

Niddry Castle Golf Club

Minutes of the Council meeting 9th February 2023

Present J Pritchard, J Finnigan, A Leslie , J Forbes, S Robertson, M McElroy, A Webster, M McAnulty,

Apologies B Anderson, M Binnie, S Nicolson

The Minutes of the January meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Prop AL Sec JP

Treasurers Report

JF Reported that subs were up on the corresponding time last year, but we had paid the NI contributions and tax as we do on a quarterly basis. In addition, several vouchers had been repaid. Currently we were showing a profit and more money would be coming in from later subscriptions.

Membership Report – February 2023

There are currently 175 members (210 members same time last year). The Breakdown only includes Members who have paid in Full or paid a Deposit. Last year's figures in brackets. The figure on the right is the increase/decrease from last month.

- 56 Senior	(51)	+9
- 71 Full	(91)	+16
- 17 Life	(23)	+4
- 4 Junior	(11)	+1
- 1 Country	(1)	=
- 2 Weekday	(3)	=
- 3 Intermediate	(9)	+1
- 2 Student	(4)	+1
- 17 Winter	(12)	+2
- 0 honorary	(1)	=
- 2 social	(4)	=

Suspensions & Resignations to Follow

There are 11 Suspensions & 21 Resignations

There have been 74 members take the 2024 Option.

Winter members had been reduced by one and still some to pay as they had delayed membership until April , and it was emphasised that it was a 12 month membership from that date.

New Membership forms were needed.

Matt M pointed out that the 3 data bases were erroneous and he would rationalise them and bring consistency. JP and Matt M would meet to solve this issue.

Clubhouse Report – January 23

We have had two meetings with Stuart Gowans and at last there may be some light at the end of the tunnel. More to be discussed with the full Club Council on the February 9th.

Anne Dobie continues to cater 4 days a week, but this leaves the Clubhouse unmanned on the remaining 3, including the busy Saturdays.

Forwarding phone calls when the Clubhouse is closed has proved to be successful.

S Gowans had now had 2 meetings with the club and it would appear that he would be taking over the catering. Discussion took place regarding a contract and also amendments to the kitchen and clubhouse were required. This was proposed on a 50% basis and at the same time the front desk would be altered. The contract discussions and other issues would be held between SG and AL, JP and JF.

A Dobie was currently doing 4 days and members were helping on Saturdays.

Ladies Report

It was noted that our scorecards for the 9 holes was incorrect on Scottish Golf, and we are trying to sort this out.

The ladies are very aware of the need to raise funds are holding a Lancôme Evening in February which will be open to everyone. We also hope to hold pre-loved clothes event. and sale of jam, etc. Hopefully, this will raise some money.

Our Lady's guide has been given to Mike McAnulty who is in the process of preparing a new website.

The Spring fair will be on 29th April and the Ladies Invitational would be moved to 18th July and thanks was offered for this change. SR would liaise with Matt M about the fixture list.

Junior Report

January 23

Junior Coaching will start on Thursday, April 6th. The parent/guardians of existing members have been informed that we intend to continue with the 5 sessions that has proved to be successful over the last 3 years.

There will be a change to the pricing structure. Although Junior Membership for 2023 will remain at £50, the pricing for those who attend coaching will be:

5-8 years old – Free

9-year-old and over - £25

The year will be split into 3 Blocks of 10 weeks with a break in between rather than the continuous lessons of previous years.

Requests for sessions from schools in West Lothian continue to come in, as far away as Kirknewton and Blackburn. This has been very good for funding in the past but is extremely demanding. For example, in Term 3, sessions will be held in Winchburgh Primary on Monday Mornings and in Winchburgh Academy on Friday mornings.

I will look at ways of expanding the coaching staff.

It was agreed that competent 14yr olds could play the course when parental permission was produced.

Greens Report

This month saw 145mm of rain at the beginning of the month, snow in the middle and below freezing towards the end has led to several closures to the course and some very difficult working conditions for course maintenance.

Works carried out-

Old yellow and red tee markers have been refurbished as temporary replacements to our current course markers so we can bring them in and refurbish them. All white tee markers have been refurbished and are ready to put back out for the beginning of the season.

The potholes on the main drive were repaired.

Machinery maintenance is continuous and keeping on top of repairs.

The drainage works and pumping works at the 9th hole has been put on hold until this area dries out, not just on the surface but in the soil and substructure to allow us to continue to work, new levels have been measured out and when ground conditions are suitable, we will finish the drainage works. In the short term we will do experimental digs to the rear of the 9th pond to see if we can find an alternative option/existing hidden/lost drainage.

We had a slight break in the bad weather and used the opportunity to put a half rate winter feed down on the greens to aid in their recovery after being covered in a sheet of ice for a considerable time. The 17th and 18th greens have been slit tined to aid in the water movement through the soil profile as both these greens have been considerably wetter than the rest of the greens.

Due to the weather, we have been restricted on machinery going out on the course and causing more damage to the surfaces than is necessary so we have started the long process of raising the crowns of the trees and clearing scrub. So far, we have achieved the first 6 holes plus the trees around the 12th green. We will continue this practice throughout the winter period. Tree branches and scrub is being burned as we go but we are also saving the bigger sections and logging for the members.

We took delivery of 20 tons of bunker sand and have used this to renovate and replace the white sand in bunkers on the 9th, 11th, 14th, after removing the worn-out bunker liners. Hopefully we have enough sand left to do one more bunker which will be the smaller left-hand bunker on the 10th or right hand bunker on the 1st hole. This leaves 11 bunkers left to do, and we will tackle the worst ones first as sand becomes available to us.

We have plug patched the divot damage on the 18th green. The hydraulic oil burn will be done next.

The black signage at the entrance road to the club has had a white background put on and the black face has been repainted over the worst areas of flaking.

Next month

We intend to finish of the drainage works, tree works and hopefully make a start on addressing the pathways on the course.

Praise was given regarding the new bunkers , especially at 9th 11th and 14th Greens. AW informed the council that due to a new job he was no longer able to remain as Greens Convenor. He left a work sheet with the council informing them of the agreed work to be done. Hollow tining was required fir the greens and had been agreed at a size of 19 mm. This would allow more root zone to be fed to balance the greens. JF agreed to contact external companies and gain a price for sub-contracting the work rather than doing it in house.

The trees at the s=castle would be done for a cost of £200 and Network rail were to commence work on the burn near to the 3rd green.

AL raised the question of the containers and a meeting would be arranged with J Hamilton of WDC to ascertain whether they could possibly assist . JP, AL and JF to attend.

AW was thanked for all his work as Greens convenor and wished success in his new job.

Match Secretary Report

More time spent familiarising the BRS/Handicap Master/Dot Golf systems, which are all holding member records albeit in different states of completion. However, I should now be in a position to use operationally and continue fixtures setup for the new season commencing April. Winter Leagues and Seniors Sweeps will continue as planned then finish at end of March. I will post updated results information after completion of each Winter League round in the clubhouse, with a winner announced after last round. The Seniors Sweep competitions each Thursday will continue to be managed by email and I will also post weekly results tables in the clubhouse. Meeting with Anne to discuss scorecard information held by SG was very informative to me being new.

Matt M would make changes so a more coherent pattern of Fixtures was produced. He would contact A Roberts for additional information. It was emphasised that in any 9 hole competition the Gents would not play the composite course.

Social report.

A quiz evening on the Opening day 1st April was agreed and a cost of £5 per player and teams of up to 4 was the format. Crisps and nuts would be provided and drinks would be available . EC would prepare the quiz and a poster to advertise it. JF offered a projector to the club which was gratefully accepted and would be very useful. Prizes would be discussed and a raffle also held.

AOCB.

- 1- The club has purchased a buggy for £330 and it would be available.
- 2- The notice board for the wall has run into problems due to the state of the site . A solution will be sought between JP and A Dunlevie.
- 3- It was decided to enforce a one way system from the 18th tee to preserve the area around the clubhouse and this would be by signs and possibly a return of the area being roped off.
- 4- J Rennie will pave the area around the compressor to assist with the aesthetic aspect.
- 5- SR raised that on the 9-hole composite course visitors had delayed everyone and caused problems. JP had spoken to the individuals concerned and settled the issue.
- 6- AL would be sending information via BRS regarding the Premier 100 club.

- 7- Mike McAnulty would be taking over the club's web and mail which was cheaper and more efficient than the current arrangement. A confidentiality agreement would be signed on the change over .**

E Connolly Hon Sec NCGC

Next Meeting 9th March 1930