



RICHMOND PARK GOLF CLUB

Captain's Log

1 June 2005
Issue 4

GAMBLING

**Have you
blocked out
the 23rd July
in your Diary
for the
Summer
Event?
Sheets will
soon be on
the Notice
Board on
which to ap-
pend your
name as a
participant.
Remember it
is an after-
noon of ten-
pin bowling
at Ealing fol-
lowed by a
BBQ hosted
by Peter and
Sheena**

The ruling bodies of golf lay down pious policies on gambling although in their role as custodians of tradition they are on slightly uneasy ground here. Since the earliest recorded minutes of club affairs back in the eighteenth century gambling has played an integral part in golf, to the extent that the clubs maintained 'Bett Books'. A special officer was elected to record challenges made at the boisterous club dinners so that there would be written proof when the dawn brought its customary hangover and partial amnesia over the previous evening's bargains. What the legislators really seek to control is the scope of gambling, rather than the fact of it. There is no doubt that big-money wagers can put a severe strain on the ideal of golf as a game of trust and can create suspicion and discord within a club. And as soon as big money becomes involved the spirit of the rules of amateur status is thoroughly compromised. As an amateur you may not accept a golf prize with a retail value of more than £500. There is nothing that the authorities can do to stop you having a fat bundle on a private match, which is why they do not even try to prevent it. But as soon as an organised competition is involved, over which the authorities have some control, then they can and do exert a degree of pressure, albeit mostly moral.

You may feel, in passing, that as the winner of a competition you are put into a highly invidious position by your responsibility instantly to appraise the retail value of your prize and then, with as much disdain as you can muster, hand it back if it exceeds the limit. There are steely characters capable of acting with such lofty self-righteousness but for the majority of us frail mortals the euphoria of the occasion, combined with the sheer embarrassment of the alternative, would dull any pricking of conscience. We would, in short, grab the loot and hope the authorities did not get to hear about it. Can we be blamed? Well, the authorities can and do blame any culprit on whom they can pin a rap. Golfers have been deprived of their amateur status, which thus precludes them from competing in further official competitions.

As for gambling in private golf, nobody cares what you get up to, except possibly your dependants. It is entirely up to you but from a purely golfing point of view it is bad to play for more than you can afford without wincing. Is this a problem for the way we conduct ourselves within our club? I think not; but you might become involved in larger competitions where huge prizes are on offer and then this part of our beloved sport could become an issue.

June 2005

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	2	3	4 Hawtree 'B' Team 'V' Huntswood	5 Monthly Medal
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Summer Cup
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 Club Champion- ship Round
20	21	22	23	24	25 Association Cup	26 Club Champion- ship Round
27	28	29	30			

NEW CAFÉ OPENING!!

Have you noticed the new Café opened by Glendale? It is situated to the left of the Pro Shop's main door. It already serves a range of decent coffees, tea and hot chocolate and, the buzz on the grapevine is that there will soon be a beer tap installed too! Finally - somewhere we can meet for a little refreshment after a gruelling five hours on the golf course without having to traipse across to a log cabin that closes at 4 O'Clock anyway!



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UNSEEN AND UNHEARD

It may sound a counsel of perfection, but expletives are best deleted on the golf course, especially when playing with strangers. There are still people in these permissive days who are offended by swearing and even if we are among friends the sheer volume of our curse may carry to a neighbouring match and put somebody off their stroke. Anger, like joy, is best expressed *sotto voce*. The one time it is permitted, nay obligatory, to turn up the volume is when a wayward shot looks as if it might hit somebody, or even land near them. Then a warning shout of "Fore!" is entirely in order, since a ruined golf shot is a fate less severe than a smack on the back of the head from a ball travelling at more than 100mph.

In essence, the conventions of golfing conduct add up to an ideal which would make it appear after our round that we had never even set foot on the course. All our divots have been invisibly mended; our footprints have been meticulously smoothed from the bunkers; no witness can be found who was on the course at the time who heard us or even, hopefully, who saw us. They were all preoccupied with their own enjoyment that even if we came into their view we did not register on the memory. The reality is all too often far from short of that ideal. An excursion round our golf course is all too often like following in the wake of a particularly undisciplined army fleeing from battle. Discarded equipment in the form of beer cans, cigarette packets and ball-wrappers litter the grass; footprints trace the progress of the rabble through the bunkers; pitch marks pock mark the greens like Lilliputian shell craters. The culprits have affected the enjoyment of our game. The least we can all do is guarantee that we do not leave a similar trail of misery for others.

'X' Marks The Spot

I suspect we've all been guilty of it at some stage in our golfing lives or other - failing to sign our score card at the end of a competition before putting it into the green box for analysis by the handicap secretary.



"This is the last will and testament"

Already this year there have been twelve occasions where individuals have succumbed to this oversight.

The most costly occurred on 22nd May when one of our member's lack of concentration cost them third place and £12 in lost sweep money. So, the moral is you're game is incomplete until you've signed to say otherwise.

RICKMANSWORTH

Each year the club has a friendly match against Rickmansworth. We play a home leg and an away leg, then combine the two outcomes to determine the winner.

This competition gives us an ideal opportunity to 'blood' new members into inter-club competition without anxiety or repercussions - keep your eye on the Notice Board!

Competitions Page



Last month saw much activity on the competitions front. The process began with the May Monthly Medal, which was also Round Three for the Grand Medal Trophy graced the winner's slot too. Kerry Sargeant with a Grand Medal Trophy, a one shot lead over Gupral Sekhon for the first time by beating a further eight shots better back nine. In the trophy winner, Ian Smith. In the Martin Goldsworthy holds a knockout matches since day. Nevertheless, 72 was used by many to beat Martin Wright, who in turn and the outcome was a Park; our members fill- The following weekend play singles of doubles Paul Grand found his it was Ruskie Hall Open individuals still took part triumph for Richmond ing the top five places. form to become the victor

by two shots from Geoff Foreman. On 15th May sixty of our club members participated in the Golden Jubilee on the Dukes Course; resulting in another new name gracing the winner's slot for the first time - Michael Rossiter. Michael won by two shots from a valiant effort by top lady for the day, Veronica Mitchell. Given the uneasy playing conditions of the courses the Shaw Cup's stapleford format came as quite a relief for some. Bill McSorley, who by his own admission was having a dreadful time of late, suddenly remembered how to play this game and shot a credible 41 points to beat Bruce Cuff into second place by just one point - a round that included five birdies!

During May the Club played three inter-Club competitions. First the Hawtree 'A' Team crossed swords with a strong team from Ruislip. A ding-dong battle ensued with no quarter given until the final holes where Richmond squeezed out as victors 3-2. The 'A' Team now go on to meet Little Hay away. Next was the turn of the men in the Clapham Common. Drawing against last year's National winners was never going to be an easy task, and so it proved to be the case, losing by nine points at home and 21 points away. The Ladies Whitewebbs 'B' team were more successful however, by playing excellent golf to account for a team from Birdhills (great name for a ladies team!) by 3.5 - 1.5. The 'B' team next meet Sandown away. With the Whitewebbs 'A' Team having travelled all the way to Portsmouth in April to be beaten 3-2, that just leaves the Hawtree 'B' Team to bring their guns to bare; they play away at Huntswood on 4th June; a report on their endeavours will appear next month.