



## All change on the GC as chairman gives a call to action

KEVIN HOPWOOD gave his first chairman's report at the 2018 AGM, announcing a much changed committee while making a strong appeal for action to help surmount the difficulties experienced by golf clubs at this time.

He thanked retiring senior captain, David Gentleman and committee member Tony Cleaver for all their efforts and then paid tribute to Garry Postlethwaite who was stepping down after five years as treasurer, Lin Kay who assumed the role of acting secretary when Jan Francis left and Nigel Day who took over as acting men's captain following the departure of Mick Gregorace. He also thanked Dave Ware who was retiring after six years as president and Barrie Seaman for producing the 40th anniversary booklet.

Kevin then told the members: "The golfing world is under pressure and is fighting for survival as membership numbers are in sharp decline. The golfing community is getting older and they are not being replaced as young people have different lifestyles with

more choice as to how they spend their leisure time. Some may play golf but tend to pay green fees or take out short-term memberships rarely becoming full members and playing regular golf.

"The fact of the matter is that there are too many golf clubs and too few players. Local to Newbury there are five clubs, excluding West Berks, some of which are struggling for membership.

"So what are the implications for our club? We are recognised as being one of the best courses in the area but despite this, our numbers have fallen and will probably continue to fall unless we take action. You may say, that it is the responsibility of Bournebridge, but if we want this club to continue we all have to play our part. I have a mission to see WBGC continue for a very long time, and not just survive but thrive.

"So, what can we do? Our fees are competitive and reducing fees is a headlong dash to failure as is cutting prices in any business. We may not have capital to invest in the course, but

what we can do is build a reputation that WBGC is *the* place to play golf and is a club that is friendly and welcoming to all. We must talk to every guest, visitor and society making them feel welcome, reinforcing the idea that it's great to be a member. We can also conduct an E-marketing campaign to reinforce this message.

"I know many members are not entirely happy with some aspects of the course, but we should focus on the positives. Guests I have invited to play have all been highly complimentary about the course. We need to emphasise the positives and tell people what a great place it is to play golf.

"Turning any business around is tough and turning a golf club round in the prevailing circumstances is going to be really tough, but I believe it is possible and we all have a responsibility to do what we can to help.

"Reaching the Club's fiftieth anniversary should be the minimum target and I hope I am here to see it!"

## The week's results

### Men's winter league underway

Forty pairs set off on the season-long pursuit of the men's winter league competition at West Berks on Sunday November 25. John (Chopper) Harris and Kevin Hopwood were the early pace setters winning the first round, a better-ball stableford competition, with a remarkable 50 points.

There was a three-way tie on 46 points for second place with Jason Kendal and Garry Postlethwaite taking second spot, Tony Athawes and Luke Prestoe third and Mark Ramos and Derek Smith fourth on count-back.

In Round 2 on December 2 Rob Bridgeman and Paul Beake took first spot in a 1,2,1,2 format competition with 63 points. One shot behind were Kevin Hopwood and Chopper Harris and Jason

Kendal and Garry Postlethwaite with Kevin and Chopper taking second place on count-back.

### Mary takes WL R5

Mary Harwood won the fifth round of the ladies' winter league on November 24 with 29 stableford points. Gale McAuley was one point behind in second place and Jane Brackenbury third with 23.

### It's no fun

Mixed fun three club and putter competition was cancelled due to bad weather with the hope that it can be rearranged.

### Seniors gain revenge

The seniors continued their recent good form with a 3-1 home win against The Downshire and so gained revenge for a defeat in the away fixture.

## WBGC 2019

### Officers, GC and responsibilities

<b>President:</b>	Gordon Munro
<b>Chairman:</b>	Kevin Hopwood
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Nick Jones
<b>Secretary:</b>	Sandy Miller
<b>Men's Captain:</b>	Nigel Day
<b>Men's Vice Captain:</b>	Mark Kendal
<b>Senior's Captain:</b>	Barrie Seaman
<b>Ladies Captain:</b>	No appointment
<b>GC Members:</b>	
<b>Handicaps:</b>	Mary Harwood Rob Bridgeman
<b>Competitions:</b>	Patrick Wilmore Darren Galbraith
<b>Committee Member:</b>	Bob Fagg

**Many thanks to the Hopwood Ash Financial Planning Consultancy for printing this bulletin**

Please send items that you would like to be considered for the bulletin to Dave Ware at: [tnb.wbgc@gmail.com](mailto:tnb.wbgc@gmail.com)

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## Quick start for Joe the pro

JOE SIMPSON turned pro on March 28 of this year and it is an understatement to say that he got off to a bit of a flyer.

His first outing was a qualifying event for the English PGA championship at Clandon Regis, near Guildford, where he tied for third place shooting four-under par. He then tied in first place with a score of two-under in the Oxford GC Pro-Am and finished second in the Assistant Championship qualifier at Bristol and Clifton where he was one-under.

He then tied in first place in the Pro-Ams at West Hill with one-under par

and The Springs where he was four-under. That's five events and an aggregate score of 12-under. Quite a start!

Joe qualified for two national events through the season. He missed the cut at Staunton Sands in the English PGA by two shots while in the Assistants Championship held at Farleigh GC near Croyden he was one-under over the three rounds and finished in ninth place.

He also qualified for the inter-counties south region qualifier by virtue of being in the top three of the BB&O order of merit at the time of qualification. He

represented BB&O as part of a three-man man team at Kings Hill in Kent and the team missed out on qualification for the final by a single shot.

The end of the season did not finish on quite such a high note but he ended his first season as a pro in a highly creditable fifth place in the BB&O Order of Merit.

But as you would expect, Joe has his feet firmly grounded telling TTNB: "Overall I would say it's a pretty good start but with some practice over the winter I hope I can make next year even better." We all wish him well.



**Joe Simpson - off to a fast start**

## It's Turkey Time

### The rest of 2018 at WBGC

#### December Tuesday 4

Ladies: Winter Trophy Stableford

#### Saturday 8

Ladies: Winter League

#### Sunday 9

Men: Winter competition

#### Tuesday 11

Ladies: 8-hole comp and Christmas lunch

#### Wednesday 12

Men: Midweek Turkey Trot Singles

Ladies: Midweek Turkey Trot Singles

#### Saturday 15

Men & Ladies: Turkey Trot Singles

#### Sunday 16

Men & Ladies: Turkey Trot Team

Captains' Drive-in

## The Last Splutter

*President's Splutter was once a regular feature in Tee Times and as your editor is giving up his day job as president at the end of the year it was decided he should be allowed one last splutter*

I AM delighted to have this opportunity to thank all members for affording me the great honour and privilege of being the president of WBGC for the past six years.

I would also like to congratulate Gordon Munro on his appointment and hope that he enjoys the job as much as I have.

I was once told that piloting a jumbo jet consisted of hours of tedium interspersed with short periods of mild panic. The president's job is a bit similar - long periods of jogging along without the need of any serious involvement and then suddenly being thrown into periods of intense activity. I am sure Gordon will manage and enjoy both extremes.

By way of advice I think the most important quality is to know when to interfere and when to say and do nothing. The most difficult thing is to see something going on that you don't really agree with but having decided not to intervene you have to sit on your hands and do nothing and that can be difficult at times.

Because I took on the role in September 2012 I have spanned seven years and worked with seven men, lady and senior captains and three chairmen, not to mention numerous officers and committee members. I'll say no more until my book is published.

The position does hold one privilege that I will not miss in that you get to use the worst parking space on the whole site.

This issue represents one of my major failures in that I tried to make a simple change to the Constitution decreeing that no lady captain should ever drive a car bigger than a Fiat 500. But I lost that one - they are a hard bunch to deal with these lady golfers.

Thanks again and I wish Gordon and all the officers and committee members success in the coming years and I hope that WBGC continues to offer challenging and enjoyable golf to its members for many years to come.

*Dave Ware*