

Niddry Castle Golf club

Minutes of the committee meeting of 13th April 2023

Present: J Pritchard, S Robertson, J Finnigan, M McAnulty, M Binnie, S Nicolson, M McElroy, E Connolly

Apologies: A Leslie, J Forbes

The minutes of the meeting of March 9th March were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Prop Mike M, Sec JF

Finance Report –

March 2023 February income was £11,162 which comprised of £8,484 Annual subscriptions £1,142 Green fees £585 Competitions £550 Premier 100 £375 Donation - Mcdivots Expenditure was £14,532 which includes £118 Bank and interest charges £257 Bounce back loan £450 Engraving £702 Loan repayment £4,698 Upkeep of property (incl. heat/light, rent, telephone, water) £4,032 Wages and pension costs £29 Email Hosting £1,896 Upkeep of equipment / oil £137 Vouchers £1,908 Insurance Net loss £3,371 Year to date loss £5,27

JF reported that we would be selling off some of the alcohol stock and also we had paid some large property bills well as Kitchen and Catering equipment been purchased. Income from the Quiz and 100 club had been received. A question was asked about the TV licence.

Membership

JP reported 9 winter members had joined and the discrepancy regarding lady members would be resolved. Matt M will update all 3 lists and produce a definitive list. The aim would be for 1 management system as he had already brought the old system up to date. Consistency was desirable and the possibility of a Merchant account online was discussed.

COURSE REPORT MARCH 2023.

Yet again the weather is playing havoc with our maintenance work on and off the course, with last month seeing 174mm of rain, this trend has continued into March with frosts and snow at the beginning and to date we have had 108mm of rain and to end the month with more frosty conditions. The rainfall has been recorded at over 120% for the month of the average rainfall in this area. Ground conditions have remained very soft and have hampered our attempts to get machinery out on the course and moving around the course without causing some major damage from wheels spinning.

We did however have 2 good days where we managed to hollow-core the greens with 12.5mm tines to a depth of 80mm and all cores cleaned up with the help of some extraordinary gentlemen, my thanks to all the volunteers who helped. Unfortunately, the bad weather hit us again and we have been unable to complete the planned overseeding and top-dressing work. The seeding, top-dressing, brushing, harrowing, and rolling will be carried out as soon as we can when the ground conditions are suitable. We must have a dry 3-4 days as we are using soil for top-dressing not sand so the drier the better to prevent the soil from smearing the greens, our top dresser has developed a hydraulic leak in the main spinner motor, and we are awaiting repairs.

Drainage at the 9th has been completed and the ditch works filled in. The drain is working but not draining the water as fast as we hoped for and with the amount of rain we have had isn't helping, however pumping the water out helps a great deal and has been made a lot easier with pumping it down the 45-degree inspection pipe. However, this has been hampered through multiple breakdowns with the pump itself. We are making progress and soon the surrounding areas will be seeded with a native wildflower/grass seed mix and the stretch down to the sump will be seeded with a grass seed cultivar as will the works going across both the 9th and 12th fairways. All seeding works will take place when the soil temperatures reach 7 degrees c to allow germination to take place. Doing the seeding work before this greatly reduces the chances of germination thus potentially wasting the seed and money.

We have cut areas around the course when conditions have allowed us to, all fairways have been cut once but with the back 9 being drier and firmer we have managed a second cut, greens tees and aprons have all been cut.

tee complexes have fertilised with a slow-release granular fertiliser.

Mole traps have been put out on the 17th and mole heaps removed, hopefully we will catch the wee blighters.

New flags, hole cups, refurbished tee markers have been put out for the start of the season and the main tees will be back in use.

Access to the course at the clubhouse has been very wet recently and through observations this is being caused by the rain-water downpipes for the clubhouse roof. We have dug a couple of drainage channels and infilled with stone chips to help alleviate this issue and hopefully dry this area out.

The main entrance road to the golf course has been re-chipped for the start of the season. We have tidied up, re-edged and chipped the pathway at the 4th leading from the 3rd to the steps going to the medal tee.

Machinery maintenance and repairs have been continuous.

Next month will see us start our monthly greens conditioning programme via spraying a cocktail of seaweeds, iron, potassium, phosphates, nitrogen, and wetting agents. We will be spraying the fairways with an herbicide as well as the greens and tees. The cutting heights will gradually come down as conditions allow.

We will verticut, seed, and top-dress, hopefully at the beginning of the month to allow the greens to heal before the ladies open.

JF was no longer able to act as Greens convenor and JP and JF would take over the task. There were comments about the poor state of the fairways and that the root zone had still not been added to the greens. The rough mower was being fixed and a part was delaying the repair. The banking on 17 has been cut and was praised. A new triplex was to be added and a summer worker had applied and was able to start.

Ladies Report

The ladies held their pre-season competition on 29th March with a healthy entry. The worthy winner was Lori White. The captain's cake was provided by Ann with a golf decoration by her daughter. The donations from the day were shared between Mouth Cancer and the ladies funds.

We are currently organising our open greensomes and to date have had a very encouraging response. We are grateful to the members for volunteering for various jobs.

Our Spring sale is taking place on the 29th of April, and we have posters which we will distribute online and throughout the village.

Match Secretary Report for Meeting 13 April 2023

The fixture list for the new season commenced 1 April and details are published on the club website. There is a full programme of competitions for the gents' members offering a good mix of stroke play/stable ford formats, handicap counting and opportunity to bag some sweep prizemoney. All the 'expected' trophy competitions are included in the fixture list. Running the events requires a substantial time commitment and it is not a one-man job. The committee must establish a 'matches team' urgently so the workload can be shared. My personal commitments between April – June alone, will make me unable to cover 14 events including an 'Open' competition scheduled in early May. Having spent many hours familiarising with the various software packages used by the club, I would recommend a serious review is undertaken to ascertain best fit for purpose and effective separation user duties.

There were 80 possible fixtures and assistance was needed. Members who were able to close a competition on an occasional basis as Matt M was away and was not able to cover all the competitions, as well as 6 opens.

It was hoped to find suitable volunteers.

The Aberdour outing is on 2 May.

Clubhouse Report

Adam "Olly" Shanks has been offered and accepted the post of Clubhouse Franchisee. This is great news for the Club as Olly is an experienced chef and I am sure he will bring his own style and expertise to the Kitchen. He has also agreed to take over Starting Duties.

However, it does mean that Anne Dobie will be standing down as Franchisee. We cannot thank Anne enough for the effort that she has put in, sometimes at very short notice. Her baking will be missed.

Anne will continue in her role as an administrator for the Junior Section.

Facebook was to be used for publicity and it was hoped that members would support the new chef. To help the ropes directing players to the rear of the club would be withdrawn.

SN would take on the role of club convenor and liaise with Olly.

Seniors.

MB re [ported that he had 19 names from whom to choose and would email for availability.

Junior Coaching started on Thursday, April 6th. A modest turnout in week1 but it was the Easter weekend. However, at the time of writing 46 Juniors have paid. This should increase by next month.

School sessions start this month with 6 weeks in Winchburgh Primary coaching 60 kids in 4 groups. There will also be 7 weeks in Winchburgh Academy although we will hopefully have at least one week at the Club.

Social Report

The Quiz evening was a great success and attracted a good turn out and was a suitable start to the season.

This is to be followed by a Curry and Quiz evening to introduce Olly and to keep momentum going. Tickets are now available, and a raffle will also be held.

Thanks to Anne and Steven for all their help.

AOCB.

1- The fixtures are now on the calendar and some tee times will be released for other bookings.

2- The Match team still required a captain and JP would seek one.

3- MB enquired about the First Aid course, and it has still to be arranged.

4- CASC – a meeting took place between WDC and NCGC and Penny Lockhead about future developments. S Carlisle and J Hamilton were contacted about Alease extension which would allow funding applications. The club could register and become a Community Sports Club and not a member's club as we no longer own any land. Our fee structure also fits in well with CASC and we would be part of the Greater Winchburgh project and their promotion.

This model was supported by Scottish Golf and a meeting with PL would take place at the next meeting on 4thMay. More debate was required, and an EGM would be necessary.

5- Discussion at the meeting had also centred on new equipment sheds and welfare unit.

6- JP requires a V Captain and BRS will be used to inform members.

Next meeting 4th May at 1930

E Connolly Hon sec.