

MINUTES OF THE 24th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 7th FEBRUARY 2017 AT 7:30PM



Chairman Mr. Mark Northern opened the meeting, welcomed members and thanked them for attending

Apologies

Gary Box, John Shipley, Colin Brown, Phil Abbott, Wayne Murry

Minutes of 23rd AGM

Proposed	David Dandie
Seconded	Hans Bauder

Matters arising

None

Treasurers Report

Mick Greenwood presented the clubs financial report for 2017 which had been on the Mens notice board for one week prior to the meeting.

Mick stated that the report had been checked and verified as true and accurate by an independent accountant.

Mick went on to report that at the time of producing the annual accounts there were £1,250.00 in unclaimed vouchers still on the system and as such the figures presented had included for these to be claimed.

HB added that he had been out trying to get the vouchers out to the relevant members as much as possible lately and the number has been reduced significantly.

Mick went on to thank the committee for their continued support during his time on the committee but mainly during his time as treasurer.

As Mick was stepping down from committee and his position he wished Hans Bauder all the best with his new role as treasurer and also wished everyone in attendance a good year golfing.

Mark Northern thanked Mick for his 4 years' service as treasurer.



Centre Managers Report

Steve Norton reported as follows;

Good evening President, Chairman, Captain, Lady Captain, club committee members, ladies and gentleman. Thank you very much for inviting me to attend the Club AGM tonight.

As this is my first ever AGM I have tried to give some thought about what it is you want to hear from me. I have tried to focus my speech on what I believe is important to you as members and I hope I will achieve this.

For those who do not know me yet, I have come from 13 years in the fitness industry where I was a Regional Manager after spending 8 years as a GM in health clubs. My greatest passion lies in golf and I try to play as much as possible, the lowest I got to was 7 however I am currently stuck on 9.5 (which I blame on an absence from the game for 3 years – something I will touch on later). Something I learnt early on in the fitness industry is that the biggest factor in success is people. People lie at the very heart of everything good (or bad) that happens. I learned that it doesn't matter how much shiny new kit we put in the gym, the success of the gym lay with the culture within that club. The relationship between staff and members and the relationships with members themselves. At this point I would like to say thank you to all who have made me feel so welcome in my initial 8 months. I also wish to thank the committee for their efforts – both current, past and the future. So much time and effort goes into running the club side of the centre and from what I see it is a largely thankless task. People will always have opinions on whether the committee is good/bad and whether their decisions are right/wrong however no one can dispute the time and effort they dedicate to try and run everything for the good of the members. So to all committee members of all sections – THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO. I am also looking forward to playing more competitive golf here as I will be not be renewing my membership at my club in Lincoln due to time constraints. I would also like to thank the team here, they also spend a huge amount of effort trying to look after everyone as best as they can. The team here may not always be perfect however I feel strongly that they love the centre and want to see you all enjoy your time with us.

It was an easy decision for me to join Ramsdale Park, the centre's facilities accommodate so well for all golf provision. When I initially set out on my journey to this position I carried out research into the industry and I was staggered by the stats but it convinced me Ramsdale Park was the right place to start my career in golf. Of the 9.5 million people in the UK that participate in golf each year only 3.6m people play a traditional 18 holes. So what makes up the remaining 5.9m? Driving range users, video gamers (I Know – sad right???) adventure golf users, short course users, simulator users etc.

Ramsdale is set up to provide the facilities to not only bring people to golf in the way the public seem to want to as well as develop them through into the 'traditional form of golf'. Golf is fighting against so many other sports and



pastimes. Never has golf faced such challenges. Recent studies show that people are now spending on average 1.5 hours a day checking social media. One of the fastest growing online sensations is online professional gaming. TV on demand now occupies more of peoples time. Time is precious and these new forms of media create new competitors for the golf industry and we face a greater fight for peoples time.

Once starting at Ramsdale I decided I needed to spend time learning the business and its members and customers and I have spent allot of time listening and learning (I always aim to stick to the principle – seek first to understand – then to be understood). I understand that the club is and has been in a position of turmoil with people questioning the centre and its decisions. I am committed to making our golf course the best it can be within the means we have and ensuring we have a thriving, integrated membership base. Many people have said we don't care about golf, we are focussed on weddings etc, I understand how and why people feel that however I simply can't agree. If that was our core focus as a centre – I would not be stood here! I have 0 days experience in running functions/weddings etc before arriving here. As I mentioned earlier, my background is in business and specifically running large membership bases, when I left Pure Gym my region had over 57,000 members across 10 sites – now that is a hard job to please everyone. Of course we want to do functions/weddings/meetings etc as it helps to grow our revenue and gives us a greater opportunity to reinvest into our golf courses. This year we are working closely with the committee to try and avoid diary clashes as much as possible so that we can reduce the impact of these events on the members. Just as we did at Pure Gym, Burhill now use a survey called NPS to help us understand the thoughts of our members. This has helped me along with the comments and discussions in the centre try and deal with the issues that have arisen since I came to Ramsdale and gives me an opportunity to feedback directly in a timely fashion. We will continue to use this method of surveys and I encourage all of you to use it. I would ask at this point that if anyone has questions/queries or issues to simply ask for me in the shop. I am always happy to listen to peoples thoughts and will always endeavour to find a solution. Please don't wait for the survey – come and see me – please. This feedback has helped us increase member discount to 15% as well as reinforcing the need to invest in the brand new hill buggy and trailer along with the £6.5k to repair the hill to the 10th.

2016 saw the introduction of the flexible membership – something England Golf advocate strongly and I am pleased to report we now have 60 members since up since April. On a personal note I am huge fan of this as had my previous club had this when I decided to leave them I would not have spent 3 years out of a game I love and wanted to keep playing. England golf reports the issues we face with 26-35 year old members leaving as they start full time work, seek house ownership and begin their families. England Golf believe that flexible golf is the best way to keep people in the game and I am keen to see us continue this. This year we are about to launch a partnership with Play More



Golf, which is another flexible membership scheme with the aim of further building on the good work already achieved and in addition to the current membership options.

I feel that given my time in position it would be better for Johnny to discuss the course more thoroughly so I have his notes which I will read out: 2016 was a strange year from our perspective as we had a very cold spring which delayed growth at the start of the main playing season, we then had a massive flush of growth within the space of a few days in early May and couldn't keep on top of the cutting, followed by a very wet early summer which resulted in thick growth in the deep rough, finished off by a very dry and cold autumn and winter. These conditions do make it difficult for us to present the courses with any consistency and as always we are at the mercy of the weather.

Over the winter period last year we managed to rebuild 7 bunkers on the 11th of the Seely and 17th & 18th on the lee and these bunkers are performing fine so far and haven't caused us any problems throughout the year.

We managed to do some additional path work on the Seely 1st tee, 1st green to the 2nd tee and 11th tee area on the lee and some tree thinning work on holes 1 & 2 on the Seely which was long overdue.

We also built the new patio area outside the clubhouse which is much better than the lawns and shrubs that were there previously and has given us some extra space outside when the weather is nice.

Onto 2017 and we have been very busy as usual and managed to rebuild 10 bunkers on 15th & 16th of the Seely and re-turf the greenside one on the 3rd that had been damaged by pests. We have also re-built the 11th tee which has always been wet and soft, so with new drains and root zone it will remain firm and playable during wet weather.

These projects are nearly complete and should be finished by the end of February. Just as a point of interest the total cost of the 10 bunkers and tee including fresh new sand in the new bunkers is around £9,000. This does not include our labour costs as everything was done in house by my team. The path from the 9th to the 10th tee is being resurfaced this week at a cost of £6,500. So we have good investment over the last few months and hopefully it will continue next winter as we plan to complete all the bunkers over the next 2 winters.

We have also reviewed practices and will be hollow-coring earlier than before to improve playability and green condition to avoid a repeat of this year.

Machinery wise we have taken delivery in December last year of a scarifier/flail mower that will allow us to cut the deep rough at our discretion and also thatch removal on tees and possibly fairways. We also took delivery of some machinery cassettes that fit onto our existing machines to allow us to carry out more beneficial operations to the greens during the year. These items cost close to £10,000

This year we have budgeted for a new mower that will cut around greens, tees and bunkers potentially saving many man hours that can be used elsewhere and also improving presentation, this machine costs just under £40,000 and also a



second hand mini digger that can be used for many things including bunkers, paths, ditches, etc.

We also have some new tee signage coming in soon that will present the teeing area much neater and tidier. These will go in over the next few months.

So to conclude I would like to look at where I believe we need to still focus to improve the centre offering. Although membership numbers are strong, we sadly are not converting these through into competitive golfers and I think we need to look at how we can increase this. Member rounds last year grew on 2015 on the main course but I understand that competition entries fell, something I am keen to work on with our committee to help drive competitive rounds up this year.

Our offering for lady golfers also falls below par (pardon the pun) and sadly at the news that we will lose more weekend lady golfers I feel that we have reached a tipping point at which we need to make a commitment that will not only retain more members but will attract further members. The decision we make will decide the future for ladies golf at Ramsdale Park. I am in favour of integrating ladies into weekend 'club competitions' to create a stronger club mentality.

I feel that we need to aim to integrate all members and sections of the club in order to create a stronger 'club culture' to increase our retention and attract more members. We are keen to re-introduce social events to help improve the social feel with the club at the heart of this. I also believe we need to work on clarifying and defining our junior member pathway – from AG to full member. I also appreciate that the centre has in your eyes the greatest responsibility of all – to make sure we provide the best possible facilities presented in the best way. I hope you can see that through the investment we have already committed to in 2017 we are already working hard on making this a reality. Finally thank you to Ian, Helen and David for their excellent work as captains this year and I am excited to celebrate our 25th year with Dave, Gillian and Dave.

I appreciate your loyalty with us and look forward to having a great year together.

Dave Costin asked Steve Norton what he believed was the reasoning behind so many members leaving RPGC.

Steve responded that last year had been a difficult year and the number of rounds played had dropped in average but this had picked up towards the end of the year and he was hopeful that the trend would continue.

Steve did then go on to say that with regard to the level of dissatisfaction amongst the members that he would be working hard to resolve this and attract new members.

One key element is issuing the MPS survey but then acting on the responses as this would guide the centre on where the shortfalls were which could then be addressed.



Steve also commented that there had been a lot of investment across the centre and a lot of the improvements do look to be within the centre and not the course

There was also feedback that there is dissatisfaction of how the club is run by the committee which needs addressing plus he will be working hard to turn around people's perception of Burhill.

Pete Reville a member in attendance provided feedback of his experiences of being part of a 16 man society that had played at other BGL centres where they were latterly told they would no longer accept society memberships and hence they all moved on.

SN went on to explain potential offers that may become available to attract new members.

Chris Oakes asked about any increase in fees for the membership. SN replied that any increase would be minimal.

Mick Greenwood expressed his thanks to Steve for increasing the members discount to 15%.

Mick also went on to comment that we should be looking at flexible membership for the 18-30 age group.

SN stated that he will discuss individually so we do not lose loyal members.

Captain's Closing Statement – Ian Saunders

Ian Saunders the outgoing Captain stood and delivered the following speech.

President, Committee members, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me begin by referring to what I said at this time last year: " it has been an honour and a privilege to have been Club Captain for 2016.

It has also been a real pleasure and although the role does present the odd challenge, I have enjoyed my year enormously.

Playing with different members each weekend in the competitions has been a highlight for me. Although I missed the madness of playing with Ronnie and Hans I was made very welcome by everyone I played with and got to know so many more members as a result.

I have really enjoyed representing Ramsdale Park in club matches. We have had a great squad of reliable players, including some new members who have relished the opportunity to represent their club. My thanks to all who have been involved, especially Dave for team selection and ensuring a full team for each match. Sometimes more than a full team if the weather forecast was poor or we were playing Southwell away! I also want to thank Steve Sayers and the club pros who have partnered me in many matches – I will always remember

beating Darryl St Jones on the 18th at Oakmere Park with a Steve Sayers chip in, and even sweeter still, beating Rob Macey 3 and 2 at Ramsdale!



As with most things in life, very little is possible without the support of others and I would like to recognise the support I have received over the year by recording my thanks tonight. Especially:

- All members who joined me at Loncliffe (40) on my Away Day or Harrogate for my Away Weekend.
- Anyone who helped to raise funds for the Lincs and Notts Air Ambulance, by playing on Charity Day, buying a raffle ticket, bidding in the auction or in any other way. I am pleased to report that I met with a representative of The Air Ambulance this afternoon and handed over cheques for £8813 which along with collections from boxes on the bar meant we raised over £9000 this year! Fantastic. My special thanks to the Charity Day Committee who freely gave up their time and energy to make Charity Day a success.

Without wishing to sound like an Oscar winning diva, I also wish to record my thanks to Steve Norton and the Ramsdale Park Golf Centre who, in all sections and at all levels have never failed to give me their full and friendly support. This made my year so much easier and I am very grateful to them all.

I also wish to thank the members of the committee and previous captains for their advice and support which has been so vital. Thank you all.

Finally, I wish to thank Dave, who as Vice Captain has supported me throughout the year in everything I have been involved in. Thank you Dave – I am certain you will enjoy your year and be a first rate captain.

This year has not been without its challenges but I truly believe that if we work together we can solve any of the issues thrown up over a golfing year. I believe we have great members, a great course and great facilities – the rest is up to us!

Thank you, for listening so patiently.

It is now my pleasure to present Dave with his captain's blazer and welcome him as Captain for 2017.

Incoming Captains Statement Dave Gritton



Dave Gritton stood and gave the following speech.

Thank you Ian, I am delighted to accept the Captaincy for 2017.

Firstly I would like to congratulate Ian on a very successful year. He has done a terrific job, worked veru hard and his organisation has been second to none.

I've enjoyed my year as vice-captain and would like to thank everyone especially the new members who have supported the club playing in the Southwell Autos events, we didn't win but all had a good time. Everyone said the toughest job I would have would as vice-captain would be getting enough players for the Southwell Autos matches but we kept turning up with too many.

I've been a member here a long time and have had some terrific times here and met some terrific people, this year as you know is the clubs 25th anniversary so I feel especially honoured to be captain this year and would like to thank you all for the extra work I will have to do!

My charity this year will be the Notts Air Ambulance which I believe is a great cause and none of know when it may be needed. I would like to raise as much money as possible as we did last year which was a fantastic amount, well done to all involved.

My drive in this year will be on Sunday 5th March and after the AGM this evening you will all have the chance to guess the distance.

My away day will be at Torksey Golf Club on Friday 16th June.
My away weekend will be at Skegness 28th-30th July playing Louth, Seacroft and North Shore, all great courses and I hope you will all join me.

My first official duty as your captain is to introduce your incoming vice-captain for 2017, a very good golfer who has been a member for a couple of years during which time he has become very popular, I'm sure he will be of great assistance to me welcome your new vice-captain Mr Greg Cawthorne.

Finally I would like to congratulate the most improved player of the year who started the season with a handicap of 18.8 and finished with a handicap of 12.2. That player is Gavin Griffiths. Well done Gavin.



Incoming Vice-Captains Statement greg Cawthorne

Greg stood and addressed the audience as follows;

I have been a member here for a few years now, have worked with Kev Iremonger, played for the scratch team and look forward to working and playing with the members.

Proposals and Nominations

One nomination received for Greg Cawthorne (Vice-Captain),

There were no proposals or nominations received for committee positions.

To Appoint 3 tellers

Three tellers were not required due to only one nomination for vice-captain and there is space available.

Election of new committee members

Greg Cawthorne (Vice-Captain) – Automatically elected on to committee.

A.O.B.

Tom McLatchie made a statement that a positive attitude will result in retention of members providing the centre commit to and honour their statements delivered this evening.

Date set for 25th AGM February 6th 2018 at 7:30pm

Meeting closed at 8:25pm