to FOP for the funding of new winter tee mats and to Simon Wells for furnishing me with data for this article.

Enjoy your golf

***Gary Hann***  
Chair of Green

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## **Course Invaders**

Course invaders are not only moles who build their mounds here and there, rabbits or badgers, but also these timid deer.

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## VETS SECTION

Not a great deal has happened over the January – February period although quite a good number of hardy vets have been seen on the course, especially early in the morning. In some cases this was almost pre-dawn.

The only winter competition running has been the Harvey Frarey Winter Matchplay Knockout. At the time of writing this had got to the semi-final stage, leaving Ian Hawes up against James (lucky) Easley and Graham Tate against a new Vet, Nigel Addison.

I have had another delve into the Vet's archives and came up with a spiffing notion to assist us with our forthcoming matches this year. On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> April 1984 (I don't know if the date was significant) the Vets held their first Medal Competition of the year – for the purpose of adjusting Vets handicaps. Although some did rather well and were left alone those at the bottom of the field were summarily adjusted, in some cases by as much as plus 6. This took some up to a "Vets Playing Handicap" of 30. I haven't tried out this idea on Jason yet...

I expect there will be more to report next time.

*Geoff Webb*  
Vets Captain

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## COLTS SECTION

### **18 playing handicaps and above – Read on**

For any newer members, or older ones that have forgotten, who do not know about the colts, you would think they were junior members, nothing could be further from the truth. To qualify for the colt team you must have a handicap of 17.5 or greater, and age is no barrier.

We start our season with the Tankard on the 28<sup>th</sup> Feb, a competition where we all get together and see who is on form, this year rained off, now being **played on the 14<sup>th</sup> March**, and so still time to get your name down.

As a team we play against six other clubs, East Brighton, West Hove, The Dyke, Ham Manor, Cottesmore, and Ifield. There is also an interclub trophy day, where all seven clubs play against each other. The matches are played mainly on a Saturday, and a few Sundays, usually teeing off at about 13.00, (some away matches differ). Tee time preceded by Bacon Roll & Coffee, with Sandwiches and Chips after play

For anyone interested in playing all the information (Sign-up Sheets, Fixtures) is on the Colts notice board opposite the kitchen door, if you want to be considered please e-mail your details to [al1955@talktalk.net](mailto:al1955@talktalk.net) , and put your name on the sign-up sheet.

Happy Golfing

*Alan Carter*