

# RICHMOND PARK GOLF CLUB



## ANNUAL REPORT - 2015

After a thoroughly wet Christmas period we found that 2015 started with the courses well and truly waterlogged with fairway puddles very much in evidence. Despite the difficult playing conditions we ended 2014 with an optimistic view of 2015. One important feature giving rise to this optimism was the knowledge that for the first time since 2011 our Club year would be playing over the 36 holes of the Duke's and Prince's courses without interference from the development activities. For the Club members who had persevered through the variety of assorted disruptions since 2011 a return to a state of stability was a very welcome relief. We anticipated that the 'settled' conditions at the Park would help us with our competition arrangements and provide an opportunity to start to rebuild our membership numbers. At the beginning of 2015 little did we know that the Club was embarking on its most fundamental change since play was resumed at the Park in 1946 !!

In early 2014 Glendale introduced a company-wide marketing plan whereby the annual Loyaltee card-holders at its facilities would have the option to obtain handicaps and enter local competitions. Whilst RPGC and Putney Park GC were happy to enter into a mutually acceptable arrangement with Glendale to accommodate the Loyaltee card conditions there was strong objection to the process by White Lodge GC. It became apparent to everyone involved in the discussions that White Lodge would not under any reasonable circumstances participate in any arrangement with Glendale and, moreover, it was also apparent that White Lodge had no desire remain a member of the Association that had been formed by the Park's three official clubs. The stance taken by White Lodge created a problem for Glendale because it meant that there was no club environment for the annual five-day Loyaltee card-holders to be able to obtain handicaps or play in competitions. On 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 RPGC was offered and promptly accepted the opportunity to commence midweek activities with the support of Glendale.

In 2014 Glendale's Loyaltee card scheme had produced just one membership referral to RPGC. However, with the reconfiguration of the courses completed in mid-2014 there was a firm belief that there would be an uptake in the demand for both the 5-day and 7-day annual Loyaltee cards. With the agreement that RPGC should commence midweek activities it was recognised on both sides that RPGC would need to move fast in order that the terms of Glendale's annual Loyaltee card scheme should not be compromised. It was agreed that the new midweek section should commence on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March and on this day we hosted our first event – the Inaugural Trophy.

Of course, having agreed to increase the Club's activities with the new midweek section we recognised that we were committing the Club to a very substantial increase in responsibilities. From a very long-standing traditional position of hosting between 50 and 60 Saturday and Sunday yearly events we were in effect doubling our operations by adding another 52 events to the fixture list. From the additional 52 events we knew that we would need to arrange for the competition entry and sweep monies to be accounted for; the scorecards would need to be checked; handicapping would need to be performed and results posted; Mastersscoreboard would need additional maintenance; and the Club's website would

have roughly double the amount of input to control. I am pleased to report that with thanks to multiple inputs from a number of Club members we can claim that 2015 was not just a year of major change but the integration of the midweek section to our operations was indeed a major success story.

So, on a general level what else happened in 2015? Well, we can't help but notice that the Club's membership has expanded. This is discussed in more detail below but we are finding that the increased membership provides opportunities for a greater participation in external events and we started to increase the range of competition activity during 2015. This is a theme that the Committee aims to see progressed during 2016. Another consequence of a higher membership level is the greater level of participation in our Sunday and Wednesday events and it is very pleasing to see our game numbers returning to their former glory. Of course, in 2015 we were helped by the weather from spring onwards with mainly excellent playing conditions all the way through to the end of a very mild December.

My closing remarks last year referred to the completion of the development work at the Park and we were all looking forward to 2015 being a year of relative stability. Well, 2015 was anything but, however the changes were all to the good and we can perhaps now look to 2016 being a year of steady growth.

## **Annual Prize-giving**

For the award of our 2015 prizes on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February we are making a return to the Coombe Wood Golf Club which is located just off Kingston Hill. Those of us that can remember the previous visit to Coombe Wood will be keeping our fingers crossed that we do not encounter the same Saturday evening snowfall which necessitated everyone having an impromptu early retirement. Paul Brown and Alison Chadwick have taken care of the arrangements for the evening and we are grateful to them for taking this task on board.

The forthcoming prize-giving evening takes on a new dimension with the addition of the trophies for the midweek fixtures. In the table below you will see the new events integrated with our full Sunday listing.

For RPGC the 36 hole "Club Championship" scratch event is recognised at the Club's premier event on the fixture list. Here's a summary of how the winners unfolded:

- For the men's Senior CC with handicaps up to 16 the first round leader was Sean Feldon with a score of 71. Leading the charge behind Sean was Roger Rojas on 75, Aidan Hurley on 76 and Paul Appleton also on 76. The best gross score for the second round was Aidan's 76 but with Sean scoring 78 his total of 149 was enough for him to be our 2015 Club Champion and recapture the trophy that he last won in 2011. With his total of 152 Aidan was our runner up for second year running. After round one Tim Meyer was lying 10<sup>th</sup> on the leaderboard but with a score of 78 and the best net score of the second round Tim moved up to 3<sup>rd</sup> place for the scratch result.
- In the men's Junior CC event for handicaps of 17 and above Paul Rockett overwhelmed the opposition with his first round score of 78. This would have been good enough to be lying 5<sup>th</sup> in the seniors event. Following Paul, the nearest contenders were Mike Shabani with a score of 86 and Ray Esin on 87. In the second round Paul extended his lead with a score of 83 and he takes the 2015 Junior Club Champion trophy with a total score of 161; this would have been good enough to take 4<sup>th</sup> place in the senior's event. Keith Cassidy was lying 6<sup>th</sup> after round 1 however after a good second round he moved up to the runner up position with a total of 175.
- The men's Handicap Trophy is awarded to the player with the best aggregate net score over the two Club Championship rounds. For his first round Paul Rockett scored a net 61

and under normal circumstances this would be miles ahead of everyone but Roger Rojas had a net 63 on the board. The best second round score was Tim Meyer's net 66 but with a net 68 Paul secured the win with a combined net 129 for the two rounds. Although there is no award for the runner up the second best net following Paul was Pete Harrison's total 135 net.

- The ladies' Club Championship event is also played over 36 holes. At the close of the first round on the Prince's course the top of the leaderboard was bunched. Val Riziotis was leading with a score of 88 from Jayne Maxwell with an 89, Lia Donath also on 89 and Veronica Mitchell with 91. For the second round Val repeated round 1 with a score of 88 and again this was the best score of the day. With her total 176 Val is our Club Champion of 2015 and this is her first Championship win. Chasing Val and taking the runner up position was Jayne whose second round score of 91 gave her an aggregate total of 180.
- In conjunction with the Club Championship the ladies have two handicap trophies. For the handicaps up to and including 20 the ladies compete for the Handicap Cup. At the close of the first round Lia had the best score with a net 68, one shot ahead of Val's net 69 with Veronica in close proximity with a net 70. As noted, Val's second round was the same as her first round and this gave her a total of 138. Lia's second round gross was three shots higher than her first round and this gave her a net score of 71 and an aggregate of 139. It follows that by one shot Val retains the Handicap Cup for her 2015 win.
- For the ladies with handicaps above 20 the challenge is for the Pembroke Cup. At the close of the first round the scores were close with Cheryl Woodhouse on 67, Joan Mulcahy scoring a net 68, and Susan Smith with a net 72. Joan did not play in the second round and in theory this left Cheryl with a relatively easy task of a comfortable round. Cheryl's second round net 74 on the Duke's course gave her a total of 141. From a first round position way down the leaderboard, Doreen Dolby made a second round charge with net 68 but she was one shot adrift with a total net of 142. Although Cheryl has been a member of the Club for many years and a former Lady Captain, her 2015 Pembroke Cup win was a first.
- In the planning phase for the midweek events an allowance was made to run a midweek championship if the correct competitive conditions should prevail. As we approached summer it was felt that a scratch event would not be appropriate for 2015 but the Club did promote a 36 hole Handicap Trophy and this may be run in conjunction with a midweek championship in due course. At the close of round 1 the leaderboard showed that a mix of men and ladies were firmly in contention with Liam Bridger on net 63 leading from Caroline Mylon on 64, Ross Hood with a net 65, Kate Emanuel with a net 66 and also Gina Jillett on 66. The second round in August was a complete washout and with flooding on the greens the round had to be abandoned. The second round was reconvened for September and on this occasion it was Gina's net 73 that was one shot better than Ross's net 74. They both finished with an aggregate score of 139 but with her superior second round Gina takes the first midweek Handicap Trophy a countback.

Here follows the full prize list for 2015:-

## **RPGC 2015 PRIZE LIST**

<b><u>EVENT</u></b>	<b><u>WINNER</u></b>	<b><u>RUNNER-UP</u></b>
Senior Men's Club Championship	Sean Feldon	Aidan Hurley
Ladies' Club Championship	Val Riziotis	Jayne Maxwell
Junior Men's Club Championship	Paul Rockett	Keith Cassidy
Men's Club Championship Handicap Trophy	Paul Rockett	-
Ladies' Handicap Cup - handicaps 0-24	Val Riziotis	Lia Donath
Ladies' Pembroke Cup - handicaps 25-36	Cheryl Woodhouse	Doreen Dolby
J H Taylor – matchplay 0-16	Pete Harrison	Liam Bridger
Two Courses Cup – matchplay 17+	Mike Shabani	Paul Grand
Ladies' Challenge Cup	Lia Donath	Veronica Mitchell
Midweek Handicap Trophy	Gina Jillett	Ross Hood
Men's Fourball – matchplay	Paul Grand & Patrick Murphy	Martin Heinrich & Roger Rojas
Ladies Double C Cup	Sheena Harrington & Julie Smith	Gina Jillett & Val Riziotis
Mixed Foursomes – matchplay	Cheryl Woodhouse & Nigel Ward	Jayne Maxwell & Pete Harrison
Ladies' Committee Cup	Tenesi Karakaneva	Deborah Potter
Midweek Inaugural Trophy	Brett Colley	Paul Grand
Grand Medal Trophy	Stephen Legg	-
Midweek Grand Medal Trophy	Richard Owen	-
Silver Jubilee Trophy	Veronica Mitchell	Julian James
Golden Jubilee Trophy	Paul Green	Charlie Whiteman
Diamond Jubilee Trophy	Mike Shabani	James Barker
Platinum Jubilee Trophy	Roger Rojas	Peter Osgood
Anniversary Cup	Veronica Mitchell	-
Midweek Anniversary Accumulator	Gina Jillett	Julian James
President's Putter	Roger Rojas	Pete Harrison
Midweek President's Prize	Tamas Ladacs	Toby Hunt
Captain's Prize	Tamas Ladacs	Martin Heinrich
Lady Captain's Prize	Christine Stewart	Rianda Markham
Midweek Captain's Day	Kate Emanuel	Chris Jones
Richmond Park Golf Club Open	Sheena Harrington	Tenesi Karakaneva
J Q Robertson Trophy	Pete Harrison	Habib Amir
Coronation Cup	Tony Kopczak	Toby Hunt
Midweek Priory Cup	Gina Jillett	Ann Gardner
Shaw Cup	Graham Terry	Teneis Karakaneva
Midweek Masters Bowl	Gina Jillett	Ed Henery
Midweek Claret Jug	Paul Grand	Molly Hood
Summer Cup	Nick Rogers	Stephen Legg
Midweek Midsummer Trophy	Colin Pizzey	Liam Bridger

Spring Mixed Better-Ball	Gin Jillett & Paul Brown	Sheena Harrington & Stephen Mason
Autumn Mixed - Handicap	Jayne Maxwell & Pete Harrison	Gina Jillett & Ed Henery
Autumn Mixed - Scratch	Jayne Maxwell & Pete Harrison	-
Burgess Cup - Greensomes	James Barker & Pete Harrison	Ed Henery & Mike Rowe
Top Dog Trophy	Pete Harrison	-
Ladies' Dowling Cup	Kate Emanuel	-
Lissaman Cup - 3 clubs + putter	Gina Jillett	Jane Fraser
Midweek Harrington Trophy - 3 clubs + putter	Colin Pizzey	Mike Shabani
Barton Bowl - Play-off – top 8 against captain	Gina Jillett	-
Charity Cup	Kim Chaffart	Susan Smith
Midweek Charity Trophy	Brett Colley	Igor Stark
Spring Stableford Trophy	Paul Brown	Paul Grand
Winter Competition	James Barker	Ed Henery

## Membership

Here's our 11 year table and we can see where we stand at 31 December 2015.

	<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>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
<b>Men:</b>											
Regular	109	80	88	98	100	97	89	78	62	69	69
Senior	14	6	5	4	4	4	7	7	7	8	6
Junior	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hon (playing)	1	1	1	4	4	5	1	1	1	1	3
<b>Total Men</b>	<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>	<u>78</u>	<u>78</u>
<b>Ladies:</b>											
Regular	27	26	28	29	31	40	36	38	36	34	33
Senior	14	10	9	8	9	6	7	5	5	5	2
Hon (playing)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Ladies</b>	<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>	<u>40</u>	<u>36</u>
<b>Total</b>	<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>	<u>118</u>	<u>114</u>
<b>Joiners:</b>											
New men	49	14	22	25	23	24	26	27	7	15	13
New ladies	9	2	2	2	1	9	5	6	4	5	4
Junior	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Rejoiners – men	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	4	2
Rejoiners – ladies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<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>	<u>25</u>	<u>19</u>
<b>Leavers:</b>	<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>	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>
	16%	18%	26%	22%	18%	15%	15%	14%	15%	18%	19%

Those who have been with the Club for a while will recall that during 2005 and 2006 we were struggling on an operational front following the aftermath of the 'great fire' of 2004. With a helping hand from Geoff Foreman the Club received a portacabin 'off the back of a lorry'. This made a significant difference to the Club's opportunity to steadily improve its membership numbers and we see this through to the beginning of 2012 when the next 'event' at the Park disrupted the membership flow. The event that I am referring to is of course the programme of development work that included the construction of the new building, the reconfiguration of the golf courses and the replacement of original golf holes. This work was completed in mid 2014. The underlying message here is that over the years RPGC membership has been known to be very susceptible to isolated detrimental external events which have discouraged membership renewals and tempted potential members to look at other facilities. As is happens, 2015 was the first year in a while were the Club was 'event free' and so far as we can judge the good news is that there are no known events on the horizon.

Compared to the other years shown on the table it is clear for all to see that 2015 was a truly bumper year for membership growth with 59 new members joining the Club. A major contributor to the 2015 result has been the Club's new agreement with Glendale to welcome the referrals from the annual Loyaltee card scheme. In 2014 the Club had just one new member who arrived via the referral scheme. In 2015 we believe that 36 new members joined via the referral scheme and this means that through its own devices the Club attracted 23 new members. It is fair to say that with the majority of Club members holding annual Loyaltee cards the raw statistics have now become somewhat blurred, however it is evident that the relationship with Glendale has been a very positive move. One point for us to all bear in mind is that roughly 90% of prospective members approach the Club without a handicap and this necessitates the three qualification cards to be completed. With members joining at an average rate just above one per week in 2015 it follows that our average rate of card marking has been at least three per week !

As we move from one membership year to the next it is a common theme to lose members as a result of changed personal circumstances; and 2016 will be no different. As we look towards the new 2016 membership year we are confident that the Club will recover the immediate membership losses and continue the pattern of growth but not at the same rate as 2015.

## **Midweek Golf**

Given that the addition of the midweek golf has had such a significant effect on the Club's operations it is appropriate to mention a few snippets of information.

Having agreed to promote midweek golf one of the first tasks to complete was the preparation of a fixture programme. The pattern of the Club's Sunday fixture programme had operated with success for many years and it was agreed that we should apply some commonality with the formation of the midweek fixture programme. For example, we have the midweek monthly medal events which count towards a midweek Grand Medal Trophy accumulator, albeit with a slightly different formula to arrive at the overall winner. We all know that for Sundays the Club has two separate fixture lists for the men and the ladies though there are many events where the men and the ladies play jointly for the same trophy. For the midweek schedule the Club agreed that for the beginning period all events would be 'joint' and that this should remain so until the player numbers could support something similar to the Sunday arrangement.

At the outset the unknown quantity was the scale of the expected weekly activity. It was unclear how many of the Club's existing members in conjunction with Glendale's annual 5-

day Loyaltee card-holders would be attracted to the Club's Wednesday programme of events. After taking account of local traffic conditions it was agreed with Glendale that the Club should have a mid-morning start. It became apparent that the set time did not suite all those who wanted to play on Wednesdays so it was agreed to amend the arrangements to accommodate those who wanted to play early on Wednesday mornings or later in the day starting in the afternoon. One further feature of Wednesdays that we were keen to introduce was to play in 3-ball games and Glendale has been happy to permit this whilst the public demand remains low.

The first midweek event was held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015. We named the event 'The Inaugural Trophy' and Brett Colley was our winner with 38 points on the Prince's course. The midweek fixture programme includes further permanent trophies and these will be awarded for the first time at the forthcoming prize-giving evening. In 2016 we are adding a few more permanent trophies to the fixture list.

Twelve months ago the Club's committee had no inkling that midweek golf would be on the agenda. There has been a considerable amount of work undertaken behind the scenes and it is appropriate to give a special mention to three members who have helped make our midweek activity the success that it has become. Firstly, Richard Owen has worked with Glendale to obtain the best arrangements for the Club. Richard agreed to be the Club's first midweek Captain, competition entry collector and sweep distributor. Richard has maintained a full statistical record of all the midweek activity. Secondly, Chris Jones stepped into the role of midweek bookings officer to keep the games in good order. Thirdly, our Wednesdays would not have had the same success without the actions of Paul Grand to maintain the Club's handicap records.

The Wednesday schedule has brought new members to the Club and a few have extended their 5-day cards so as to join us in Sundays. At the early months the Wednesday players had to assist with a fairly large volume of card marking for the evaluation of starting handicaps. This action paid off. I won't dwell on the statistics but one comparison is quite revealing. In the first ten weeks of Wednesday activity the average 'member' attendance was 14 per week. In the last 10 weeks of 2015 the average number of Club members playing had increased to 23.

Overall the Club has taken quite a leap forward with the introduction of the midweek activity and the Committee is looking forward to a continued increase of players during 2016.

## **Inter-Club Matches**

Here's what happened in 2015:

Men vs Rickmansworth:

After a succession of Rickmansworth wins the cup returned to Richmond Park in 2014 and there was a keen desire to retain the cup in 2015. The first leg was played at the Park. Over the years we have endeavoured to finish the first leg without a deficit, however back in June our home team had a very good day and finished with a 5-1 lead. In some previous years we have been walloped 6-0 by Ricky's home team but it was our turn to be dominant and I hear that our away win was possibly 4-2; giving our Club an overall win of 9-3 and the all important retention of the cup.

Ladies vs Mitcham:

The Mitcham ladies arrived as the trophy 'holders' for the first leg that was played at the Park. The visitors left with a 2 – 1 first leg lead over the Club's team. For the second leg at Mitcham there was some confusion which resulted in one of the matches being abandoned.

The result for the remaining two matches was one a piece and this was sufficient for Mitcham to retain the trophy with a 3 – 2 overall win.

Mixed match vs. Amida:

It was RPGC's turn to host the event at the Park. This is a pairs event with both sides typically fielding six pairs. The result was a win for RPGC but unfortunately the match report is missing so further details are not presently available.

## **External Competitions**

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

In the first round the partnership of Richard Owen and Nigel Gaymond had to make the tricky long journey as far as Roehampton where they came unstuck against a home side that won with the score 2 – 1.

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

The Club returned to the Surrey 5's event for the first time in over 10 years and Peter Davis stepped in to captain the team. The first round was drawn against Limpsfield and the Club secured a win. In round 2 the Club's team enjoyed a visit to Royal Wimbledon. The reports indicated that the Club was in contention but at the final hurdle Royal Wimbledon won by 3 – 2.

### **NAPGC Clapham Common Shield – Men's Greensomes Aggregate Stableford**

The Club scored a round 1 victory by 7 points over Brent Valley. In round 2, the Club's opponents Wexham Park were the winners.

### **NAPGC Bourne-Vanneck – Men's Aggregate Medal**

Along with other NAPGC member clubs from the division the Club's team travelled to Farnham Park for the regional qualifier. From this event the two best teams progress to the final comprising fourteen teams from around the country. On the day, it was two local teams from Farnham Park that were successful.

### **NAPGC Hawtree Trophy – Mixed Greensomes Aggregate Stableford**

For the third year running the Club's first round competitor was a team from Hoebridge, and unfortunately, for the third year in succession the opponent were the victors.

### **NAPGC White Webbs – Ladies' Aggregate Stableford**

In the first round the Club was drawn against the very competitive Hoebridge B team. The Club secured a win by 20 points but then lost in round two against a team from Easthampstead.



## **Internal Matches and Competitions**

### **The Bontor**

After the win in 2014 the ladies entered 2015 as the holders of the trophy. In the competition the ladies took the lead by 4 – 2. The men then made a strong challenge to lead by 9 – 7. The final two games finished with two more wins for the ladies. The overall result was a 9 – 9 draw and the ladies retain the trophy until the next challenge in 2016.

### **Ladies' Invitation**

For 2015 we retained the traditional American Greensomes format for the May event. After a recount the winners for the second year running were Val Riziotis and Paul Brown with a total of 38 points. In second place, also with 38 points but losing out on a countback were Lia Donath and Ed Henery.

### **Men's Invitation**

On a barmy hot day the Invitation was played in July and the winning scores were high. The winners were Veronica Mitchell and Graham Terry with 42 points. In second place with 40 points were Sheena Harrington and Pete Harrison.

After golf there was an open invitation to an excellent feast of a BBQ – and a few drinks - in the surroundings of Paul Grand's garden in East Sheen where we were able to celebrate Paul's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **The Ladies' Spring Weekend Away main event - The Lockie Trophy**

In 2015 the Club ventured north in the direction of Birmingham to the Forest of Arden Hotel and Country Club. Fortunately, a very wet spell had passed and the weekend weather was dry. The main challenge for the ladies is for the Lockie Trophy, a 36 hole event played over two days. The weekend winner was Susan Smith with scores of 33 and 32 for a total of 65 points. The runner up was Gina Jillett. The men have a similar challenge and the winner was Paul Grand with scores of 31 and 40 for a total of 71. The runner up was Martin Heinrich.

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

In the autumn of 2015 the ladies returned to an old favourite, the Meon Valley Hotel and Country Club heading down towards Southampton. Playing for the 36 hole Gill Hibbs Trophy the weekend winner was Jayne Maxwell with scores of 28 and 35 for a total of 63 points. The runner up was Deborah Potter. For the men's challenge the winner was Pete Harrison with scores of 32 and 39 for a total of 71. The runner up was Peter Osgood.

## **Individual Achievements**

- The first success of 2015 occurred in April. Back in November 2014 the entrants for the NAPGC Mary Forster Bowl commenced the round robin cycle of games against three other clubs where all the group's courses are played. It transpired that over the four events the Richmond Park ladies were the group's top players and this took them to the final. Then, at the final the team won the national championship !! A number of ladies participated in the team's effort, however of special mention are the three who played in the final challenge: Jayne Maxwell, Cheryl Woodhouse and Val Riziotis.

- For the RPGC Open we invite the members of Putney Park to join us for the event. Some years ago we were joined by two other clubs that have since disbanded. Over the years it has been something of a rarity for an RPGC member to win the Club's Open event but this did occur in 2015 with Sheena Harrington winning with a net 67, and following Sheena in the runner up position was Tenesi Karakaneva. Sheena's success was the first home win since Jason Loubser in 2009, and before Jason it was Ole Leon-Martin in 2004. The other highlight of Sheena's success is that this is the first recorded Open win by a lady member.
- In the men's NAPGC UKPCC Stableford championship both Paul Appleton and Nick Rogers qualified for the final and although both scored well they did not finish amongst the top places.
- The men's birdie tree has grown!! Jay Barker scored the highest number with 54 birdies in 2015, and Ed Henery was in second place with a total of 48. By comparison, Ed was the winner in 2014 with 28 birdies.
- There were no 'holes in one' scored in 2015.
- And last but not least, perhaps the most impressive win of 2015. Back in Jan or Feb I was in the last game progressing round the course at the usual Sunday pace and I spied a lady many holes behind who was 'speeding'. It didn't take long for her to run into the back of the RPGC convoy and she joined my game. After a couple of weeks of constantly bumping into RPGC members Jane Fraser decided to join and she received her first handicap award of 23 on 8<sup>th</sup> March. Jane entered the NAPGC Ladies' Championship qualifier and progressed to the final at Southern Valley GC in Kent. Playing against a field of 23 players in the Bronze Division and playing off 22, Jane scored a 3 under net 65 to win by one shot. So, from her starting blocks position in March, Jane progressed to become a national champion in August !! – 2015 will definitely be a year to remember !

## **Extra Curricular Activities**

As mentioned in the matches note above, for those participating the Ladies' 2015 Spring Weekend Away ventured to the Forest of Arden course on the outskirts of Birmingham. Fortunately the weather was better than normal but it was still cold. Then, for the the Autumn the weekenders travelled in the opposite direction to Meon Valley near Southampton. For this weekend the golfers enjoyed some good playing conditions. The weekends away are organised through the ladies' section. As expected, when it comes to filling the available slots the ladies have first refusal but this still allows room for a good representation from the men's department. Both weekends were very successful and we pass our thanks to Veronica Mitchell who dealt with bookings and the hotel arrangements on both occasions. The plans for 2016 are well under way. For those that have not been away before now and would like to be added to the list of interested members I recommend buying Veronica a drink stronger than tea.

Jim Deissler took the plunge into the deep end and after some detailed research he arranged for a Club away day to Merrist Wood Golf Club near Guildford on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June. The day comprised a 9 hole morning warm up session followed by a full round in the afternoon. The winner of the afternoon event by a country mile was Pete Harrison with 41 point and the next best scores were Richard Owen and Molly Hood with 32 points. We thank Jim for organising both the golf and the excellent weather for the day.

On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October that Club enjoyed another great away day. This time it was to Rusper for 18 holes and the organiser was Alison Chadwick. After a fairly comfortable first

couple of holes we soon found that our first impressions were misguided and Rusper was a lot harder than it first appeared. Perhaps Alison knew something that we didn't because the ladies topped the leaderboard. The winner of the day's competition was Jayne Maxwell, Veronica Mitchell was second, and Alison came in third. We thank Alison for organising the away day and making sure that the weather behaved itself.

## **www.RichmondParkGolfClub.Org.Uk - The RPGC Website**

With no big fanfare or bunting the Club's website slips into its 15<sup>th</sup> year.

Using his own IT services Tim created the website as a medium for the Club to retain an annual archive of data including results, activities and all sorts of snippets of information. Via 'Latest News' it is possible to browse back over previous months and years and recapture previous wins and also be reminded of the players of the time.

At the commencement of the website the Club was based in the former building known as the Pavilion near Roehampton Gate and we soon found the website to be an invaluable assistance with the information flow to members; most notably with regard to the display of our order of play for future weeks.

Tim maintains that his role in the maintenance process is 'Editor' but it is pretty clear for all to see that the editing includes a lot of time-consuming reformatting of information to fit the website's style. I am sure that there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes that we are not aware of.

My guess is that at the beginning of 2015 Tim was hoping for a sensible year without too much drama; then of course, from 4<sup>th</sup> March we just about 'doubled' the activity level with the addition of the Wednesday fixtures. Tim was therefore confronted with the task of building in lots of extra 'homes' for the stream of data and adding all the associated linkages.

Shortly after the website commenced I suggested to Tim that the site could show a 'hit' tally to indicate how well we were doing. Tim quite clearly knew more about this topic than me. As a result of a few technical topics the data showed that we were receiving a hit of one sort or another every 30 seconds. At a rough guess I reckon that we have received over 12 million hits since the start in 2002.

Yet again we are exceedingly grateful to Tim for his editorship and dedication to the maintenance of the website through 2015. Some of us know that Tim's work timetable is very congested and that slipping in the Club's website updates between tasks can be a struggle from time to time.

The website has already rolled forward to 2016 we look forward to seeing the build up of our performances through the forthcoming year.

## **Absent Friends**

I am very pleased to say that I have nothing to report for 2015.

## The Committee and helpers

We started our 2015 golf season with two new appointments; Paul Brown as the Club's Captain and Lia Donath as the Club's Lady Captain.

From the sidelines it is very easy to assume that the roles of Captain and Vice Captain are pretty straightforward without too much direct action. As it happens, nothing could be further from the truth and the Club's Captains always get drawn into every facet of Club activity. There are many tasks and actions that drop into the laps of the Captains and the idea that the position carries a simple oversight duty is far from the truth. Immediately following the 2015 AGM the Club was involved in the creation of the new midweek section and I know that Paul and Lia found themselves with a sudden surge in the daily email traffic and the rate has not abated. We are of course all extremely grateful for their dedication to their positions through the year. In Paul's case I know that he was confronted with some hugely time-consuming situations that nobody could have predicted.

Everyone who sits on the Club's Committee contributes to the well-being and progress of the Club through the course of each rolling year. For some Committee members the input is in the form of advice and commentary, and then we also have a few members who are involved in the front line of activity to ensure that everything on an operational level is ship-shape. I will remind everyone of those who have been working hard behind the scenes

- I have placed Richard Owen on the top of this list because it is very clear to all of us in close quarters that the success of the new Midweek programme is very largely the result of Richard's tireless endeavours to make it all happen and happen in a very good way. At the very beginning of 2015 Richard was the Liaison Officer representative of the three clubs for the purpose of the two-way communication with Glendale. At this time Richard was confronted with a constant stream of antagonism from White Lodge which led to the dismantling of the configuration of the former Association and there was no let up in the communication traffic when it was agreed that RPGC would indeed have a Wednesday fixture schedule. Richard has 'looked after' the Wednesday fixture programme including the collection of entries and the distribution of prizes and I also know that Richard has maintained a record of player attendances for 2015. It was typical that at the first hint of a need for a Midweek Captain for 2015 Richard agreed to add this to his portfolio of duties. One further critical role that dropped 'conveniently' into Richard's lap has been the first point of contact of the new annual Loyaltee cardholder seeking a club membership. In addition to assisting the prospective new members Richard has been looking after the invoicing for the Club's contribution from Glendale for the new member subscriptions. In short, Richard performed a monumental task in 2014 and this was excelled in 2015!
- We are all fortunate to have had Nick Rogers look after Club's coffers through 2015. If my memory serves me correctly Nick took over the Treasurer's role in 2009. He retires from the post during the AGM but has agreed to be around for a comfortable transitional handover. Keeping tabs on the receipts and payments and the membership numbers requires a particular style of application and we are very grateful for Nick's devotion to the task throughout the last seven years of accounts control.
- On the men's side one of the objectives of 2015 was to share or delegate some of the Captain's workload, notably with regard to the external matches and I am aware that our Captain Paul would like me to say a 'thank you' to Tony Kopczak who took charge of a few events.
- Another new activity that originated in 2015 was the issue educational bulletins twice a week. These have normally been accompanied by the less interesting order of play listings. With Chris Jones looking after Wednesdays and Peter Jagger looking after

Sundays we have been the fortunate recipients of golfing snippets and historical info to brighten up our days. Needless to say, administering the booking sheet process has its testing moment and we are grateful to Chris and Peter for their time and input which is a critical part of the weekly cycle of the Club's operations.

- And finally I must mention our Handicap Secretaries, Paul Grand and Sheena Harrington who have not just kept our handicaps fully up-to-date throughout the year but have had to take on board the additional burden of the Wednesday fixtures. In order that we can run both the Wednesday and Sunday fixtures as handicap qualifying events it has to be the case that the Club does everything possible to ensure that the handicap records are correct and updated in time for the next event which is now just a few days away. Between them, both Paul and Sheena have managed to keep the handicap records in tip-top order through the year which is a major accomplishment for the Club. Of course, the work does not stop with the members' handicaps because all the cards for the prospective members have to be controlled separately. It goes without saying that we are all individual beneficiaries of the work undertaken by Paul and Sheena and we are grateful to them for their commitment.

## **The Final Word**

For 2016 we are optimistic that it will be a case of onwards and upwards. I hope that you all have a most enjoyable golfing year and an entry on next year's prize list.

Peter Harrington  
Secretary  
30<sup>th</sup> January 2016