

RICHMOND PARK GOLF CLUB



ANNUAL REPORT - 2017

In 2016 I reported that we had a year of 'relative normality' without any disruptive external influences. For 2017 I can report the same and apart from a few days when the weather worked against us we had a year with few interruptions and the fixture list played out very much as planned. Although early summer was roasting in parts, the full 2017 summer period was not as sunny as many would have liked, but the dry weather helped to keep the rough in check and some very low scores were recorded.

At the beginning of 2017 we said a big thank you to our departing captains Paul Brown and Lia Donath for their stewardship from the beginning of 2015. During their tenure we had seen the near doubling of the Club's activity with the commencement of midweek golf; quite a momentous period in the history of the Club. For 2017 we welcomed Nick Rogers and Alison Chadwick as our new Club Captain and Lady Captain. Between them both, Nick and Alison have many years of club membership and committee service and it was very easy for them to settle into their new roles.

Experience has taught us that when there is a period of operational stability at the Park one consequence is to provide the correct environment for the Club to grow and we have seen this happen in two ways during 2017. In the notes below we see that our membership numbers have increased for 2017 but it is also encouraging that compared to 2016 we have seen our average weekly attendances increase by a figure of 20% for our weekend and midweek games. This rate of development is very positive, and it is to be hoped that we can maintain something of this momentum in 2018.

During 2016 we recognised that a number of the midweek players were teaming up to play on Fridays and we arranged with Glendale to have a regular Friday booking for a weekly roll-up. Contrary to our expectations we found that through 2017 the increased demand for the Friday tee bookings did not materialise and with some members playing at other tee times our bookings had low attendances. During discussions with our colleagues at Glendale the Friday booking position has been considered and we will explore the introduction of a new initiative in 2018 to boost attendances and this may also provide another avenue for new members to join the Club.

In 2016 we teamed up with the Overseas Golf Club to promote some Saturday events on a joint basis. We did not follow this through for 2017 but with nearly 25% of the OGC membership comprising RPGC members it is clear that we have a strong representation with this club and there may be more collaboration in 2018.

One good feature of 2017 is that for the Club the year was reasonably standard and it could be said it was all pretty routine and undramatic, apart from one hugely significant event that occurred on 9th September. I am of course referring to the Club's team winning the NAPGC Hawtree Trophy at the final held at Frilford Heath. We have always maintained that the setup of the courses at the Park does not provide the technical challenges that are common with other courses and a residual consequence of this is that the Club's handicaps do not

always travel well to other courses. This situation emphasises all the more the achievement of the Club's team in lifting the Hawtree Trophy for the first time since 1982. We offer hearty congratulations to the team whose members are mentioned in the narrative below.

Annual Prize-giving

For the 2017 prize-giving evening we are heading to a new venue; to the Malden Golf Club in New Malden on 3rd February 2018.

The arrangements for the evening are being masterminded by Lady Captain Alison Chadwick with Captain Nick Rogers in support and we are grateful for their involvement for what promises to be another successful celebration of both individual and Club achievements.

From the list below we see that with the more recent addition of the midweek activity the Club has a very extensive prize list exceeding 60 trophies for the men's, ladies', and mixed events, and let's not forget that in addition we have the men's and ladies' monthly medals that are distributed through the year. The prize list demonstrates that the Club has a very busy fixture programme and this helps to keep everybody on their toes.

The 36-hole "Club Championship" scratch event is recognised as the Club's premier event and it is customary to give a summary of how our Champions won through:

- After the first Sunday round of the men's senior division played on the Prince's course the players in contention were Simon Malin and Jay Barker on 74, Toby Hunt on 75, and Henry Lindesay-Bethune and Seong Lim on 76. On the Duke's course a week later Jay Barker pulled out the stops to score another gross 74 and win the Championship with a combined total of 148. For the second round Simon Malin finished in 7th place but his gross 81 was just enough to hold on for the runner-up position with a total of 155. Although he was off the pace in the first round Lee Marshall made a good challenge to finish in third position with a total of 157.
- After the first round of the ladies' championship Habe Crocker dropped just 5 shots to Par to lead with 75 from Lia Donath with her score of 81. The next best were Jayne Maxwell on 82 and Sheena Harrington on 84. In her second round Habe was just a little off the pace with a 91 but her total of 166 gave her ample margin for a convincing Championship win. Lia did not play in the second round and Jayne's 92 was enough for her to take the runner-up position with a score of 174.
- For the men's junior division with handicaps of 17 and above the first round leader was Mark Andrews with 85. Following Mark were Dominik Leisi and Mark Rosamond on 86, and on 87 we had Barry Page, Davide Oddono and Tamas Ladacs. In the second round it was Barry Page who leapfrogged the others with a score of 89 and he became the Junior Champion with a total score on 176. Mark Andrews had the second best round 2 score of 93 and this was sufficient for him to hold the runner-up position with a total score of 178.
- In addition to the scratch championship the men also play for the Handicap Trophy which is awarded to the best net score for the 36 holes. Leading after round 1 was Toby Hunt with a net 63, with the next best group just three behind on net 66s. In round 2 Toby scored a net 72 but Lee Marshall returned with three shots less on a net 69. Both Toby and Lee finished with totals of 135 but it was Lee's superior 'back 18' that awards him the Handicap Trophy on a countback.

- The ladies have two awards for the best net scores; the Handicap Cup for handicaps up to 24 and the Pembroke Cup for handicaps of 25 and above. At the halfway stage playing for the Handicap Cup, Habe Crocker led with a net 65 but a net 82 for the second round placed her out of real contention with a total of 147. In her first round Veronica was adrift of the leaders with a net 74, but a commanding net 67 for the second round and a total of 141 placed Veronica 5 shots ahead of Jayne Maxwell in second place with a combined net of 146. Playing for the Pembroke Cup Doreen Dolby led at the midpoint with a net 71 but after a first round of 72 Tenesi Karakaneva finished with a second round net 70 to take the Cup with a combined score of 142 and Joan Mulcahy moved into second place with a combined net of 149.
- The Midweek Club Championship is no less a challenge than the Sunday event. In the senior division Joseph Shin was the first round leader on 71 with Henry Lindesay-Bethune chasing on 72. In the second round Joseph increased his lead with a score of 77 and with a combined total of 148 he is the 2017 Midweek Champion. Henry's second round of 82 was sufficient to retain the runner-up place with a total of 154. In the junior division the first round honours were shared between Ted Holt and Paul Green, both with net 86s. In round two Paul had the best junior division score of 88 and accordingly, with his combined score of 174 he is the Junior Midweek Champion of 2017. Mark Rosamond had a tidy second round score that elevated him to the runner-up place with a total of 178.
- After the first round of the ladies' Midweek Club Championship the honours were shared with 84s for Habe Crocker and Liz Britton. In the second round Habe took a commanding lead with a 79 for a winning Championship total of 163. Liz scored 86 for her second round and this was good enough for her to hold the runner-up position with a total of 170.
- The Midweek Handicap Trophy is a joint event shared between the men and the ladies. At the halfway stage the leader was Henry Lindesay-Bethune with a net 63. However, after 36 holes both Mike Shabani and Paul Green were both sitting with a net 136 and it was Paul's superior back 18 that awards him the trophy on a countback.

Here follows the full prize list for 2017: -

RPGC 2017 PRIZE LIST

WEEKEND EVENTS

Senior Men's Club Championship
Ladies' Club Championship
Junior Men's Club Championship
Men's Club Championship Handicap Trophy
Ladies' Handicap Cup - handicaps 0-24
Ladies' Pembroke Cup - handicaps 25-36
J H Taylor – matchplay 0-16
Two Courses Cup – matchplay 17+
Ladies' Challenge Cup
Men's Fourball – matchplay
Ladies Double C Cup
Mixed Foursomes – matchplay
Ladies' Committee Cup
Grand Medal Trophy
Silver Jubilee Trophy
Golden Jubilee Trophy
Diamond Jubilee Trophy
Platinum Jubilee Trophy
Anniversary Cup
President's Putter
Captain's Prize
Lady Captain's Prize
Richmond Park Golf Club Open
J Q Robertson Trophy
Coronation Cup
Shaw Cup
Summer Cup
Spring Mixed American Greensomes
Autumn Mixed - Handicap
Autumn Mixed - Scratch
Burgess Cup - Greensomes
Top Dog Trophy
Ladies' Dowling Cup
Lissaman Cup - 3 clubs + putter

WINNER

Jay Barker
Habe Crocker
Barry Page
Lee Marshall
Veronica Mitchell
Tenesi Karakeneva
Caleb Mills
Tony Kopczak
Val Riziotis
Tony Bergqvist &
Tore Burman
Gina Jillett &
Val Riziotis
Habe Crocker &
Roger Rojas
Alison Chadwick
Mike Shabani
Mike Assender
Tamas Ladacs
Greg Saunders
Joan Mulcahy
Roger Rojas
Peter Osgood
Peter Osgood
Jane Fraser
Cheryl Woodhouse
Shane McGillycuddy
Habe Crocker
Deborah Potter
Pete Harrison
Lia Donath &
Mike Shabani
Susan Smith &
Nick Rogers
Sheena Harrington &
Tamas Ladacs
Pete Harrison &
Roger Rojas
Peter Osgood
Habe Crocker
Sheena Harrington

RUNNER-UP

Simon Malin
Jayne Maxwell
Mark Andrews
[Toby Hunt]
Jayne Maxwell
Joan Mulcahy
Pete Harrison
Stephen Mason
Lia Donath
Jon Cooper &
Nigel Gaymond
Doreen Dolby &
Susan Smith
Veronica Mitchell &
Jay Barker
Veronica Mitchell
[Keith Cassidy]
Jay Barker
Henry Lindesay-
Bethune
Val Riziotis
Habe Crocker
[Tamas Ladacs]
Barry Page
Nigel Gaymond
Habe Crocker
Oliver Maskell
Keith Cassidy
Tony Bergqvist
Roger Rojas
Peter Osgood
Deborah Potter &
Nick Rogers
Sheena Harrington &
Tamas Ladas
[Susan Smith &
Nick Rogers]
Phil Flanagan &
Richard Owen
[Tamas Ladacs]
-
Danny Deprez

Barton Bowl - Play-off – top 8 against captain	Not awarded	-
Charity Cup	Michele Principe	Jim Deissler
Spring Stableford Trophy	Richard Owen	Paul Green
Winter Competition	Barry Page	Jay Barker

MIDWEEK EVENTS

Senior Men's Club Championship	Joseph Shin	Henry Lindesay- Bethune
Ladies' Club Championship	Habe Crocker	Liz Britton
Junior Men's Club Championship	Paul Green	Mark Rosamond
Club Championship Handicap Trophy	Paul Green	[Mike Shabani]
Inaugural Trophy	Ted Holt	John Ahad
Grand Medal Trophy	Jay Barker	[Jeremy Ryan]
Anniversary Accumulator	Gina Jillett	[Veronica Mitchell]
Founder's Cup – E. Bailey	Brett Colley	Jon Cooper
Founder's Cup – Mrs Millidge	Paul Green	Jon Cooper
Founder's Cup – J. Hume	Jay Barker	Mike Shabani
Founders' Cup	Jon Cooper	[Gina Jillett]
President's Prize	Chris Jones	Eelco Snijders
Captain's Day	Tore Burman	Kim Chaffart
Priory Cup	Ann Gardner	Aidan Hurley
Masters Bowl	Patrick Poletti	Jeremy Ryan
Claret Jug	Stephen Mason	Kim Chaffart
Midsummer Trophy	Darren Enthoven	Keith Cassidy
Fred Hawtree Cup	Jeremy Ryan	Tore Burman
The Edward Cup	Jay Barker	Gina Jillett
Autumn Pairs	Elaine Elborn & John Curry	Veronica Mitchell & Brett Colley
Harrington Trophy - 3 clubs + putter	Peter Osgood	Jon Cooper
Charity Trophy	Oliver Maskell	Tore Burman
Winter Competition	Brett Colley	Ray Esin

All the names mentioned will be receiving prize awards apart from the names shown in brackets [xx].

Membership

Here's our 11 year table and we can see where we stand at 31 December 2017.

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
Men:											
Regular	144	136	109	80	88	98	100	97	89	78	62
Senior	27	13	14	6	5	4	4	4	7	7	7
Junior	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
Hon (playing)	2	0	1	1	1	4	4	5	1	1	1
Total Men	<u>175</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>70</u>
Ladies:											
Regular	28	27	27	26	28	29	31	40	36	38	36
Senior	16	14	14	10	9	8	9	6	7	5	5
Hon (playing)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total Ladies	<u>45</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>42</u>
Total	<u>220</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>167</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>145</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>141</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>112</u>
Joiners:											
New men	42	53	49	14	22	25	23	24	26	27	7
New ladies	7	3	9	2	2	2	1	9	5	6	4
Junior	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Rejoiners – men	2	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Rejoiners – ladies	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	<u>54</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>12</u>
Leavers:	<u>26</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>18</u>
	14%	19%	16%	18%	26%	22%	18%	15%	15%	14%	15%

Between 2015 and 2016 the Club's membership increased by 15% and the first observation for 2017 is that it was another positive year with a further 15% increase in membership numbers. If this pace of increased membership continues the Club will have in excess of 250 members at the end of 2018.

A more detailed look at the membership data shows that whilst the men's total has increased over the years our ladies' section has seen very little change. Our assessment is that there are in fact fewer ladies playing at the Park on a regular basis compared to 10 years ago and this means that the opportunities for the Club to capture new lady members are much less, and this point has been noted by our colleagues at Glendale.

One further key observation from the table is a gradual increase of our senior membership total where we can see a doubling of our senior members from 10% to 20% of the total membership. The increase is derived from a combination of new joiners and some of us old stagers who find ourselves drifting into the senior ranking. However, a quick scan of the prize list shows that the senior contingent is well represented.

Although the Club does not operate a junior section per se we did welcome two juniors to the Club in 2017. Both juniors joined with full handicaps and they have integrated very comfortably, looking down on most of us from a superior height !

It was in 2014 that Glendale introduced the Loyaltee card scheme that offered club membership opportunities for those acquiring the annual 5-day or 7-day cards. We agreed to work with Glendale and the new arrangement provided something new for the Club; an annual membership that spans two periods of the Club's normal membership year that commences on 1st February. For general information, at the close of 2017 there were 73 members directly allied to the Glendale referral scheme and we had 147 standard members whose renewals are due on 1st February 2018. We also had more than 30 standard members with annual Loyaltee cards therefore approximately 50% of our membership possessed an annual card at the close of 2017.

At the start of every subscription year on 1st February we know that some of our members will not be rejoining and we are aware that a number have already moved on to new pastures. Membership enquiries towards the very end of 2017 were quieter than in previous years, however for 2018 we are expecting to see a small bonus from the publicity surrounding the forthcoming Ryder Cup.

Midweek Golf

After starting in March 2015 the midweek Wednesday fixture programme has become very firmly established and with over 20 trophies and 12 monthly medals on the annual calendar the major prize activity level is not far short of the Sunday programme.

In 2016 we were pleased to report that average Wednesday attendances had edged up towards 30 and in 2017 we saw a further improvement with attendances edging up towards 40 on a weekly basis. One important move to facilitate this increase has been to add the 8:00am start time to our regular 10:00am start, and for the summer season there is the addition of a very early 7:00am start and an afternoon start.

To make sure that the Wednesday programme runs smoothly there is a working committee that oversees the operations. The administration of the bookings sheets was ably controlled by Chris Jones and latterly by Kim Chaffart. The keeper of the sweep purse is Stephen Mason and Richard Owen maintains the weekly contact with Glendale to ensure that we have the correct number of games booked.

Perhaps the highlight of the year was Kim's Captain's day in August. Kim arranged for a number of on course challenges to keep everyone concentrating through to the 18th hole and he raided his piggy bank to provide a very extensive selection of prizes. The day was wet but not as bad as forecast and the refreshments before and after the golf were very welcome. As you will see from the results listing, Kim was runner-up for his Captain's Day so he did have some prizes of his own.

During 2017 a friendly challenge match was played against midweek team at Coombe Wood. The RPGC team lost but there was a desire for a rematch at the Park and this is open for consideration.

Inter-Club Matches

Here's what happened in 2017:

Men vs Rickmansworth:

We know that the Ricky team is traditionally very good on home soil and there was a high degree of optimism for 2017 when we took the lead at home with 4½ to 1½. Ricky rose to the challenge and secured a home win of 5:1, giving Ricky an overall win of 6½ to 5½. It follows that Ricky retained the cup.

Ladies vs Mitcham:

The first leg of the friendly was played at the Park and the home team secured a lead of 2½ to 1½ over Mitcham. In the away leg our team was again victorious by the same score and the cup was retained with an overall win of 5:3.

Mixed match vs. Amida:

In 2017 it was the turn of Amida to visit the Park. For the match both sides field 6 mixed pairs and on the day the Club had a convincing 6:0 win. In 2018 the match returns to the Amida course.

External Competitions

One key advantage of an enlarged and more flexible Club membership is the ability to provide an increased opportunity for members to represent the Club in external competitions. A scan of the competitions below shows that the Club has indeed become more involved in external events and we can see this list growing if indeed the membership continues to develop as it has done over the last few years.

Surrey Golf – Kelso Hamilton – Men's Four-ball Matchplay

In the first round the partnership of Richard Owen and Nigel Gaymond were up against a pairing from Surrey Downs who had a player that didn't put a foot wrong. After battling well Richard and Nigel were eventually overwhelmed and lost on the 17th hole.

Surrey Golf – The Surrey 5's – Men's Individual Matchplay

In the first round the Club's team scored an impressive win against a team from The Oaks which has had a history of good competition results. For the second leg the team travelled to the renowned Walton Heath Golf Club. Our team lost by 3½ to 1½ at Walton Heath but the match was much closer than the final score has indicated.

Men's UKPCC – [Stableford]

Richmond Park had three men playing at the regional qualifier at Thorney Park. None made it through to the final and our best result was Jon Cooper with 28 points. However, over at Merrist Wood Pete Harrison finished third with 34 points and this earned him a place in the final on the Eden Course at St Andrews. In the final Pete finished in 5th position with 35 points in the Division 1 field of 31. He was just 3 points behind the winning score. A former RPGC member finished in 24th place.

Ladies' UKPCC – [Stableford]

Veronica Mitchell and Alison Chadwick played in the regional final at Downshire. Veronica's second place with 37 points gave her an entry to the final that was played alongside the men on the Eden Course at St Andrews. In the final Veronica finished 6th with 31 points in Division 1 that had a field of 12 challengers.

NAPGC Men's Championship – Medal

Richmond Park had five entrants for the regional qualifier held at the Bird Hills Golf Centre. Unfortunately, none made it through to the final at Woodhall Spa and Keith Cassidy missed out by two shots with his net 74.

NAPGC Ladies Championship – Medal

In the ladies' championship the club qualifiers head straight to the final and in 2017 the venue was played the Bromsgrove Golf Centre. Veronica Mitchell was the Club's qualifier who ventured to Bromsgrove however she finished outside of the top placings.

NAPGC Clapham Common Shield – Men's Greensomes Aggregate Stableford

The Club's team was successful in the first round against Downshire with a convincing win of 192 points to 165 points. In the second round the team had a win against Brent Valley with a closer margin of 237 to 231. In the third round the team lost to Harefield by just 2 points with the scores at 222 to 220.

NAPGC Bourne-Vanneck – Men's Aggregate Medal

In 2017 the regional qualifier was held at Huntswood. Our team comprised Pete Harrison, Jay Barker and Keith Cassidy. With a combined net score of 226 our team finished in 11th position from an entry of 34 teams, and 7th in the gross ranking with a total of 248.

NAPGC Senior Men's Championship - Stableford

The Club had a good representation of seniors (aged 55+) at the NAPGC final event held at West Middlesex. With an impressive 37 points Tim Meyer came third, just one point behind the winner and runner-up on 38 points. Patrick Murphy finished in 5th place with 36 points and Jon Cooper was 9th with 35 points.

NAPGC Men's Siemens Bowl – Four-ball Better Ball

This event is geared towards the higher handicappers. The Club's team were up against Tilgate Forest in the first round and lost away by 157 to 151. In the national final Tilgate finished third.

NAPGC Men's Weekday Match Play Knockout

This is a simple pairs better ball knockout. The Club entered three pairs. In the first round all three pairs won their matches against pairs from Hoebridge, Tilgate Forest and Haste Hill. In

the second round the A team lost to Tilgate Forest and the remaining two pairs won their matches against pairs from White Lodge and Haste Hill. In the next round the sequencing pitched the two Club pairings against each other and it was the B team that progressed. In the next round the B team of Tamas Ladacs and Kim Chaffart came up against the Tilgate Forest team that had beaten the A team and Tilgate was successful again.

NAPGC White Webbs – Ladies' Team Match Play

The Club's team was drawn away for the first round and lost to Easthampstead.

NAPGC Ladies Match Play Trophy – Pairs Better Match Play

In the first round the Club's pair won at home against the Easthampstead H team. For the following round the pair had to travel away and was unsuccessful against the Easthampstead D team.

NAPGC Ladies Weekday Greensomes Match Play Trophy – Pairs Match Play

The Club's pair was drawn to play away for the first round and was unsuccessful. The opponents were ladies from White Lodge.

NAPGC Hawtree Trophy – Mixed Greensomes Aggregate Stableford

In a repeat of 2016 the Club entered two teams for the 2017 Hawtree challenge. The Club's B team lost heavily in its first match against Hoebridge B with the score 131 to 106 points

The Club's A team did not receive a bye for the first round and scored a win against Easthampstead B by 156 to 148 points. In the second round the Club was pitched against the Hoebridge A team and scored another win of 155 to 145 points. In the third round the Club was pitched against Portsmouth and secured another win of 155 to 145 points. This sequence of wins meant that the team had reached the regional final where it came up against the high scoring Easthampstead A team. The match was played at the Park and the Club's team had a rather convincing win of 157 to 138 points.

The final was held at Frilford Heath in September where four teams competed for the national honours. The other teams were from Rose Hill (2015 winners), Basildon (2016 winners) and Huntswood.

It is common knowledge that in 2017 the Club's team went one step further than the runner-up position in 2016. The team had a fantastic win with 148 points, outscoring Rose Hill's second place score of 142 points. The last time that the Club lifted the Hawtree Trophy was back in 1982. The winning team at Frilford comprised the following pairings: John Cooper and Susan Smith, Peter Osgood and Cheryl Woodhouse, Roger Rojas and Jayne Maxwell, and Nigel Gaymond with Sheena Harrington. We need to mention that this team was also supported by Pete Harrison when Roger had his clubs stolen from his locker at the Park.

NAPGC Mary Forster Bowl – Team Stableford

This winter event is open for Club members to play between November and April. I'm not aware of the origin of the Team's name but perhaps as a hark back to the old days of the

team members it was decided that the team should be known as The Dropouts. In the local regional points accumulator the team was successful and qualified for the final.

For the final round congratulations are in order because The Dropouts finished as the national runners-up !! With a combined total of 106 points the team was beaten into second place by Easthampstead whose score was 109 points.

The Dropouts who played at the final were Lia Donath, Val Riziotis and Susan Smith. The other Dropouts who helped the team on its journey were Doreen Dolby, Jayne Maxwell and Cheryl Woodhouse [Team Captain].

Internal Matches and Competitions

The Bontor – Match Play

The ladies won the Bontor in 2014. This was followed by drawn matches in 2015 and 2016 therefore the ladies had retained the trophy for these years.

Although the men thought that they would have the upper hand in 2017 it was the ladies who took the honours with a 10 – 8 win. This win means that the ladies will hold the trophy for four successive years and this is the longest run of success since the first match was held in 1932.

Ladies' Invitation – American Greensomes

The May playing conditions were fine for the Ladies' Invitation and definitely suited Cheryl Woodhouse and Roger Rojas who won with 39 points. In her only Club round of 2017 Nina Humphries played with Eric Lit and they came second with 38 points.

Men's Invitation – American Greensomes

Apologies but I have been unable to find any information on the result of the July fixture.

The Ladies' Spring Weekend Away: main event - The Lockie Trophy

The Lockie Trophy is awarded to the lady with the highest Stableford score for the Saturday and Sunday rounds of the away weekend. A sunny weekend was enjoyed at the Lingfield Park Marriot Golf and Country Club and the winner with a score of 69 points was Susan Smith. The runner-up for the weekend was Joan Mulcahy with 67 points and Donna Wilson was third with 65 points. The men always have their own challenge and Jon Cooper was the winner with Peter Osgood in second place.

The Ladies' Autumn Weekend Away: main event - The Gill Hibbs Trophy

The autumn weekend away saw a return to The Bell Inn and the two courses at the Bramshaw Golf Club. The Bramshaw course is a traditional 'hotel-style' parkland course, but the Forest course is like no other where the golfers share the tees, greens and fairways with horses, ponies, cattle, and pigs.

The away weekend in early September clashed with the Hawtree final being played at Frilford Heath and this caused the attendance numbers to be fewer than normal but the weekend was hotly contested.

The winner of the ladies 36 hole event playing for The Gill Hibbs Trophy was Joan Mulcahy.

Extra-Curricular Activities: Away days.

It seems like a long time ago but back in 2016 Caroline Dewar started her research to look for a venue for the May 2017 away day and before the end of 2016 we knew that we were heading to Bletchingly, just south of Godstone off the M25. Caroline's efficiency was such that after arriving all we needed to do was eat, drink, and play, but not necessarily in this order. 27 of us attended for an excellent day and with a good score posted the winner appeared to be a foregone conclusion until Lia Donath arrived from the last game with a superior score that left Alison Chadwick with the runner-up prize.

On 26th October Paul Brown (and Val !) took 32 of us off to Hoebridge for 27 holes for a challenge in terms of skill and fitness. The warm up morning round was played on the testy 9 hole course and after a hearty lunch the afternoon session was played on the main 18 hole course. The weather was good but despite best endeavours the final game couldn't manage without torches and had to retire after the 16th hole. Paul amassed prizes galore for a variety of singles and team combinations. The overall winner of the morning and afternoon combination was Phil Flanagan who collected the top prize and a high-quality St Andrews caddie rain jacket that was donated by Paul Patching.

Individual Achievements

- In July 2017 the Club participated in the Putney Park Open on the Duke's course. The event's winner was a member of Putney Park with a net 65, however Eelco Snijders took the runner-up position on a countback with a net 66, and Seong Lim finished in third place.
- In the RPGC Open we invite the members of Putney Park to join us for the event. For 2015 and 2016 we had witnessed the first recorded wins by our lady members and in 2017 it was a case of three in row with Cheryl Woodhouse winning with a net 66. Following Cheryl in the runner-up position and leading the "men" was Oli Maskell with a net 68.
- Birdies galore! It will come as no surprise to learn that the top of the 2017 birdie count is Jay Barker but his tally will be a surprise – 137 birdies, and he also amassed 2 eagles. Jay had more birdies than holes of double bogey or worse. Holding second position on the count is Henry Lindesay-Bethune with 60 birdies and one 1 eagle. Third place on the men's list is Keith Cassidy with 51 birdies and he also has 1 eagle on his record. To put Jay's result into perspective, on the Prince's course the par is 68 and Jay's eclectic gross is 50, and for the Duke's course the par is 71 and Jay's eclectic gross is 52. The only hole at the Park that he did not birdie in 2017 is the 5th on the Duke's.
- The ladies 2017 birdie tree was overwhelmed by Habe Crocker with 58 birdies and Habe also has 1 eagle on her record. Veronica Mitchell lies second on the ladies' listing with 12 birdies and third place with 9 birdies each is shared by Jayne Maxwell, Jane Fraser and Gina Jillett.

- After a barren period we had a flurry of 'holes in one' scored in 2017. The four acers are:
Richard Owen – Prince's 11th hole, Winter Competition, 26th February
Chris Jones – Duke's 7th hole, Midweek March Medal, 8th March
Tony Bergqvist – Prince's 4th hole, March Monthly Medal, 12th March
Veronica Mitchell – Duke's 10th hole, September Monthly Medal, 17th September

www.RichmondParkGolfClub.Org.Uk - The RPGC Website

16 years of Club history and still going strong as the website rolls forward to year 17 !!

Over the years the Club's website has had a number of specific purposes to accommodate the Club's needs. For example, prior to the requirement to use authorised handicapping software the Club's website housed the weekly bookings data and the handicap records that we now access on Mastersscoreboard. More recently the key service of the website has been to maintain a comprehensive record of all the Club's daily activities and through the last few years the range of activities has grown with the introduction of the midweek events.

As I have reported before, the website was inaugurated by Tim Meyer in 2002 and his intervention as 'editor' keeps the style consistent and numerous linkages intact. Most of the new data reported on the website is accessed via Latest News and for 2017 the event commentaries exceeded 150 by some margin. At this level of activity it does not need too much thought to imagine the amount of time needed to reformat the various streams of input and maintain the Club's website to the high consistent standard that we have become accustomed to.

Some of us are aware that Tim has an exceedingly busy work routine with a degree of travel and from time to time it must be hard for him to juggle the Club's website with his other demands. We are all exceedingly grateful to Tim for his continued support for the website.

Absent Friends

Before moving the Gloucestershire Cathryn Leftwich was a regular Sunday player and she was Lady Captain for 2000 and 2001. We received news from Cathryn that her partner Ken had sadly passed away. Although not a golfer Ken was often with us for the social events and he would join us for the away weekends.

On 19th December I reported in my missive that one of our former regular ladies had passed away; Bette Hill. Bette was the wife of Graham Hill who was the two-time Formula One world champion. Bette was playing with us in 1996 and she gave us snippets of news as her son Damon Hill was heading towards his Formula One world championship win. Bette also played with White Lodge and she inaugurated a ladies' match between RPGC and White Lodge which is no longer on the calendar.

In 2016 I reported that John Fordham suffered a debilitating stroke on 14th December. The assessment was that John's stroke resulted from a tick bite that he received on an overseas trip. John was hospitalised for many months and he returned home in mid-2017. John has not recovered to his former self, and for the foreseeable future John will not be able to drive and his movements are limited by tiredness. However, there is a chance that in 2018 John will be able to have an excursion round one of the courses even though he will not be playing.

The Committee and helpers

As mentioned earlier we started 2017 with our new Captains Nick Rogers and Alison Chadwick. The Club's two captains have responsibility for the stewardship of the Club and the fact that the Club has progressed during 2017 is in part a result of the contribution to the proceedings that have been made by both Nick and Alison. It may appear that the Captains have a relatively passive input to the organisation of the Club's arrangements and activities and this is a long way from the truth where there are many actions taken to ensure that all the Club's fixture programme is successfully completed. We are grateful for Nick and Alison's involvement in 2017 and we wish them all the best for another steady year in 2018.

In 2017 the Club's main Committee consisted of 16 'volunteer' members and everyone contributed in some way towards the day-to-day well-being of the Club and the Club's future development. We are fortunate that with a diverse range of ideas and opinions we are able to consider many topics from different angles. There are however a few committee members and others who bear the brunt of the admin chores and these members deserve a special mention:

- As in previous years I am mentioning Richard Owen first because there is no doubt that Richard is more active on Club matters than anyone else. With regard to the relationship with Glendale Richard has the role of Liaison Officer of the Association comprising RPGC and Putney Park. This means that for all matters concerning the two clubs Richard is the conduit for topics that need to be raised with Glendale and the converse is true where Glendale needs to pass information across to the clubs. The volume of email traffic is extensive and there are many discussions at the Park to make sure that our business with Glendale runs smoothly. One of the key components of this liaison is the twice weekly determination of the number of games required for our Sunday and Wednesday players, after which the requests have to be lodged with Glendale. This particular task does not stop at this point because we are obliged to release games back to Glendale if it appears that we have overbooked. Another key liaison topic covered by Richard is the processing of new member enquiries that filter across via the Loyalty card programme where prospective members need to be informed about RPGC (and Putney Park) and for those wishing to pursue membership the arrangements need to be made for card marking etc. From the time in early 2014 when Glendale's annual Loyalty cards included a contribution towards Club membership the task of invoicing Glendale for the refunds on a monthly basis was picked up by Richard and he has followed this through very diligently where frequent checks with Glendale's records are necessary. In short, we are all indebted to Richard for his dedication to these tasks which are known to be exceedingly time-consuming.
- I'm pretty sure that when Peter Jagger agreed to take over the Treasurer's role he realised that he was moving outside of his normal comfort zone but Peter rose to the challenge and he has manoeuvred the Club's books and records through the year very successfully. With over 100 event days in the year and with new members arriving at an average of one each week there is a lot of accounting activity and we know that it does take a good deal of time and devotion to keep on top of things.
- ..and talking of keeping on top of things, we need to remember our Handicap Secretaries, Paul Grand, Kim Chaffart and Sheena Harrington. In October 2016 Paul was hospitalised and Kim was enticed into the role as a 'helper' for Sheena but this soon became a full role for Kim to keep him occupied when he wasn't engaged on his collection of other Club duties. In the autumn of 2017 Paul was able to start to assume some of the handicapping activities and it is good that Paul is now up to speed and together with Kim the men's handicapping is very well covered. With two events occurring each week the handicapping records do require a lot of updating and maintenance and this needs to be done very quickly to ensure that our members are

playing off their correct handicaps. Behind the scenes there are a number of additional tasks that must be attended to including the posting of the results to players, updating the Masterscoreboard results sections including the accumulators and performance stats, attending to the two-way transmissions with CDH, and all the processes associated with the new members.

- We need to give a special mention to our bookings officers; Pete Harrison who looks after our Sunday fixtures and Chris Jones for the Midweek fixtures until the autumn when Kim Chaffart picked up the reins to add yet another task to his portfolio of responsibilities. Without the actions of our bookings officers our order of play would be very much a case of disorder. Unbeknown to most, with a bit of arm-twisting from me at the beginning of 2017, we do in fact have another bookings officer working under the radar who very quietly and diligently has a weekly exchange of messages with Glendale and I am referring to Paul Brown who looks after all our Friday arrangements.
- Not everyone will have had a visit from the 'sweepers' in the year but it is a very welcome sight when an envelope does arrive. Toby Hunt and Stephen Mason have been looking after the collection and banking of the competition entry collections and the distribution of the sweeps, and we all know that this is another task that needs to be managed on a weekly basis.
- For as long as can be remembered the away weekends away have been a major feature of the Club's fixture programme and for a number of years Veronica Mitchell has been the organiser. Veronica has the knack of making sure that everything runs smoothly and the trips in 2017 to Lingfield and the New Forest were no exception.

To all those mentioned here we are grateful for their involvement and service to the Club which helps to ensure that all the components come together for a successful operation.

...and the final word

For 2018 all the ingredients are in place for the Club to progress onwards and upwards with the possibility of some enhancements to our regular activities. I hope that you all have a most enjoyable golfing year and, possibly, a mention on the 2018 prize list.

Peter Harrington
Secretary
27th January 2018