

RICHMOND PARK GOLF CLUB



ANNUAL REPORT - 2022

I am pleased to report that we can regard 2022 as a normal year. We all like normal because our plans and routines have some degree of certainty. We have to go back to 2019 for our last normal year. 2020 saw the onslaught of Covid and the dreaded word lockdown emerged. It was not until 18th July 2021 that we saw the end of the Covid interruptions with the 'no touch' rules dropped, and this gave us the luxury of being able to lift the flagstick once again. With 2022 being normal the committee took the opportunity to introduce a few policy changes and these are outlined in this overview here.

Just occasionally there emerges an excuse to expand the list of perpetual trophies. Following some anomalies with the changeover to WHS in November 2020 the committee undertook a review of the Club's Sunday events where there was a general belief by sections of the membership that the WHS system contained a subtle bias in favour of high handicappers to the detriment of the lower handicappers. To deal with this perception and to alleviate some concerns the committee agreed to add some events to the existing theme of having separate awards for the senior and junior divisions. In the prize list mentioned below we can see that junior awards are now provided for the men's grand medal trophy, the men's top dog trophy, and both the spring and autumn 36 hole Stableford events. The men's winter competition series has also changed to the divisional results basis. In another change for 2022 it was decided to discontinue the Midweek Anniversary Accumulator series comprising four medal rounds and for two of the available slots it was agreed to increase the Midweek Founder's Cup series from four to six Stableford events.

Many will recall that in the days before WHS when the Congu handicapping system was in force it was necessary to complete three rounds of golf on a club's home course to obtain a starting handicap. Under WHS the scores from three full rounds of golf are also required for the issue of a starting handicap, but the rounds can now be played on any golf course in the world. The main difference between the two systems is that under Congu a golf club could exercise discretion in determining the award of a starting handicap. It was common that after a full analysis of the 54 holes of play, in roughly 65% of new handicap awards we would apply either an upward or downward variation from the recommended starting handicap number. In the case of WHS there is no scope for a club to intervene to apply any element of discretion in the award of starting handicap numbers, and it was this lack of control that presented the Club with some difficulties. After a review of some relevant data the committee introduced the policy whereby a new Club member cannot 'win' a competition until six scores are shown on the member's WHS handicap record. New members who are short of the six scores still enter the Club's weekly competitions in the usual manner but the prospect of collecting the day's trophy is out of bounds. This rule was introduced to provide a degree of fairness to the existing Club membership and to counter one of the WHS anomalies that have become apparent since its introduction.

If we cast our minds back to November 2020, the Club had endured a testing time with the on/off consequences of the lockdowns and when golf was permitted the games were limited to

2-ball or 3-ball activity. To alleviate some of the tee time pressures the committee introduced the rather controversial policy of moving the Sunday competitions to weekend competitions by allowing play on Saturdays. At the time of introducing this new arrangement it was stated that allowing Saturday golf would be for a trial period. In May 2022 the committee reviewed the Saturday golf arrangement and decided to discontinue with the scheme. Understandably there were some who were disappointed to lose the freedom of choice between playing on the Saturday or the Sunday, and there were some who welcomed the move because the playing conditions can be vastly different for the two days. More importantly from a technical perspective, the Club could not be certain the course set up on a Saturday would be unaltered for the following Sunday. A small group of Saturday regulars had emerged and when the golf returned to Sunday only they were offered the opportunity to establish something more formal than just a social golf gathering but this line was not pursued.

Those in the Club in the pre-Covid era will recall the competition entry fees and the optional sweep entries being collected in cash each event day. Of course, we all know that with the arrival of covid one of the first no touch safety measures to be introduced was the avoidance of cash, and this required the Club to move very quickly over to the Purse account. Controlling the optional sweep collections proved to be difficult but in June 2022 the arrangement became much easier when the Club was able to take advantage of a new facility that allowed members to opt in or out of the sweep when signing in for a competition entry.

At the beginning of 2022 we welcomed John Ahad into his new role as the Captain of the Club and John was accompanied by Sheena Harrington who commenced her second year of the present term as Captain of the Women's Section. Throughout the year John and Sheena have been very diligently keeping an eye on the proceedings and activities, and they have been supporting the external competitions with other clubs. We are thankful for their stewardship and look forward to them continuing with their fine work through 2023.

Annual Prizegiving

On Saturday 4th February we will see the array of the Club's trophies and awards ready for presentation at the Club's annual dinner. Before 2014 the annual dinner was accompanied with some extra-curricular entertainment, usually in the form of a live band. 2015 was the year when the large group of midweek awards was added to the Club's portfolio and since this period the annual dinners have been less energetic with more time devoted to the actual presentation.

Listed below are the Club's main competitions along with our 2022 winners. We do normally have a good number of names with something to receive for their performances and 2022 was no exception. The number of our events listed has increased from 61 to 69. We have 89 names receiving a mention, and this is again equivalent to 30% of the Club's membership. In addition to the main competitions we do have 'just a few prizes' on offer that are handed out from time to time including 18 Club Plates and for each month we award four monthly medal glasses.

The Club's 36 hole scratch Club Championship has always been viewed as the premier event on the Club's fixture calendar. It is traditional for the first of the two rounds to be played on the Prince's course and for the more challenging Duke's course to be played for the final 18 holes. In the senior division it was Richard Back who took the first round lead with a gross 74, just one shot ahead of Brian McMahon and Chris Saloway. For his second round Richard scored a gross 77 giving him a total of 151. Brian and Chris could not match Richard for the second round. A late charge emerged from Jay Barker with a second round 74 but Jay's total of 152 left him just one shot adrift as the runner-up. In the junior division Tony Kopczak finished his first round in the lead with a gross 85, just one shot clear of Phil Flanagan and Dave Chilvers. All three struggled in the second round and they left room for Julian James to finish with the leading score of 176, one shot clear of Dave's 177. For the Midweek Championship Richard

Back pulled out the stops for his first round and seven birdies helped him to a gross 66. Jay Barker finished behind Richard with his gross 72. For the second round Richard was off key with a gross 81 to give him an overall 147. Jay could not match Richard but five birdies from Rob Smyth for a gross 73 elevated him to the runner-up position to finish one shot adrift of Richard. In the junior division the first round leader was Roland Godfrey with a gross 85 and he was pursued by Colin Price with a gross 86. For the Duke's round Roland stepped up his lead by one additional shot from Colin to finish with a gross 173 and Colin had to settle for second place with his 175. Without giving any major secrets away, the age difference between Roland and Colin is 50 years.

Turning to our women, on the Prince's course Silvia Bortoli's round included three birdies for a score of 79, two shots ahead of Veronica Mitchell with her gross 81. On the Duke's course Silvia scored better with a gross 77 to finish with a total of 156. Veronica could not match Sylvia and she settled for the runner-up position with a total of 170. In the Midweek Championship Sylvia started her campaign with an opening gross 76, a full seven shots clear of the gross 83 from Sheena Harrington. For the second round Silvia's gross 85 was the best of the day and she finished with the winning total of 161. Sheena held onto second place with a second round score of 86, finishing with a total of 169.

Hearty congratulations are therefore due to our four 2022 Champions, firstly to Richard for winning both the Sunday senior men's Championship and also the senior Midweek Mens's Championship, secondly to Sylvia for winning both the Sunday championship and also the Midweek Women's Championship, thirdly to Julian for winning the Sunday junior men's Championship, and finally to Roland for his success in winning the junior Midweek Men's Championship.

Here follows the full prize list for 2022: -

RPGC 2022 PRIZE LIST

WEEKEND EVENTS

Senior Men's Club Championship

Women's Club Championship

Junior Men's Club Championship

Men's Club Championship Handicap Trophy – Senior Division

Men's Club Championship Handicap Trophy – Junior Division

Women's Handicap Cup - handicaps 0-19

Women's Pembroke Cup - handicaps 20+

J H Taylor – match play 0-16

Two Courses Cup – match play 17+

Women's Challenge Cup – match play

Men's Fourball – match play

Women's Double C Cup

Mixed Foursomes – match play

Women's Committee Cup

WINNER

Richard Back

Silvia Bortoli

Julian James

Kevin Prendergast

Dave Chilvers

Veronic Mitchell

Jenny Lawrence

Paul Kamerling

Julian James

Roslyn Williams

Tony Kopczak & Nigel Ward

Jayne Maxwell & Susan Smith

Sheena Harrington & Paul Green

Gina Jillett

RUNNER-UP

Jay Barker

Veronica Mitchell

Dave Chilvers

(Roger Rojas)

(Tony Kopczak)

Silvia Bortoli

Katharina Katte

Richard Owen

(withdrawn)

(withdrawn)

Kim Chaffart & Henry Lindesay-Bethune

Gina Jillett & Katharina Katte

Katharina Katte & Uli Katte

Hilary Casey

Grand Medal Trophy – Senior Division	Kerry Sargeant	(Brian McMahon)
Grand Medal Trophy – Junior Division	Julian James	(Goran Kovacevic)
Silver Jubilee Trophy	Ben Dickey	Brendan Sullivan
Golden Jubilee Trophy	Sheena Harrington	Goran Kovacevic
Diamond Jubilee Trophy	Alex Braun	Ben Dickey
Platinum Jubilee Trophy	Joe Goncalves	Duncan Taylor
Anniversary Cup	John Morris	(Mike Shabani) (Sheena Harrington) (Paul Kamerling) (Oz Doyle)
President's Putter	Susan Smith	Ryan Jones
Captain's Prize	Goran Kovacevic	Patrick Murphy
Women's Captain's Prize	Fiona Coombe	Caroline Stilwell
J Q Robertson Trophy	Paddy Stone	Henry Lindesay-Bethune
Coronation Cup	Reiko Hashimoto	Joan Mulcahy
Shaw Cup	Duncan Taylor	Pat Dalton
Summer Cup	[Colm Ivors – expelled]	Peter Goodall
Spring Mixed - 4BBB	Hilary Casey & [Colm Ivors – expelled]	Joan Mulcahy & John Ahad
Autumn Mixed - Handicap	Cheryl Woodhouse & Peter Goodall	Sheena Harrington & Brendan Sullivan
Autumn Mixed - Scratch	Sheena Harrington & Brendan Sullivan	(Veronica Mitchell & Nick Rogers)
Burgess Cup - Greensomes	Will Balakrishnan & Brendan Sullivan	Tony Kopczak & Nigel Ward
Top Dog Trophy – Senior Division	Richard Owen	Paul Kamerling
Top Dog Trophy – Junior Division	Duncan Taylor	Goran Kovacevic & Charlie Whiteman (tied)
Women's Dowling Cup	Sheena Harrington	
Lissaman Cup	Joe Goncalves	Nigel Ward
Barton Bowl	Katharina Katte	-
Charity Cup	Jihum Kim	Ray Esin
Spring Stableford Trophy – Senior Division	Jay Barker	Oz Doyle
Spring Stableford Trophy – Junior Division	Martin Hay	Goran Kovacevic
Autumn Stableford Trophy – Senior Division	Justin Bradford	Bernie McDermott
Autumn Stableford Trophy – Junior Division	Suhail Salim	Sean O'Sullivan
Winter Competition [2021 / 2022]	[Colm Ivors – expelled]	Julian James & Richard Owen (tied)

MIDWEEK EVENTS

Senior Men's Club Championship
 Women's Club Championship
 Junior Men's Club Championship

WINNER

Richard Back
 Silvia Bortoli
 Roland Godfrey

RUNNER-UP

Rob Smyth
 Sheena Harrington
 Colin Price

Club Championship Handicap Trophy	Rob Smyth	(Hilary Casey)
Inaugural Trophy	Chris Rudkin	Brian Ransom
Grand Medal Trophy	Kim Chaffart & Tony Kopczak (tied)	-
Founder's Cup – E. Bailey	Richard Young	Juho Lim
Founder's Cup – Mrs Millidge	Tamas Ladacs	Peppe Monterosso
Founder's Cup – J. Hume	Richard Owen	Richard Hodgkinson
Founder's Cup – J. Davidson	Juho Lim	Veronica Mitchell
Founder's Cup – H. Prendergast	Jay Barker	Tamas Ladacs
Founder's Cup – J. Nicholas	Alison Chadwick	Vinny Hayes
Founders' Cup (overall)	Tamas Ladacs	(Richard Hodgkinson)
President's Prize	Naveed Manazir	Darren Vallance
Captain's Day	Paul Giles	Chris Jones
Priory Cup	Chris Newman	Paul Green
Masters Bowl	Sheena Harrington	James Deissler
Claret Jug	Lia Donath	Peter Goodall
Midsummer Trophy	Jeremy Prescott	Luke Rubra
Fred Hawtree Trophy	Giles Rawlinson	Allan Cobb
The Edward Cup	Oliver Khan	Gina Jillett
Spring Stableford Trophy	Toby Hunt	Ryan Jones
Autumn Pairs	Pat Dalton & [Colm Ivors – expelled]	Richard Hodgkinson & Richard Norden
Harrington Trophy	Peppe Monterosso	Richard Owen
Charity Trophy	Peppe Monterosso	Neil Elkins
Winter Competition [2021 / 2022]	Juho Lim	Peter Goodall

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

Precise performance statistics are not easily obtained because the historical data from WHS can skew the results. However, on a general level we find that of the members who were with the Club for all twelve months of 2022 a total of 49% improved their handicaps, a total of 16% did not have a handicap change, and a total of 35% saw their handicaps increase. For the members who joined the Club during 2022 we find that 40% managed an improvement on their starting handicaps, a total of 8% of our joiners did not achieve a handicap movement, and 45% watched their handicaps go up. It is interesting that in 2022 we see the above improvement ratio of 49% and this compares very favourably with the figure of 23% for 2021. The main difference between the two years was that the summer of 2021 at the Park was exceptionally wet and green, and the summer of 2022 was exceptionally dry and brown.

Membership

Here we have our 11 year table and we can see where we stand at 31st December 2022.

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
Men:											
Regular	251	232	203	217	192	171	149	123	86	93	102
Junior	4	2	0	0	3	2	1	1	2	1	1
Hon (playing)	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	4
Total Men	<u>256</u>	<u>235</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>218</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>175</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>107</u>
Women:											
Regular	43	42	45	53	46	44	41	41	36	37	37
Junior	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hon (playing)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total Women	<u>45</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>38</u>
Total	<u>301</u>	<u>279</u>	<u>250</u>	<u>272</u>	<u>242</u>	<u>220</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>167</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>145</u>
	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
	8%	12%	8%	12%	10%	15%	15%	33%	5%	8%	10%
Joiners:											
New men	59	60	42	61	50	42	53	49	14	22	25
New women	6	5	3	11	7	7	3	9	2	2	2
Juniors	2	3	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	0
Rejoiners – men	4	3	5	4	1	2	1	2	0	1	1
Rejoiners – women	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	<u>71</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>28</u>
Leavers:											
	<u>49</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>33</u>
	18%	17%	26%	19%	17%	14%	19%	16%	18%	26%	22%

It is good to see that the trend is up and for the first time in recent history the Club has completed the year with an excess of 300 members. It is possible that the Club might have reached this number sooner had it not been for Covid. 2020 was the main year for the Covid interruptions and even when golf was permitted the restrictions meant that most of the games were limited to no more than 2-ball play and this had a consequential impact on membership retention. 2021 started with a three month lockdown period at the beginning of the year, therefore we see 2022 as being the first 'normal' and unblemished year since 2019.

From the table we see that new member activity was both good and steady in 2022. Whilst keeping an eye on our new memberships it is very apparent that WHS has contributed both positive and negative influences on memberships. WHS maintains all club handicaps as well as the non-club handicaps that are administered via the iGolf facility. One positive feature of WHS has been the ease by which the iGolf members can transfer across directly and seamlessly with their handicaps to the club system, and we are fortunate that we have been able to attract a small number of iGolf players to join RPGC. Conversely, one unquantifiable negative feature of the iGolf option is the number of golfers who appear to play handicap golf quite regularly at the Park without making the move to join RPGC.

Regarding the profile of the Club's membership, a couple of statistics have come to light. Firstly, without disclosing all the data we see that 27% of the membership has reached the comfortable retirement age of 66, and for some days this percentage appears to be a good deal lower than the sight of our players out on the courses would indicate. Another snippet is that

52% of the Club's members have subscribed for either the 5-day or the 7-day annual Loyaltee plan offered by Glendale. This number shows that one half of the Club's membership has invested in a keen interest to play regularly at the Park. It is also interesting that 34% of the subscribers are members of the 5-day annual plan and the remaining significant majority of 66% have opted for the 7-day annual plan.

As mentioned in previous years we see that whilst the men's total has increased by 139% since 2012, the increase for the women is negligible at just 18%. The women's membership for 2022 has kept pace with 2020 and 2021 but as a proportion of the Club's total membership we have seen the women drop from around 25% to 15%. We are aware that the Women's Committee does intend to step up the promotion of the women's section to the public players at the Park and it is hoped that this will encourage new interest.

Over the years we have come to accept that the ratio of leavers is typically in the range of 15% to 20% for the years when there is no major upheaval or playing limitation such as Covid. This leaving ratio would appear to be common for clubs in the London area where sectors of the population can be very transient. For 2022 our 49 leavers provided a leaving ratio of 18% and this is within our level of expectation. With many of our leavers the reasons are very clear and from the comments received we see that 18 former members (37%) have moved away from the locality, 9 former members (37%) are members of other clubs, and 19 members (39%) appear to have discontinued golf or the prospect of playing competition golf with the Club.

We know that activity levels are influenced very significantly by external happenings, noticeably the weather and the ground conditions at the Park. 2022 was a year of temperature extremes and exceptional rain which no doubt had some impact on the desirability or availability to play at the Park. The analysis shows that for 2022 there was a marked drop of general golf activity over 2021. The figures for 2022 are:

	Playing days	Average per day	Average for 2021	Movement
Sundays	49	58	66	(12%)
Wednesdays	50	43	48	(10%)
Fridays	50	18	16	+13%
Per week		119	130	(8%)

Despite the fall in the averages between 2021 and 2022 it is fair to comment that 2021 was not a 'normal' year in the traditional sense. Golf in 2021 did not commence fully until the end of March when the lockdown period ended and this means that roughly twelve weeks of the quieter winter activity does not feature in the 2021 data. Also, whilst international travel was considered by some to still be taboo in 2021 it was apparent that many were taking advantage of the opportunity presented by the good summer weather of 2022.

If our golf days at the Park seem busier than our membership data shows this will be because we are card marking for potential new members at the rate of roughly four per week through the year, and clearly there is a level of heightened interest in the spring to autumn period.

Midweek Wednesday Golf

Now in its eighth year we saw the Club's Wednesday fixture programme continue as an important established feature of the Club's operations. From the playing analysis shown above we see that 36% of the Club's weekly activity occurs on Wednesdays and this is when the courses are not usually so busy as we find on Sundays. One difference with our Wednesdays is that with the tee intervals set at seven minute intervals we aim to play our games in no more than 3-balls in order to assist with the speed of play.

During 2022 we enjoyed the benefit of the oversight of the activities performed by our Midweek Captain, Henry Lindesay-Bethune, and we are grateful for his input through the year.

Again, it is necessary to give a special mention to Kim Chaffart for arranging the set up and publication of the Wednesday start sheets, and Kim has also been conscientiously producing the Wednesday results in a time that is quicker than some of us can get home from the Park.

Midweek Friday Golf

With thanks to Richard Owen our Friday sweeps have become an established feature of the club and attendance has crept up to 15% of our full weekly activities.

Team events have become a popular addition to the Friday programme and will no doubt continue for 2023.

Behind the scenes we are aware that Richard spends a good deal of time setting up the Friday programme, pre-booking the extra tee slots when necessary, the administration of the bookings sheets including the publication of the start sheets, and finally the publication of the results. We are all very grateful to Richard for his commitment to ensuring that Fridays run like clockwork.

The Purse

The Purse keeps growing in terms of activity. The Purse account records are maintained and controlled via a simple but large spreadsheet and in 2022 more than 15,000 individual transactions were recorded. On our MasterScoreboard profiles the Purse balances are of course agreed individually with the accounts records, a task which often takes more than just a few hours to complete. For those hoping for something in return for a good score, the competition sweep pay-outs for 2022 totalled £8,955.

Inter-Club Friendly Matches

Here's the score for 2022:

Men vs. Rickmansworth:

Unbelievable !! For many years the Club has had a real drumming from the Richmansworth teams. In the knowledge that RPGC struggles with this friendly it was some years ago that the home leg at the Park was set to be the first leg so as to give some prospect of optimism that the match might be worth continuing with the second leg set to be played at Rickmansworth. At the Park, by some miracle of nature, the Club's home team won the leg 6 – 0. This did not mean that the match was a forgone conclusion because a clean sweep by Rickmansworth at their home would draw the match and Rickmansworth would be entitled to retain the cup. Well, over

at Rickmansworth for the second leg there was another miracle of nature because one pair halved with their opponents. The overall result therefore was a remarkably rare Club win with the score 6½ - 5½.

Ladies vs. Mitcham:

The 2022 match was cut to three pairs and the first leg was played at Mitcham on a sunny June day. The result was a 2 to 1 win to Club's team. In the home leg at the Park the Club's team excelled with a 2½ to ½ result giving an overall win of 4½ to 1½.

Mixed match vs. Amida:

In 2020 the Amida team captured the trophy on their home soil. In 2021 the Amida team arrived at the Park with the trophy and when the result was shown to be a draw the Amida team took the trophy back to Hampton. The 2022 match was played over at Hampton. The details of the score are not available but it is known that the trophy remains in Hampton.

External Competitions

It is traditional for the Club to enter competitions promoted by Surrey Golf and the NAPGC. Here is a synopsis of our activity in 2021:

Surrey Golf – The Surrey 5's – Men's Individual Match Play

Competition not entered in 2022.

Surrey Golf – Kelso Hamilton – Men's Four Ball Better-ball Match Play

Richard Owen and Uli Katte played for the Club in 2022. Richmond Park was positioned in the East division where 45 teams had entered. In their first round Richard and Uli scored a victory over Dulwich and Sydenham. In the next round they scored another victory, this time over Woodcote Park. The next round was the quarter final and they succeeded yet again, this time against a team from Thames Ditton. In the division semi-final Richard and Uli were up against Reigate Heath and they were unsuccessful on this occasion. This run of success in the Kelso Hamilton is perhaps the longest run by Club members in the modern era.

Surrey Golf – The Thornhill KO - Mixed Foursomes Match Play

Veronica Mitchell and Kim Chaffart represented the Club in 2022. They had to play away and were unsuccessful against opponents who would have had a massive shot advantage.

Men's UKPCC – [Stableford]

Seven men passed muster at the Club's home qualifier and they headed to the regional final played at Hoebridge on Tuesday 19th July. This date is significant because it was the hottest day – ever. Very wisely the NAPGC decided to offer the option of an 18 hole qualifier or a 9 hole qualifier for those who were concerned about the playing conditions. Progressing from Hoebridge to the October final at the Celtic Manor Resort in Wales were Peter Goodall and Colm Ivors (later expelled). Neither player collected a prize but Peter Goodall did receive a mention on the prizewinners list which is mentioned here later.

NAPGC Men's Championship – Medal

Success !! From the Club's home qualifier eleven players were entitled to play at the regional final held at Haste Hill. When the list of the qualifiers for the final to be held at Woodhall Spa was published we saw Suhail Salim's name appear as the sole representative from Richmond Park. In the final played on the Bracken Course in August Suhail featured on the prizewinners sheet for his net 77 and third place in his Division 4 group.

NAPGC Clapham Common Shield – Men’s Greensomes Aggregate Stableford

Each Clapham Common team comprises six pairs. In the first round the Club was drawn against High Elms and quite remarkably both teams finished tied on 2013 points. On the countback it was the Richmond Park team that progressed to the next round. For the next round the Club was beaten by the Perivale Park team who then went forward to finish second at the national final.

NAPGC Bourne-Vanneck – Men’s Aggregate Medal

The Club entered two teams of three players for the regional qualifier played at West Middlesex in May. Neither team made it through to the final, and neither did the ‘ghost team’ that the NAPGC inadvertently named as an RPGC team on the result sheet.

NAPGC Senior Men’s Championship - Stableford

7 men enrolled for the Seniors Championship at Thorney Park. The NAPGC does not have a results listing for the 79 competitors but none of the RPGC names feature on the prizewinners list.

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

This event requires four pairs with two pairs playing at home and two pairs playing away. For the second year in succession the first round opponents were Wexham Park, however, unlike 2021 the Club was successful. In round two the Club came up against Huntswood and the two sides finished with the scores drawn but the Club’s team lost on the countback.

NAPGC Men’s Ballantyne Trophy - Better Ball Team Match Play Trophy

This event comprises three pairs in a match play knockout. The first round draw was an away visit to Bird Hills. The result was a draw after 18 holes and the opponents won on the fourth extra hole.

NAPGC Men’s Weekday Toprock Salver Better Ball Match Play Knockout

The Club did not enter at 2022 team.

NAPGC Gordon Forster Bowl – Team Stableford Knockout

Success !! Two teams entered for the Gordon Forster Bowl. The B team lost to Farnham Park in the first round but for the A team – it was a major win !! It is common knowledge that handicaps for Club members at the Park do not travel well and it is a very rare moment to have a successful result at a national final. In the early part of the knockout stages the team comprising Captain Cuneyt Sazer, John Ahad, Sean O’Sullivan and Charlie Whiteman had a modest win against Stevenage. In the next round the team had another modest win, this time against Hoebridge, and this win carried the team forward to the final at Gaudet Luce. At the time of the April final both Cuneyt and John were enjoying sunny golf in Belek, Turkey and to fill the gaps both Kim Chaffart and Adrian Wells stepped in. Playing in the final were a total of seven teams including those from Tilgate Forest, Wimbledon Common, Wycombe Heights (2 teams) and Huntswood (2 teams). At the completion of their round the Richmond Park team was not impressed with their total score but the organiser indicated that it was not as bad as assumed. In the final analysis the team won with 119 points, three points clear of second place.

The win marks the first occasion that a team from the Club has lifted the Gordon Forster trophy.

Women's UKPCC – [Stableford]

From the home qualifier Veronica Mitchell was presented with the opportunity to head to a regional qualifier. Veronica chose Royal Epping where she came second with 38 points and this qualified her for the October final at Celtic Manor Resort in Wales. At the final Veronica did not make it onto the list of the prizewinners.

NAPGC Women's Championship – Medal

Success !! Following the Club's home qualifier Caroline Stilwell and Julie Ryan (later expelled) were eligible to play at the national final held at Sheffield Oaks in July. Playing off 22, Caroline's net 66 was over six shots under her handicap and she collected the Mike Murphy Trophy for winning the Bronze Division by two shots.

NAPGC White Webbs – Ladies' Four-ball Better Ball Stableford

The Club entered two teams. For the second year running the A team lost to Easthampstead in the first round and the margin was 13 points. Unfortunately, the B team did not fare any better and also lost to an Easthampstead team with a deficit of 4 points on this occasion.

NAPGC Women's JHB Shield – Stroke play medal with teams of three players

Not entered in 2022.

NAPGC Senior Women's Championship - Stableford

Success !! Veronica Mitchell and Sheena Harrington entered the Seniors Championship held alongside the men at Thorney Park. 35 women played on the day and with her 37 points Veronica won the Barbara Rainey Bowl for the best Stableford score. Veronica was 4 points clear of the runner-up. Also, Veronica and Sheena won the Reg Pugh pairs shield with a combined score of 66 points where the winning margin was 6 points.

NAPGC Women's Match Play Trophy – Pairs Better Ball Match Play

The Club entered two pairs for this event. The B team lost the Easthampstead F team in the first round. The Club's A team had a successful win against the Easthampstead C team but then lost to the Easthampstead E team.

NAPGC Women's Toprock Bowl – Weekday Greensomes Pairs Match Play

Success !! The Club entered two pairs for this knockout competition. The Club's A team was successful at home against Basildon but then lost away to Haste Hill in the second round. The Club's B team comprised Susan Smith and Cheryl Woodhouse who commenced the challenge with a home win against Easthampstead. For the second round Cheryl was unwell and had to be substituted for the trip to Hoebridge, however Susan was able to report that with her win they were still very much in the knockout. The third round was the area final and this had to be played at a neutral venue. The opponents were another team from Easthampstead, and Susan and Cheryl scored yet another victory. The next round was the national semi-final and the opponents on this occasion were another pair from Hoebridge. Having got this far in the process Susan and Cheryl battled on and another win would see them heading to the national final held in September at Staverton Park.

After a remarkably successful journey of four match wins Susan and Cheryl were up against a pair from Huntswood on the first Monday of September and the photograph on the NAPGC website shows Susan and Cheryl very proudly holding the national trophy that they had won. Congratulations are the order of the day for Susan and Cheryl who are the Club's first winners of this national competition.

NAPGC Mary Forster Bowl – Women's Team Stableford

Unfortunately, the NAPGC website has a big gap of information and the details of the 2021/22 Mary Forster series are not shown. The format of the Mary Forster Bowl involves teams being placed in groups, and for the qualifying stage the teams have to play at each club location in their group. We know that there were two Club entries for the 2021/22 Mary Forster Bowl and that neither team made it through to the national final.

NAPGC Hawtree Trophy – Mixed Greensomes Aggregate Stableford

The Club supported two teams for the Hawtree knockout. The A team had a successful first round match against Huntswood, but then lost to Wexham Park. The B team was successful in its first round tie with another team from Wexham Park. In the second round the team was up against Farnham Park and was again successful. The next round was the area final and the B team managed a win against the Wexham Park team that had previously seen off the Club's A team. The area final win promoted the B team to the national final being held at Staverton Park. In the national final the B team finished in third place behind the winners from Rose Hill and Hoebridge in second place.

Internal Matches and Competitions

The Bontor – Match Play

In 2020 the Bontor trophy was captured from the women by the men. In 2021 the match had to be cancelled because the course was waterlogged. In 2022 12 individual matches set out on the Duke's course. After some close scoring at the early stages the men moved ahead in the scoring and the final result was 9-3 to the men.

Women's Invitation – American Greensomes

The Invitation was moved forward to May and 13 pairs took on the challenge on the Duke's course. The scoring was high with 9 pairs exceeding 40 points. There was a 49 points tie at the top of the leaderboard and on the countback the winners with the superior back nine were Susan Smith with Nigel Gaymond (playing off 23). Losing the countback and taking second place despite dropping only two shots to par were Sheena Harrington with Henry Lindesay-Bethune (playing off 15). Third place was captured by the pairing of Cheryl Woodhouse with Roger Rojas (playing off 17) who scored 47 points.

Men's Invitation – American Greensomes

A small group of 8 pairs took to the Duke's course in September for the men's invitation. Three birdies on the scorecard helped Jayne Maxwell with Sam Goodchild-Way (playing off 15) to their winning score of 48 points. There was a 46 points tie for the runner up position and on the countback the successful pairing were Jenny Lawrence with Richard Owen (playing off 21), thereby leaving Pat Barbour with Brendan Sullivan (playing off 22) to take the third place.

The International Challenge

Unfortunately, as a result of fixture congestion involving external matches the International Challenge had to be moved from July to early October. In September it emerged that all three nominated team captains would be away for the International and it was agreed to drop the event from the 2022 programme.

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

In April the first weekend away since 2019 took those playing to the other side of London to The Essex Golf and Country Club near Colchester. This venue was uncharted territory. The course was set out on a former air force base and one of the original runways was used for noisy pilot training.

It was helpful that the ground was relatively flat because the course was long with the red tees having a distance exceeding 6,000 yards. It transpired that one first for a Club weekend away was the presence of more men than women. For the men the 36 hole Saturday and Sunday competition was won by Suhail Salim with a 68 points total. The women were playing for the Lockie Trophy and with a total of 67 points Joan Mulcahy was the winner with Sheena Harrington taking second place with 66 points.

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

No arrangements were made for the autumn weekend away.

Extra-Curricular Activities

In September a small group of 11 headed off to the Ashbury Hotel in Devon for five nights to sample the hotel's four golf courses. The hotel is well known for providing excellent value with all the facilities included in the full board price, and those who had not been before found the new experience very refreshing. Day prizes were awarded and the overall winner for the four rounds was Colm Ivors (later expelled) with Julie Ryan (also later expelled) in second place.

Individual Achievements

It is not possible to capture all the main highlights of the members, however, here are a few noticeable instances:

- For the majority of members the occasional birdie or eagle is a rare treat, however there are some members where good hole scores seem to pop up with regular monotony. Here are some instances that occurred in 2022.
 - We have a new name at the top of the annual men's Sunday birdie listing and for 2022 our chief birdie player is Roger Rojas. Roger's total was 42 and a review of 2022 shows that he achieved this over his 40 rounds of Sunday golf. Last year's leader, Richard Back, is second on the list with 40 birdies recorded, however in Richard's case he is shown as playing on only 25 Sundays. With a lean golfing year, third on our list is Jay Barker with 39 birdies. A total of 117 members scored at least one Sunday birdie.
 - The women also have a new name on top of the annual Sunday listing and for 2022 we see Sylvia Bortoli with 13 birdies, a ratio very close to 1 birdie per round. Sheena Harrington lies second on the listing with 11 birdies, and Gina Jillett sits in third place with 10 birdies.
 - On top of the Wednesday birdie listing we see our Wednesday organiser Kim Chaffart with a total of 38. Together with his Sunday tally Kim's ratio was close to one birdie per round for 2022. Both Peter Goodall and Angus Robertson managed 30 birdies a piece for 2022.
 - Eagles, of course, are a rare breed. Whilst 17 Sunday eagles were recorded for 2022, Richard Smith is the only member with two on the listing, both on the Prince's course with his first being an outrageous 2 on the SI 1 7th hole, and the second on the par 5 9th hole.
 - The Wednesday eagle tally was much less at 6, including the hole in one mentioned below.

- On Wednesday 4th May on the Prince's course the Club hosted the Midweek May Monthly Medal. Playing off 18, Gina Jillett scored a net 73 and this equated to seven shots above her handicap. However, on this day her score was helped with a hole in one on the 16th hole.
- On Monday 3rd October Peter Goodall was playing in the UKPCC final at the Celtic Manor Resort in Wales on the Roman Roads course. In Division 1 Peter finished in 6th place with 30 points, just three shots behind the winner. Peter's score was helped along with four points on the 185 yard par 3 14th hole where he scored a hole in one.
- On Saturday 5th November Leo Andretta was under the eagle eye of his teacher as he took aim on the first tee of the 175 yard par 3 on the J.H.Taylor course at Royal Mid-Surrey, and Leo very expertly recorded a hole in one.

www.RichmondParkGolfClub.Org.Uk - The RPGC Website

Well, after five years of slow progress there was a big sigh of relief when the new website was launched on 13th December 2022.

The new website is accumulating the current news and reports very successfully. It is recognised that not all the records held on the old website have migrated across efficiently to the new website and some tidying needs to be done which will be attended to during the first half of 2023.

As it happens, 2022 is something of an anniversary. It was twenty years ago in 2002 that our President Tim Meyer inaugurated the former website and without a traditional clubhouse home the Club's website became the means to record not just the current news but also the historical data with regard to the trophy awards. Tim had been in the website editor's chair for the last twenty years and it was fitting that Tim took the final action to bounce the domain across to the new website that had been waiting in the wings. We are immensely grateful for Tim's twenty years of website maintenance and editorship.

Absent Friends

In November we received the sad news that Pat King, one of the Club's former members had died. Pat was the father of Tracy Wright who was the women's captain in 1998 and 1999. Pat was a very regular and steady Club golfer whose handicap was in the 'teens'. Pat played regularly on Sundays from the 1980s through to his departure in 2007. There were many instances when Pat would help the Club out with a few items and this was often the result of some gentle persuasion by Tracy. Outside of golf we know that Pat was involved with a community youth club which required him to exercise some stern discipline from time to time. When he left the Club we were aware that Pat was struggling with his health and we heard that he had moved to Wales to be with Tracy and her new partner.

Legal Claim against RPGC

The last four months of 2022 were overshadowed by an unfortunate event that that needs to be mentioned, not least because of the absolutely colossal amount of time that had to be devoted to deal with the subject. The following note is a brief synopsis of the main points.

It was on 25th September that the Club was presented with a letter dated 7th September from a firm of 'no win, no fee' lawyers. The letter indicated that a legal claim would be pursued, but not against RPGC. On Thursday 27th October the Club was presented with a full Legal Claim lodged on behalf of Colm Ivors alleging a breach of data protection legislation, and it emerged that in addition to Colm's legal fees a personal compensation claim in excess of £10,000 was being sought.

On Monday 31st October Colm's entitlement to play golf with RPGC was suspended. On Monday 11th November the Club's Committee exercised its power within the provisions of the Club's constitution to expel both Colm Ivors and his supporting partner Julie Ryan. An expulsion from the Club had not previously occurred in more than 40 years.

On Saturday 19th November a complete and thorough rebuttal of the Legal Claim was submitted to the law firm. The rebuttal demonstrated that the Legal Claim was based on a long list of false declarations and statements and it was shown that the reference to GDPR was merely a ruse in an attempt to pursue the vexatious claim to extract a compensation payment from the Club.

On Thursday 8th December a message was sent to Colm's lawyer specifying two major instances of Colm's unacceptable behaviour and the lawyer was requested to provide direct instructions concerning codes of conduct. On Friday 23rd December a further message was sent to Colm's lawyer specifying further instances of Colm's unacceptable behaviour and the lawyer was requested again to provide further direct instructions to stop the dreadful behaviour.

At 31st December 2022 Colm's lawyer had not responded to the rebuttal and the lawyer had not acknowledged the requests to instruct Colm to stop being a nuisance to the Club's members and to stop the disgraceful behaviour. Needless to say, the saga carries through to 2023.

The Committee and helpers

We started 2022 by electing fourteen members to the Committee and the Club's Constitution permitted a further two representatives of the Women's Section to have seats on the Committee. Contrary to the practice of most commercial business enterprises which have restricted board sizes we find that for the Club it is a case of 'the more the merrier' and it means that the Club benefits from a wider range of views and expert input. The monthly meetings are conducted via Zoom.

The success of the Club's routine operations and the occasional extras relies upon a good teamwork existing within the Committee. We have been able to maintain a good momentum for a good few years that have seen the Club get through the trials and tribulations of Covid as well as being able to continue to support the steady growth in membership numbers.

It is important to recognise the work that we can see taking place at the Park together with the many additional activities that go on behind the scenes that we know take up a considerable amount of personal time commitment. Here are some special mentions:

- Richard Owen chalks up another year as the committee member who contributes the most to keep the Club in shipshape order. Richard has continued in his role as the Liaison Officer with Glendale which involves setting the tee block bookings for the three weekly Club days, plus the Saturday games bookings, plus the inter-club match bookings at the Park, and in conjunction with these bookings there are all the associated catering needs. For each of the Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday Club days Richard notifies Glendale when games can be released for the public to book and this procedure to release unoccupied tee times is finalised on the days preceding our event days when the start sheet names are pre-adviced to Glendale via a spreadsheet. With the Club operating at a good activity level

there cannot be many days in the week when Richard is not swapping at least one message with at least one member of Glendale's staff.

Included within Richard's liaison role there is one continuing feature and this is the admin associated with the referral details sent over from Glendale where members of the public have expressed an interest in Club golf. Very often we find that potential new members need to complete the three full rounds of golf to obtain a starting handicap and Richard is very frequently involved in this process. Allied to this referral routine is the rolling monthly invoicing exercise whereby the Club is eligible to receive the refund from Glendale for members who have subscribed for Glendale's annual Loyaltee plan. As we have seen, the latest data indicates that just over 50% of the Club's membership has joined one of the annual Loyaltee plans. It requires some effort to keep tabs on the ever changing mix of member renewal dates and the payment choices and it is known that the monthly invoicing exercise often involves many exchanges of correspondence.

As mentioned previously, Richard single-handedly looks after all the arrangements for the Friday Club days at the Park where he has everything running like clockwork.

We continue to be grateful for Richard's diligence in looking after the key admin items. Fortunately, his work for the Club has not affected his handicap!

- The majority of the Sunday and Wednesday bookings sheets, and the occasional Saturday sheet find their way onto the system courtesy of Kim Chaffart's involvement in setting up the competition particulars. Unfortunately, changed circumstances at the Park do occur and there can be a need for Kim to dive into the system to apply some updates. What is more apparent to everyone is Kim's regular publication of the competition start sheets on Saturdays and Tuesdays. Before the start sheets are issued there is a need to tidy the order of play for gaps and to make sure that the games are set out in chronological order. Kim's work does not stop once the start sheets are published because the games will often need to be revised when the messages arrive from members advising cancellations, or requests to be added, or requests for tee time changes. On top of this, most weeks Kim can be found arriving early at the Park in order to write up the white board with the latest order of play details.

As mentioned earlier, not being content with organising the Wednesday bookings sheet, plus the publication of the Wednesday start sheets, and also recording the Wednesday details on the white board at the Park, we see Kim at the Park on Wednesday afternoons collecting the cards and then reporting the weekly competition results. We are grateful to Kim for his attention to all of his work routines throughout the year.

- On the subject of competition results we are grateful to Paul Grand for processing and publishing the men's and the mixed Sunday competition results. The scorecards need to be checked and if Paul is not playing he will often make his way to the Park on the following Monday morning to pick up the cards. Fortunately, for 2023 the scorecard checking process will be a touch easier because players are no longer responsible for entering their handicap details. Paul is also the men's handicap secretary and although the demands of the position are less onerous following the adoption of WHS, it is still the case that new member set up and oversight needs to be performed. We are grateful to Paul for his involvement in these topics.
- Peter Jagger chalked up his fifth year as the Club's Treasurer. Although the transaction volume is not large it is necessary to keep a watchful eye on the accounts activity and we are grateful for his diligence and for keeping the committee informed on progress.
- For some time we have heard that Glendale has been exploring the adoption of a new player management system that would provide a better method of control over the green fee payers and the introduction of a prepaid swipe card system would help to simplify the

collection of green fees. Whilst we wait for a change to occur, Sheena Harrington has continued with the task of agreeing with Glendale the green fee candidates for each Sunday and Wednesday event and then making the bulk payment personally for each day's relevant players. Of course, there then follows the task of asking the members for the reimbursement. This does not go smoothly all of the time, noticeably when payments are made to Glendale for players who do not turn up to play, and members who do not turn up to play will typically ask for their own payments to be refunded. Ideally this should all be dealt with via the Club's bank and a change of process will be explored.

In addition to the green fee task Sheena has continued as the Handicap Secretary for the women's section and she has assisted with some of the men's maintenance. One further task in Sheena's portfolio is the processing of the results of the separate women's competitions and she provides cover for the processing of the men's or mixed events.

Looking forward we have every reason to be optimistic that 2023 will be another successful year for the Club. We understand that the demand for golf at the Park is strong and this should benefit the Club with increased membership interest. It is expected that the interior of the clubhouse building will see a few changes and we will be working to ensure that there is something of a 'Club area' to help support the operations at the Park. Captains John and Sheena will be continuing with their stewardship of the Club so everything is looking positive for a good 2023.

...and the final word

I hope that you all have a most enjoyable 2023 golfing year and, possibly, a mention on the 2023 prize list.

Peter Harrington
Secretary
27th January 2023