



RICHMOND PARK GOLF CLUB

Captain's Log

1 August 2005
Issue 6

Handicaps Part One

When I first joined RPGC I did so with two intentions in mind; first was to help me reduce my handicap in a competitive environment, and secondly, to do so amongst fellow friendly, and in general, likeminded individuals. I have certainly not been disappointed with the friendliness that members of the Club have shown towards me; however, as far as reduction of handicap is concerned I've managed to knock six strokes off since joining, but, as most of my school-masters would state in my end of term reports "can do better"!

In my quest to get my handicap lower I, as I know many new members (and some not so new too), was at first extremely confused about the handicapping system that exists. For example.. "What is a Standard Scratch Score and why is it lower than Par for the Course? What does Nett Differential mean? What the hell is a Buffer Zone!? Surely a handicap is a handicap - why have different Categories?" All these new nuances confused this small bear with little brain for quite some time, so I thought I would, over the next few issues, try to demist this cloud of confusion that I know exists in many of our Members minds. I know that once I got to grips with it all I felt that I understood the game better and had a greater appreciation of the complex rules that our two Handicap Secretaries (Paul Grand for the men and Julie Smith for the ladies) have to operate under when concluding the results of our weekly competitions.

First I think it might be helpful if we all understood how a course is allocated its Standard Scratch Score (SSS). The SSS is the score that a scratch player (like Bruce Cuff) is expected to return in ideal conditions over a *measured course*. In assessing the SSS of a course, officials will take as the starting point the score shown in the Table of Provisional Standard Scratch Scores (see over on page 3). They will then consider the following points:

- a. The terrain and general layout of the course.
- b. Normal ground conditions - is run average, above or below average?
- c. Sizes of greens and whether watered or unwatered.
- d. Hazzards - are greens well guarded or open. (Cont on page 3)



August 2005

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6 Bontor Trophy	7 Monthly Medal
8	9	10	11	12	13 Ladies Mitcham Friendly	14 Trevor Allen Open
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 Captain's Day
22	23	24	25	26	27 Rickmans- worth Friendly	28 Silver Jubilee
29	30	31				

RICKMANSWORTH AWAY

Although we encountered a 4-2 defeat against Rickmansworth in the home leg of our annual match, many of the losing scores were close enough to suggest that we have the capability to turn matters around on 27th August and win the match over the two legs. I will be placing a notice on the Club's board next week calling for volunteers to be part of our team. Rickmansworth (affectionately known as Tricky Ricky) has eight par three holes on its course, offering you a good chance of a hole-in-one!! Again, I am keen to 'blood' members who have not played inter-club competition before, in an environment where the outcome is less important than the enjoyment of the game and the entertainment afterwards.



Handicap (from page 1)

- (e) Width of fairways, the effect of trees and nature of rough.
- (f) Nearness of 'Out of Bounds' to fairways and greens.
- (g) Average weather conditions throughout the playing year. Is the course exposed and subject to high winds for most of the year? Is it sheltered from the effects of adverse weather?
- (h) The distance by which the length of the course varies from the standard length shown in Column One of the Table.

TABLE OF PROVISIONAL STANDARD SCRATCH SCORES

Standard Length of Course	Lengths included in Standard Length	Provisional Standard Scratch Score
7392	7282 - 7501	75
7172	7062 - 7281	74
6952	6842 - 7061	73
6732	6622 - 6841	72
6512	6402 - 6621	71
6292	6182 - 6401	70
6072	5962 - 6181	69
5852	5742 - 5961	68
5632	5522 - 5741	67
5412	5302 - 5521	66
5192	5082 - 5301	65
4972	4862 - 5081	64
4752	4642 - 4861	63
4532	4422 - 4641	62
4312	4202 - 4421	61
4092	3982 - 4201	60

Having considered all these points officials will fix the SSS of the course by either:

- a. Confirming the Provisional SSS as the SSS.
- b. Adding a stroke or strokes to the Provisional SSS.
- c. Deducting a stroke or strokes to the Provisional SSS.

And that's all there is to it!!



COMPETITION RESULTS

As I have already mentioned on page two, we had the first leg of our home and away match with Rickmondsworth early last month, and after a close fought contest ended up the wrong side of a 4-2 margin. But that is only half way; I firmly believe that we can win overall after the second leg on the 27th.

Ian Parkinson from Ruskie Hall won our Club's Open competition, carding a nett 64. Our own Paul Appleton was third with a nett 65, beaten on the back nine by Mr Schroeder from Putney Park. Many of our big guns were unable to compete this year because the date clashed with the Hawtree 'A' Team's fixture away at Little Hay. Sadly they were the wrong side of a 3-2 margin (the worst way to lose); this means that we no longer have any Club side left in the major inter-club competitions - not for the want of trying.

The 9th July witnessed the Men's Invitation. This was conducted in a slightly different manner to normal in that all couples were playing off scratch. However, to offset the loss of strokes couples were allocated a yard of string for each stroke they would have received; any amount of string was allowed to be used at any time to move the ball (even into the hole, or out of a ditch) as far as they desired until the string ran out. Once couples got the hang of this novelty nearly all agreed that the format helped to make the day as enjoyable as it was. Cathryn Leftwich and Tim Meyer came out as victors ahead of Jon Cooper and Di Jacket.

The following day heralded round five of the Grand Medal Trophy. Unaccustomed as we were to a temporary green on the fifth hole on Princes at this time of the year, it still did not prevent Stuart Nash from carding a nett 58 and claim his first monthly medal since joining the Club. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on one's point of view) the temporary hole had a bucket for a cup and so the competition was a non qualifier.

The following Friday and Saturday saw the Club take on Ludlow in the annual Ruffians Ryder Cup. Played to a similar format as the real thing we won the doubles on the Friday 4-1 and the singles on the Saturday 8-2, giving us a 12-3 victory and regaining possession of the cup that was surrendered last year. Richard Owen is to be applauded for the smooth organisation of not only the competitions aspect but also the Friday evening's social gathering and domestic arrangements for the Ludlow players - well done Richard.

As I write this piece I have not seen the full results of the Centurion Open, but having bumped into their handicap secretary at Hoebridge on 25th July I am assured that Ged Scott from RPGC was the winner; a fine achievement from one of our much newer recruits.

Finally, congratulations to Lorna White who successfully negotiated the fast and tricky greens at Hoebridge to qualify for the National NAPGC Stableford finals at St Andrews on 18th September. Even more remarkable given the nasty weather conditions she had to cope with too.