



## Golf is back at West Berks

*TTNB editor, Dave Ware, celebrates the return of golf at WBGC*

SO WE are playing golf again at West Berks and much sooner than anyone expected. Everyone that is apart from Andrew Kerr, the winner of our 'Name the Day' competition – see elsewhere in this issue.

It's all rather surreal. I think it can be compared to taking a golfing holiday in January or February. You play golf for several months in cold, wet and muddy conditions and you then take a brief trip along the motorway, jump aboard a plane bound for warmer climes and you are transported to bright sunshine, lush fairways, the greenest of greens and something like golfing paradise.

And so it was with golf after lockdown. Obviously, seven weeks of isolation was somewhat longer than the average wait in the departure lounge of either Heathrow or Gatwick but the

transformation was just as vivid and, for me, much more welcome.

Enhanced by the sheer joy of being able to play again, West Berks seems truly spectacular in this glorious early summer and what is remarkable is that we can largely thank one man for enabling this to happen. Since we have started back the greenstaff team has been hard at work ensuring the course is as good as it can be, but it is our head greenkeeper, Patrick Whelehan, to whom we owe particular thanks.

Pat has toiled on his own throughout the lockdown to keep the course in a condition where we were able to stroll out on Wednesday May 13 as if the past seven week hiatus had never happened.

As anyone who has any sort of lawn to maintain will know, that's an awful lot of grass to keep under control especially in

these climatic conditions when you can almost hear the grass growing.

Thanks Patrick. I for one promise that if I ever hit a green I will tend to the pitch mark with even more care than normal.

Enjoy your return to golf but please remember that it is vital that we earn the right to continue to play by obeying the strict code set by English Golf and passed on to you by the GC.

Please remember: no huddles or cuddles, no flags, no bunkers and no swapping cards. Most of all keep your distance! As Dell Boy would say: "Come on Rodney, you know it makes sense." Enjoy!

*Dave Ware*

P.S. For those who think that it will never rain again. Don't worry. It will!

**See Page 2 for Newbury Weekly News coverage of our restart.**

## An ode from our laureate

TTNB poet, Tina Mulford, considers golf in 2020

### West Berks 2020

*Full of promise the year 2020*

*Diary full, competitions to be plenty....*

*But blown in from the East an invisible force*

*In March it came and closed the course.*

*Coronavirus hit at this time -*

*Not the beer you drink with lime.*

*For months we had to stay at home*

*Connecting with friends by email and phone.*

*More time to do the household chores*

*No medal play to keep the scores.*

*Covid-19 the modern plague*

*Effectively stopped golf and made*

*Us all come to other people's aid.*

*The golf course blossomed and passed us by*

*It was some time before we could say Hi*

*To fellow golfers, family and friends*

*But we got back out there in the end...*

*So, what will normal be from now*

*One thing for sure only time will tell.*

*For most of us I think we've found*

*It's a bonus to still be above ground.*

*We all must keep our golfing faith*

*And in the meantime, stay safe.*

**Tina Mulford**

## Changes to booking rules

IN ORDER to maximise the effective capacity of the course the rules and conditions for booking tee times are under constant review. From Tuesday May 26 the rules are:

Tee times will be at eight minute intervals.

Members can book seven days ahead and book two tee times in any one week commencing on a Monday.

Members can also telephone the Pro-shop to book to play 'on the day' subject to availability.

The rules will be modified depending upon government advice and to suit local safety standards.

Please respect the rules in fairness to your fellow members.

## Keep abreast of WHS with EGU

DESPITE lockdown, the World Handicap System is still on schedule for implementation on November 2 2020.

WHS will unite the six current handicap indexes in operation around the world into one global system and it will affect the way we all play our golf both at home and away.

An easy and informative way to keep abreast with the rules and implementation of the system is via the English Golf web site.

Just go to the site and either activate or set up your account and search for WHS where you will find a very useful video entitled: 'WHS Golfer Education Hub'. It's well worth a watch.

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

If you have any items or ideas for TTNB or you would like to receive a copy please email Dave Ware at: [dgw.ware@gmail.com](mailto:dgw.ware@gmail.com)

## Bob Williams

July 9 1950 – May 12 2020



BOB WILLIAMS died peacefully at home on Tuesday May 12 2020 at the age of 69 after suffering for many years with motor neurone disease.

A fine golfer who had played off a handicap of nine, Bob was a popular and valued member of West Berks for over 20 years. During this time he was our senior champion in 2007 and 2008 and he also won the Classic Trophy with Nigel Pimbley in 1999 and in 2007 the Crawford Cup and the Clama Trophy with Pete Curtis.

He served on the committee as handicap secretary in 2009, and later in that year took over as treasurer, a role in which he served the club so well until 2012.

Bob was a qualified accountant and worked for ICL for many years until he set up his own company offering IT and accounting services. Bob was also a lecturer in accounting at Newbury College.

A man of many interests, in addition to golf Bob was passionate about all sports. He was a season ticket holder at Reading FC and loved watching cricket. He was also a keen steam train enthusiast.

Bob joined WBGC with his first wife, Sharron and son Matt. Unfortunately,

Sharron died suddenly at the club in June 2011 and she is remembered to this day with the Sunshine Cup, a competition played every year in her memory.

Bob married Jan in 2014 shortly after he was diagnosed with MND in 2013. Jan provided valuable support to Bob and bore that responsibility with great fortitude and resolution. Bob also demonstrated remarkable courage and strength as I witnessed on the many occasions I met them in the coffee shops of Newbury and on the towpath of the canal.

Bob and Jan also shared a passion for pub quizzes at which Bob has a reputation of being something of a whiz. Jan used to organise and chair Quiz Nights at both the club and local pubs.

We send our sincere condolences to Jan, Bob's son Matt, daughter Sarah and four grandchildren. He will be much missed by them, as indeed he will by all his friends at WBGC.

Bob's funeral is at West Barks Crematorium on Thursday May 28 at 11

o'clock. Because of the prevailing lockdown conditions only ten family members are allowed in the crematorium but some of his close friends intend to stand on the approach road to say farewell while maintaining social distancing.

*Dave Ware thanks Bob Fagg and Barrie Seaman for their contribution and the many others who have sent messages about Bob's passing.*

## WBGC return to golf in the news

IT WAS good to see that the Newbury Weekly News covered the story of golf returning to West Berkshire by running a story about its eponymous golf club.

In addition to a few well chosen words from our chairman, Kevin Hopwood, two pictures showed the course looking in fine fettle with Ian Skelton striding the fairways and Martin Walton about to sink a monster putt.

The third picture caught the impressive power and elegance of Lin Kay's golf swing.

Perhaps the only thing the article lacked was a footnote



explaining that Lin is left handed and it was not a right-handed air shot.

Can 15,000 readers be wrong?

## Chefs that deliver

THE FOXES CATERING home delivery service is, according to Karen, 'building up nicely'. Members who have used the service say the standard is spot on – well we expected that didn't we!

The service is available on Fridays and Saturdays and the menu changes every week. Karen and Nick can be contacted on:

Tel: 01488 638269 or 07787891945

Email: karen@foxescatering.co.uk

Web: www.foxescatering.co.uk

## Andrew names the day

ANDREW KERR is the winner of our 'Name the Day' comp. He was just a week out with a date of May 20 and pipped Tom McAuley who forecast a couple of days later.

Well done Andrew and now it's just a question of how we present the prize of a fine bottle of wine while maintaining social distancing.

Did I mention an entrance fee of £1 donation to Sobell House Hospice? It's optional of course and payable when possible. Just think of all the money you have saved by not being able to go out and how much lockdown has cost this very worthwhile charity.