



*The Newsletter of  
Northwood Golf Club*

# **Links**

**3 Centuries - 6 Monarchs - 1 Club**

[www.northwoodgolf.co.uk](http://www.northwoodgolf.co.uk)

**Spring 2009**

**Golfers get 41 miles  
to the gallon**

**How to be "active" all year**

**55 Mars Bars on the UK Index**

**A more confident spring in our step**



## A View Forever Outside the Box

### Editorial/Publishing

Copyright House of Links. This newsletter is intended to inform the members of NGC of some of the happenings at their Golf Club. Items are included at the sole discretion of the Editor. Any important news, and for that matter, any pointless articles, will no doubt appear from time to time. You have the overall say in what is suitable for your eyes - so read at your own risk!

### Published by NGC Office

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**Spitz'n'sparks** Sir Kit Breaker

**Gale Warning** Annie Portin-Astorm

**Fixing Elections** Gerry Mandering

**Getting the last word**

Ann Anotherthing

### Regular Columnists

The Captain

Lady Captain

Chairman of House

Chairman of Green

Chairman of Membership

All Section Captains

**Advertising** Always possible

**Research** Sometimes & Perhaps

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COPY FOR NEXT ISSUE

**Copy deadline date is  
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Please give any articles or advertisements to be included in the next issue to the Editor Dennis Sare either by sending an email with an attachment to

**dennis.sare@btinternet.com**

or by posting a letter or CD (which he promises to return) into his pigeon hole. This will be fine

Many of you will have now met and welcomed our new General Manager/Secretary Steve Derbyshire who is already making his presence felt - find out more about him in the profile on pages 8-9.

One of the first tasks for Steve was to shorten the lengthy Dress Code to something more manageable. It does, of course, rely on the co-operation of members and visitors but the new rules do seem to show a light touch but a firm hand. Dress codes are very touchy subjects with some gentlemen players although not with Ladies so much, until a younger member raises a hemline to what is thought to be a level too high! A rather succinct statement is in the new rules "If you are in any doubt as to whether something is appropriate, then please don't wear it". Quite so!

Feel like a free lunch? Well, all members can have one every year. An innovative idea, just launched, is that each month all the members who have a birthday in that month will be invited to have lunch with three fellow diners on a specified Sunday. Four for the price of three. Sounds like a good idea to the Ed whose style of supermarket shopping is the bane of Erin Dors - always looking for BOGOFs at Waitrose!

The course has received a lot of remedial work and TLC over the winter months and it certainly shows. Northwood has always been a tad hesitant when it comes to actual presentation of itself to the world, despite having a lot that would make many other clubs very envious. Luckily we have a few members whose skills can be well employed at the Club. Two of these valiant souls are John and Jenny Simmons who have tidied up the border and planted shrubs at the foot of the Terrace and our collective thanks is due to them both.

A number of new trees have been planted around the course. Some think that the doubtful fashion adopted in planting them without stakes may be worth the experiment. But will members remember that they will have no free drop if their ball goes near a new unstaked tree. I thought that half the idea of staking new trees was so that they were not damaged by accident.

This year County cards will be available direct from the MCGU. They can be used throughout England but,

unfortunately, they don't include playing in Hertfordshire. Members should request an application form from the Office which needs to be counter-signed by Steve or Jenny and then returned to MCGU with a payment of £15.

The Ed has heard that Captain Jim Thorpe, in his quest to invite members to a free Birthday lunch, has come up against a bit of a stumbling block. It seems that some members are changing their email addresses or phone numbers and forget to tell the Office. An easy thing to do - so if you have changed email addresses or phone numbers in the last year please contact Jenny or Clare in the Office to amend your details.

It would seem, whilst writing about emails, that over 150 members who have registered on the website still have not activated their accounts - and this even after the plea in the last edition of *Links*. Why should you activate? Well, it's rather like having a telephone and not having your name in a directory. Ah, I can hear some say, but I want my phone ex-directory. The answer to that is simple. We are not talking "open publishing", we are talking about access to email addresses and phone numbers by fellow NGC members and *no one else*. The details are not accessible to anyone except members. So get stuck in and activate your account NOW. This is how you do it:

*Log in - look to the top left side where you will see "Northwood Club Members" in a white box - click on this and you'll go straight to your own page - at the top of this new page change the Directory Listing so that it shows "Active". You could, if you want, alter anything else about yourself including those phone numbers or email addresses mentioned above! Scroll down to the foot of this page and click "Save Changes". Hurrah! You've done it!*

Have you looked at the Club website recently? There's a page of "Membership Options" that is newly posted. Do have a look and you will learn that the joining fee has been abandoned for new members joining from another club. What will retain them with us if all clubs did the same thing, I have been asked - I said nothing, by way of reply.

**Dennis Sare** Editor

Go to [www.northwoodgolf.co.uk](http://www.northwoodgolf.co.uk) for all the very best of Northwood Golf Club

**Jim Thorpe**  
Club Captain



## The best team can still win with a hangover

I didn't expect my jackets to be getting a bit tight and my trouser size to increase. I suppose I didn't realise there were going to be so many dinners and lunches, with some preceded by golf competitions, and nearly all with plenty of wine and camaraderie. My thanks for all the invitations as I had some great times and will relish the memories for years to come.

The Club Christmas Lunch was attended by 98 members and partners who enjoyed good Christmas fare, followed by member Mike Billings' granddaughter Kayliegh, who entertained us with some Christmas songs and then led us all in singing Carols. She rounded off with the Twelve Days of Christmas, each table lustily singing their own numbered section - well done everyone and thank you to all those who attended.

Steve Derbyshire, our newly appointed General Manager, was my guest at The Past Captains Christmas Lunch, eagerly waiting to start his new job early the following month, so I gave him a preview!! Steve is settling in well and getting to grips with the many tasks that await him. Many have already met Steve, played golf with him, or even dined with him so it's particularly nice to see him join in and take an interest in all aspects of our Club. I am sure you would want to join me in wishing him well.

The new venue for The Society of London Golf Captains Annual Dinner, The Copthorne Tara in Kensington. The event was well supported by our Club, with 13 Past Captains and myself in attendance enjoying good food, wine and company.

The Turkey Trot, in December was won by Jackie McHardy/Dennis Sare, Margaret Barkwith/Ted Gray & George Dark/Ricky Lall. Obviously everyone enjoyed the day but,

perhaps vouchers for the butcher's shop, in view of the size of the turkeys and a minor hiccup, may be better prizes for the future.

The New Year's Eve Party was well supported with everyone enjoying the good food, wine and dancing to *The Derek Goulding band*. Although Derek had only come out of hospital over Christmas, he managed to keep most of us on the floor, dancing all night.

The Old Time Music Hall 'Naughty Nineties' night was not the best attended function, but most appeared to enjoy themselves. Perhaps a few old tomatoes, some eggs or flour bags were needed on the night. St Valentines Dinner/Dance was again a good night supported by 89 members and guests with a great menu and entertainment dancing to *Limousine*. My thanks to Ted Gray for the organising and booking all the theatre trips and the great selection of entertainment at the Club this year.

As usual the Junior Dinner was well supported, despite the poor weather. There were so many trophies and prizes that had been played for throughout the year. Many congratulations to the new Junior Captain James Memory and Junior Vice Captain Robbie Johnson, also to Paul Hopkins, the retiring Junior Captain, for a great year. A big thanks to Nigel for all his hard work and organising throughout the year.

With some Juniors moving up to Intermediates, we need replacement new Junior members. One has only to attend the Junior dinner to experience the pleasure that, not only the Juniors receive, but also the parents. If you have children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews or friends with children that would benefit from being a Junior at our Club do get in contact with Nigel Gornall.

The Hangover Competition, held 2 January, started with bucks fizz and a full breakfast followed by a draw for teams of three for nine holes of golf to blow away the cobwebs. Obviously the best team of Ian Seely, Chris Marland and Phil Thornton, winning with 38 points, proved that one could still win with a hangover.

The Mixed Winter Drawn Competition with 16 entrants is nearing its conclusion. The Draw and Bistros every three weeks have been great fun and if anyone wishes to join us all for the last meal and prize giving they will be very welcome on Wednesday 1 April at 7.00pm. Please put your name on the list in the main foyer.

Can I point out that some dates for the Captain & Pro and Vice Captain & Assistant Pro matches are still free and you are advised to sign up before they are all filled. The new Assistant Pro, Jon Darby, will be starting in March so please join the others in this competition - or don't you like being beaten?

Captain's Away Day is on Thursday 6 August; the entry sheet is up, so come and enjoy another good golf course. As the numbers are limited do get in now. It has been suggested I should arrange a coach to and from the Cub, I am happy to do this if the numbers warrant, please see additional sheet.

A innovation recently introduced is that we are holding a Birthday Sunday Lunch once a month. If it's your birthday during the month we are inviting you to lunch, free of charge, if you bring a minimum of three other paying guests or members. I am ringing each "birthday" member every month to let them know, but already I am finding that some numbers have changed, so watch the notice board for the dates and book through the office.

**Take your work seriously; but never yourself, or your enemies** Robert Crampton

## Jon Darby



***“Each Golfer has something in common, to achieve goals and improve – I can make this happen for you”***

I would like to introduce myself as the new teaching professional at Northwood Golf Club.

I started playing golf when I was 12 at Waterstock Golf Club in Oxfordshire. I played in the Junior & Colts teams and eventually got a job as an Assistant Professional and completed my PGA qualification during the summer of August

2007. While at Waterstock Golf Club I developed the Junior Academy and helped to coach the junior team whilst also playing in many local professional events.

In September 2007 I became the Teaching Professional at Carswell Golf Club also in Oxfordshire, where I developed School and Club links to develop the junior section. I provided individual tuition to members and guests. Over this period I also got the chance to work underneath the world renowned John Cook, at The John Cook School of Golf in Oxfordshire. During my time as a full time coach I have taught low and high handicappers and I get immense pleasure from seeing a golfer, whatever standard, improve.

# JON DARBY JOINS NGC AS THE NEW TEACHING PROFESSIONAL

## JUNIORS ARE THE FUTURE

I firmly believe that junior golfers are the future of golf and I will be working very closely with the Club and the Junior Section to improve on an already fantastic junior section. I will work hard to attract some new juniors into the Club.

High quality junior coaching at the Club will benefit Northwood Golf Club in the future. As a fully qualified PGA Professional I have been involved with all standards of juniors from complete beginners to county level.

I will pass on my experience to all Juniors at Northwood Golf Club and see that group coaching for juniors will be exciting, motivating & effective and show every junior that playing golf is a great way to keep fit.

## How active are you?

### New General Manager Steve Derbyshire outlines the new 2009 Active/Inactive Handicap System

When the new CONGU Unified Handicapping System was launched during last winter, Clubs expressed a wish to have more control of their members' handicaps and players competing in open competitions. As a result The EGU and EWGA are to launch a system that will identify the competitive nature of an individual.

Approved and supported by CONGU the Active/Inactive handicap will identify whether an individual has competed in qualifying competitions and, as a result, returned information on their playing ability.

The Active/Inactive system will take effect on 1 January 2010 with those members not returning the required scores being identified. Consequently this is being highlighted now so that members can return the necessary qualifying scores during 2009.

The requirements are as follows:

- Players will be required to have submitted 3 qualifying scores during the calendar year 2009 to avoid having an inactive (i) handicap for the playing season 2010. NR's will not be accepted

as part of the 3 qualifying scores.

- Clubs will be permitted to exempt players from an inactive (i) handicap for injury/illness that has prevented them from achieving the required number of qualifying scores during a calendar year. This will also include those players who are transferring membership who have submitted scores albeit at another Club and golfers new to the game who are being issued with their first CONGU handicap.
- Players whose handicap has become inactive (i) will be required to return 3 qualifying scores before the indicator is removed. Qualifying scores of less than 3 are not permitted to be carried over to the next year, i.e. no topping up of qualifying scores permitted, e.g. 1 score in the previous year and 2 in the current year.
- Clubs may impose an entry condition that requires an active handicap for specific competitions such as Honours Board events. In all other cases



Clubs must allow “home” players with inactive (i) handicaps entry to qualifying competitions in order to provide as much opportunity as possible for the removal of the inactive (i) handicap.

- An inactive (i) handicap can still be used for social golf and those competitions for which an active handicap is not an entry condition. Scores from players with inactive handicaps will be used in the calculation of a CSS.
- The requirement of 3 qualifying scores will be reviewed by The EGU/EWGA during 2010 to consider if this should be increased for the following year.
- The active/inactive identification of handicaps will be required as from the beginning of 2010.
- Inactive handicaps will be followed by an (i).

For further information please ask in the office or look at the EGU ([www.englishgolfunion.org](http://www.englishgolfunion.org)) and EWGA ([www.englishwomensgolf.org](http://www.englishwomensgolf.org)) websites.

**Marion Wheeler**  
Lady Captain



# Winter clothes humbug up our swing

**B**y the time this is first read spring will be in upon us and, as I said at the Ladies Lunch on the 19 February, “ we will be able to shed all the winter clothes which humbug up our golf and, more importantly, our swing.”

There would have been 42 ladies present but unfortunately Dorothy Corbell had to cancel at the last minute because of not feeling well. It was very nice to see so many Ladies there and also the Ladies who are now social members

The Christmas draw went well and, as it was a cold day, the brandy and mince pies were very warming and were very

well received. It is good to see the green grass again after that dreadful snow

The yellow ball competition had a good turn out, and was won by Rosemary, Maureen and Ursula with a score of 71 !

The Ladies now are developing their own web pages on the NGC website - do have a look and let Ursula know if you have any good ideas.

I want to thank Margaret and the Ladies Committee of Marion, Ursula, Gwen, Linda, Phillipa, Alison and Denise for all the hard work and help that they give me.

## DESPERATE GOLFWIVES



Lindy Creedy, Tracey Bohane, Bryony Lines, Sallie Bowen

### PLEASE SUPPORT MACMILLAN CANCER APPEAL

Four NGC lady members will participate in the Macmillan Longest Day Golf Challenge, playing 4 rounds of golf on the course on Monday 8 June 2009.

The first round starts as dawn breaks around 4 a.m. and they hope to complete the challenge before dark. They will play either as 2 two balls or as a 4 ball stableford, depending on how busy the course is on the day, and hope not to inconvenience other members.

The ladies are hoping for your support and understanding. If you see them – with their caddies – please give them a smile, a wave, or better still, a fiver.

Ladies from other local clubs - Moor Park, Sandy Lodge and Batchworth Park - will also take the challenge on their own courses on the same day, in this national charity event.

Macmillan Cancer Support improves the lives of people affected by cancer. They provide practical, medical, emotional and financial support and push for better cancer care. One in three people will get cancer. 1.2 million already live with it.

Please support this cause by donating either via [www.justgiving.com/desperategolfwives](http://www.justgiving.com/desperategolfwives) or directly to Lindy, Tracey, Bryony or Sallie.

Thank you

### When £10 on-line changes into nearly £40 in a click!

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<b>Travel Insurance</b>	£8.97 (automatically checked on line)		

**I'm not offended by dumb blonde jokes because I know I'm not dumb,  
and I know I'm not blonde** Dolly Parton

## David Leach

Course  
Manager



# We are working on reducing shade to all greens

The course condition remains in good order for the time of year and the greens are showing little signs of excessive wear this winter. We have recently been resting the more vulnerable greens, these being the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> as the grass coverage on these greens is weaker than the others. A break from winter golf can only benefit these greens that will, over time, strengthen the sward, together



**S'now is the winter of our discontent**  
Photo by Phillipa Fernandez

with beneficial maintenance, resulting in a less cautious approach being needed in the future.

A plan of new grass development on these particular greens is currently in place. The reason the coverage is showing a slower development is because of each green's location and the cause is a shade issue. We are currently working on reducing shade to all greens and some tees also. This work will take many years to complete and is labour intensive and costly to the club. We must however continue to plan a yearly programme of woodland management within the winter work schedule.

The tees will begin to receive more attention over the coming months that will involve soiling and seeding to

worn areas. In addition a fertiliser application in mid march will also be applied and more aeration in the form of verti-draining is also planned. The tees are standing up to the winter play very well and showing little signs of excessive stress. No tee mats have been used this year which is a bonus. Last winter we spent time on mats and on un-level ground in front of some tees.

A closer mow is being considered around the greens for this coming season, so a fertiliser application will need to be applied. This will be integrated into the yearly feed programme so an extra cost is anticipated.

Fairway condition continues to improve yearly and the aeration and yearly feeding programme is now paying dividends. The fairways have suffered some disease activity this winter caused by the wet, warmish conditions that have enabled diseases to establish easily.

Again, for the coming season, I intend to divot the fairways on a regular basis. Divoting has already started on the worst fairways using a 50/50 mix of soil and sand. A fast germinating seed will be added and quick establishment is hoped for before the season starts. Verti-drain work will finish in mid-March with all fairways having received a double application, leaving some feeding that will be required on some fairways for the coming season, but not all. A full fertiliser application to all the fairways is very expensive, so just feeding the most needy fairways is planned. These will



**In the beginning there was a hole ....**

be the 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and selected areas on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

At the end of February, the winter work programme had been 85% completed and *within budget*. Only the pathway topping is required on these projects and the 18<sup>th</sup> bunker to complete. We also added the 5<sup>th</sup> pathway and some trees planted to the plan. Some Oak, Beech, Sweet Chestnut and Crab apple trees have been planted on the course.

We have this winter completed over 400m of new paths. Woodland management work has also been successful with good work done at the 17<sup>th</sup> green and the 6<sup>th</sup> tees. With hope, if funding is available, we can produce more good work during the winter to keep the course moving forward yearly.



**First catch your mole**

The borehole refurbishment will start imminently as this will enable the Club to source a free water supply. The water from this source is healthier for the grass plant than the direct mains supply. Staff training is going well with 2 staff members well on their way to completing NVQ level 3 Green keeping. The staff, all bar one labourer, is trained to the highest possible standard and their retention is vital.

**If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies**

Israeli General Moshe Dayan

## Ted Hodgson

Financial  
Director



# The Bottom Line

**W**e still expect our results for the current year to be close to last year's. While there is currently the prospect of some relief on utility and fuel costs, which are coming down, House maintenance costs on both the clubhouse and club properties are high, with still some backlog of work to complete.

Despite very energetic recruitment efforts, our new membership intake is disappointing. Other golf clubs are facing similar pressures. More and more golfers are opting for "pay as you play" golf, which avoids membership costs. The

current recession is likely to reinforce that trend.

The Board is currently reviewing budget proposals for the next financial year. We are adopting prudent assumptions concerning membership and subscription levels. We are taking a hard look at costs, and implementing steps to ensure that clubhouse income continues to make a useful contribution to profits. The recent letter to members from the Chairman also refers to some aspects of this ongoing review of income and costs. 2009/10 will be a difficult year, but we need to

bear in mind the severity of the current recession.

We can take some comfort, in one way, from the realisation that many other clubs, some in our neighbourhood, are facing the same pressures as we are and, unlike us, do not have our solid business foundations. We own the freehold of our course, together with a residential portfolio. We are very well placed to ride out short-term difficulties. But we do need, as much as ever, the loyalty and support of members to keep Northwood as a thriving, successful club.



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# Steve Derbyshire

**appointed as NGC's new  
General Manager/Secretary**

In 1957 many eventful things happened to the benefit of the golf world. Bernhard Langer was born, as was Seve Ballesteros and Steve Derbyshire came into the world. With his sister and family he grew up mainly in Chalfont St Peter where his principle activity appears to have been football, cricket and golf. Later, in his late thirties, he took up marathon running but this was brought to a halt after he injured both legs.

After finishing school in 1975 he joined Shell as a marketing assistant. His potential was spotted by management, who after a year put him on a "sandwich" course (6 months work and 6 months at college) for the next four years. He learnt, in his words, "a little about a lot" – from unloading sea going tankers, being a driver's mate on road tankers to being an internal auditor and manpower planner. Steve found that he was having a rich and varied life. He well remembers his boss being asked by his superior, why sales meetings were always held in Five Star hotels? "Because", came the reply, "there are no six Star ones!"

Gaining a BA Hons in Business Studies at University he developed his career with Shell and in 1981 married his wife Carol. Based for a time in Belgium, he lived on the edge of the Waterloo battlefield finding enough spare time to become a battlefield guide.

Responsible for Lubricants exports from Europe to the Far East, Asia and Oceania, in the course of his job, Steve visited such places as the Pacific Islands, China, Japan, Hong Kong and countries around the Pacific Rim. Mostly enjoying all these, he does venture to say that there are places he would prefer not to revisit – Manila where the traffic chaos and corruption take on new dimensions; Karachi in the middle of a coup and military curfew; and Delhi, where the food is fantastic, but with disastrous consequences on the journey home.

Our hero spent the last couple of his 33 years with Shell helping them divest themselves of parts of their business resulting in his job no longer existing! They were very good to him, and despite extensive candidate jobs, he decided to accept their package and parted company.

Even before starting with Shell, Steve caddied at Gerrards Cross (GX) – every Saturday and Sunday morning followed by 18 or even 27 holes in the afternoon then hopping on his bike back home. His handicap fell rapidly to six and then he discovered girls and pubs. Nevertheless his talent for golf was spotted and he was offered a job when he was 16 as an Assistant Pro at GX. Commonsense took over when he realised his 5 handicap really wasn't low enough for him to progress in the golf world.

Despite extensive world travel for Shell, Steve has only been a member of two clubs in his life - Gerrards Cross and Sept Fontaines near Waterloo, when he lived in Belgium.

Since leaving Shell, Steve has marshalled on the European Tour and Ladies Tour events and also worked with Sky TV as a scorer, spotter and camera assistant at many other events, the most recent one being the Dunhill Links Championship.

A recent highlight of his golfing life was the opportunity to play with Colin Montgomerie at his golf school at Turnberry - a 50th birthday present from his wife. They halved the first in birdie 3's with Monty not conceding Steve a 12 inch putt. Steve had driven the green on the first, so was full of confidence - over confidence as it turned out as he proceeded to spend a lot of the rest of the morning in the gorse and waist high rough. Steve recounts how he felt that Monty was a delight to play with and great company off the course but warned don't expect him to give you anything on it.

His time with GX was wide and varied. Elected to the Board in 2002, first as a Director, then as Membership Chairman and then Chairman of House whilst, at the same time being on the Social and Marketing committees.

*Continued on page 9*

**Life is a gamble at terrible odds - if it was a bet, you wouldn't take it** *Tom Stoppard*

....continued from previous page

Turning now to Steve's new involvement with NGC, I asked if he had learnt anything at Gerrards Cross that might assist him in his new role with Northwood. He replied that private golf clubs are about the people in them - the members. As the General Manager/Secretary he was mindful of the members preferences and he was well aware that, in the case of Northwood, the members' preferences take precedent over his.

In business, as well as seeing the GM operate at Gerrards Cross, he had learnt that it is better to under-promise and over-deliver rather than over-promise and under-deliver. Deliver what you have agreed and in the timeframe agreed.

Were there any qualities that he felt might help him? After thirty years in sales he felt that he is able to engage people; he is a strong negotiator and can operate with tact and sensitivity. He considers himself a good listener although he quickly added that his wife would, of course, disagree – "she thinks I am a total control freak devoid of any tact or finesse".

In answer to an enquiry about where he thought NGC should look to secure their finances, if that was to become necessary, Steve ventured the thought that one should rule out nothing and consider all suggestions to generate income and their impact on the current members. Current members are a great potential sales force - all members should be spreading a consistent, positive message about NGC. Criticism and moaning should be to be kept to the bar or in his office!

He felt that we could not rely on members' subscriptions alone for income. He pointed out that we need to generate income from other sources by marketing the



Monty and Steve at Turnberry

Club and its facilities (golf and house) properly and consistently to outside groups, individuals & companies, as well as to existing members, ensuring that they all perceive that they are getting value for money

Finally, to give Steve a free rein, I asked if he had any dislikes about golf that he would like to change. Not wanting too much prompting, he replied that he thought that golf was generally a solitary and sometimes selfish game. As a lover of team sports he wished there was more team golf played. Golf and golf clubs have a reputation for tradition. There is a need to identify areas for

improvement and to speed up the process of change.

As far as rules of golf are concerned - two things he would change; being unable to take free relief from a divot on the fairway and being unable to repair spike marks on the green.

Speaking personally, I think that Northwood Golf Club is in for an interesting, confidence building experience with our new General Manager. Already nettles have been grasped and decisions made. And off we all go, with a better and more confident spring in our steps, into a new era.

**DS**

**Don't look at me in that tone of voice**

*Dorothy Parker*

## **Stuart Vaux**

### *Rabbits Section Report*



**M**atches Last year I wrote that we were still hanging on to our unbeaten record. Well, I can tell you now that any chance of a good start to the season went out of the window when we lost our first match 3-2 away to Chorleywood. However, Norman Bennington playing his first match for the Rabbits since his promotion from the Foxes, had a win with his Captain and Peter Swindells, following up in the final pairing, had a win with Colin Starling.

The next Winter match was at home to Ealing which was our first match against them and I am pleased to say that we won 4-1. Your Captain was away playing with the North Yorkshire Seniors at the time and my thanks go to David Killick who ably led the side.

The home match with Wyke Green was captained by Bob Baker, as your Captain thought it prudent not to play on his wife's significant birthday! What

a wise decision that turned out to be as the weather was horrendous with the rain getting stronger and stronger all the time. The Captains of both sides decided on an honourable draw after nine holes and repaired sensibly to the bar. My thanks to Bob. We have not been very lucky with our matches with Wyke Green this year as the away match had to be cancelled because of snow and we are currently trying to find an alternative date to replay the match.

**Winter Greensomes** The draw is now up and running but, because of bad weather, many of the matches are slightly behind schedule. We must all, myself included, make extra efforts to play as soon as is possible.

**Angora Cup** The entry list is now up on the board and I would encourage all new Rabbits who have recently joined the Club to enter. It is good fun and a great way to get to know new people. Of course, the Angora is not just for

new members as we also welcome ex-Foxes who have been promoted to our section. We had a record entry of 70 last year and it would be great to beat that figure in 2009. The winner of this event, apart from pride of place on the honours board, becomes Northwood's Super Rabbit and competes against all the other Stanley West Clubs in our area. This will take place at Batchworth Park on Tuesday 6 October 2009.

**Match Availability List** The list is now on the notice board and I would encourage all Rabbits to enter as soon as possible. Rabbits Secretary Bob Baker will ensure that everyone has at least a couple of games.

**Rabbits Web Pages** We now have our own web pages on the NGC website - well worth a look

Good luck to all Rabbits and have a great season.

## **Brian Ratcliffe**

### *Stags Section Report*



## **Spring is in the air - a new golf season begins**

The snow and ice have gone; the spring bulbs are through; the birds are building their nests. Spring is in the air and a new golf season begins.

I played last week for the first time in two months and I thought the course was in tip-top condition - well done David Leach and the green staff.

The match lists have begun to be posted up on the Stags Notice Board. The list goes up about three weeks in advance so that members can initial their names if they are selected. Two weeks before the match I then send the

list to the opposing club so that the individual matches can be created. It's customary for each side, wherever possible, to pair up a high handicapper with a lower one. This makes for a fairer and probably more enjoyable match on the day.

Any Stags member who has not put his name on the match availability list may care to do so straight away please.

I am looking forward to the matches and to playing with different partners; win, lose, or draw - let's all enjoy it.

**Taking offence is like swallowing poison and expecting the other chap to die** *Eddie Higgins*

**Jack Wheeler**  
Green Matters



# Gentlemen's and Ladies Championships to be on same weekend

**D**avid keeps the website information up to date about the work he is doing and also writes a report for the notice board in the hall and by the Pro Shop. So, if you're not IT literate, you can still read what is happening on our course.

The Ladies have asked to hold a Championship competition of their own and have put the proposal to the Green Committee. While the Committee was discussing the proposal, it was suggested that the Ladies' and Gentlemen's Club Championships should both be held over the same weekend, with the main prizes being for the best scratch score for the Men's Trophy and Ladies' Plate.

The Committee proposes that the competitions are held on Saturday and Sunday 27 and 28 June - 18 holes each day played over two days, making a 36 hole Club Championship Competition weekend for Ladies and Gentlemen. The presentation of prizes would be on the Sunday evening. Food would be available all over the weekend with a buffet on the Sunday after finishing the round. That is an initial broad outline of the Championship Weekend. The Committee will have to decide, over the next few months, how to arrange the start times on both days for the Ladies and for the Gentlemen. We will keep you informed as we progress.

Another proposal put forward by a member is that between April and September more qualifying Stableford competitions are held. These will be CSS generated with handicaps adjusted accordingly. There will be no start sheets for these extra competitions; they will be played in normal 2, 3 or 4 ball games. It maybe that, in the group you play in, only one

member will be entering the competition.

A £1 sweep will also be optional; to enter get a score card from the Pro Shop, enter the sweep if you wish (prizes are vouchers exchangeable at the Pro Shop). At the end of your round, place your score card in the box by the Pro Shop door. The General Manager will mark your card. The aim is to give these extra competitions a trial period of two years to see if they are popular. A notice will be put on the board explaining these competitions in more detail at a later date.



*A new membrane goes in an 18th fairway bunker to prevent gravel rising to the top of the sand*

Our greens are showing a marked improvement. The grass is denser in coverage and is responding well to the fertilizer that David is applying on a regular basis.

Our greens have been faster in the winter months than the summer months. The reason is, although we only cut about once a week in winter, we rolled them with vibrating rollers about three times a week, which made them faster. They have not been rolled in the summer in previous years because the green staff has not had the time. This summer we are going to cut them once or twice a day then roll them with vibrating rollers once or twice a day in an effort to see if this will improve the speed.

## ***We still come back***

In my hand I hold a ball,  
White and dimpled, rather small.  
Oh, how bland it does appear,  
This harmless looking little sphere.

By it's size I could not guess,  
The awesome strength it does possess.  
But since I fell beneath its spell,  
I've wandered through the fires of hell.

My life has not been quite the same,  
Since I chose to play this stupid game.  
It rules my mind for hours on end,  
A fortune it has made me spend.

It has made me yell, curse and cry,  
I loathe it, and want to die.  
It promises a thing called par,  
If I can hit it straight and far.

To master such a tiny ball,  
Should not be very hard at all.  
But my desires the ball refuses,  
And does exactly as it chooses.

It hooks and slices, dribbles and dies  
And even disappears before my eyes.  
Often it will have a whim,  
To hit a tree or take a swim.

With miles of grass on which to land,  
It finds a tiny patch of sand.  
Then has me offering up my soul,  
If only it would find the hole.

It's made me whimper like a pup,  
And swear that I will give it up.  
And take to drink to ease my sorrow,  
But the ball knows ..  
I'll be back tomorrow.

*With thanks to Stephen Lee  
for spotting this and  
sending it in to Links*

**My wife was looking through a fashion magazine, and she saw a fur coat.  
She said, "I want that." So I cut it out and gave it to her.** Tommy Cooper



# Letters to The Editor

## Course courtesy begins at Home

I joined NGC almost 4 years ago. Up to that time I had played at mainly public courses, with the occasional visit to a member's club when possible. I was used to seeing deep footprints in bunkers, divots not replaced and pitch marks not repaired on public courses. I imagined that things would be a great deal better at a member's course.

Well, I am sorry to say that my experience is that things at NGC are just as bad as at a public course. I am astonished that many golf club members do not seem to know the etiquette of keeping the course in good condition for the benefit of all of us.

I think that more reminders need to be issued by the Club to try to persuade members that the small effort involved in these acts of courtesy will be to the benefit of all, and help to improve the condition of the course for all in the long run.

**Alan Baker**

## Units of Alcohol v MPG



**Volume x Percent  
divided by 1000  
= Units of Alcohol**

In other words, if you have a glass of red wine which measures 175 ml, and the label on the bottle tells you that the wine is 13.5% Alcohol by Volume, you multiply 175 by 13.5 and then divide the result by 1000, giving you a grand total of 2.35 units. Surprised? It follows that, for example 12% white = 2.1 units

**BUT** stand proud you noble swingers of clubs and losers of balls.... A recent study found the average golfer walks about 900 miles a year. Another study found golfers drink, on average, 22 gallons of alcohol a Year. That means, on average, golfers get about 41 miles to the gallon.

## Untie the hands of the Professional

This is a call for the Club to be a bit more flexible on days when there is a medal or competition being played on the weekend. During the Summer months this is nearly every weekend.

Why cannot the Professional be given the option of allowing golfers out, who do not want to play in the medal/competition, dependent on the traffic on the course. For those of us who can only play at the weekend, and who don't always want to play in the competitions, but want to play socially, the restrictions currently stop us playing in the mornings. This is totally unreasonable, especially when the course is nearly empty. I would also like to point out that my fourball at least, probably play faster than any three ball playing in a medal, and so no one would be held up.

Last Saturday (I'm writing this in the third week of January), when the weather was below zero, there were very few players out on the course in the morning, but we were forced to play as a pair of two-balls. A complete nonsense, for which the Pro apologised, but his hands were tied.

I would like us to untie the hands of the Pro and allow him to make sensible variations to the rules when the course is not busy.

Please don't come up with "it's always been like that" but look to the current conditions and especially to those who can only play at the weekend and would like to have a social game of golf on a Saturday morning.

What do you all think?

**John Steinitz**

## A reply from David Leedham, Board Chairman

*I think that John's letter requires consideration on the basis of (a) playing on a competition day but not playing in the competition, and, (b) playing as a 4 ball on a singles competition day.*

*The rules have been developed over some years of experience to maintain a reasonable pace of play that is fair to all players. I have no reason to doubt that John's regular 4 ball can keep up with a singles 3 ball medal competition, but we have to set general rules for the majority and sadly that could not be said of all 4 ball play.*

*As regards playing outside the drawn times, there has never been a problem in allowing non competition players out on the course within certain guidelines that give priority to getting the players in the drawn times through.*

*There have been times, particularly this last winter, when there have been circumstances such as John describes. At those times, generally speaking, the Professional has some discretion, but again he has to think of the majority of people on the course (if there are any), to keep play moving and to maintain the crossover of slots at the first and tenth.*

*Overall I believe that at Northwood we have a set of rules allowing a great deal of latitude that I have not experienced elsewhere. The Board and Green Committee do listen to members (and between us we do have some experience of competition playing conditions), responding where change is warranted.*

*We were approached a short while ago by a member with a very compelling argument about the lack of qualifying competitions during certain parts of the playing season. We are introducing some additional Stableford competitions to address this shortfall. We will not be setting aside competition slots. Members will be able to play when they like within their 2, 3, or 4 balls, as and when they wish to enter on the allotted days. The only stipulation will be that the player enters and pays before going out and has a marker. There will be no restrictions on members who do not wish to enter the competition playing on those days within the usual tee time slots as 2, 3 or 4 balls.*

**David Leedham**

Happiness is nothing more than health and a poor memory *Albert Schweitzer*

**Jennifer Buckmaster**  
Membership Activities



# 55 Mars Bars on the UK Mars Bars Index

With hope, by the time you read this, the winter's rain and snow will be a distant memory and we will be enjoying our golf with spring in the air and a spring in our step. This may be difficult with the chaos that is happening around us in the rest of the world but escaping for a few hours on our lovely course is worth more than money can buy. Saying that, unlimited golf for just twenty-five pounds a week is very good value for money. This equates to three bottles of reasonable supermarket wine; four packets of cigarettes; one trip to Pizza Hut; a cut and blow dry; or on the UK MBI (Mars Bar Index), fifty five Mars Bars. Apart from the cut and blow dry (but then that might give you a head cold) all these items are not particularly good for your health, so not only do we get exceptional value for money, we improve our health. And, it's much nicer than joining a gym!

As you have probably gathered from the above diatribe, it is a quiet time on the membership front but I can assure you that your Membership and Marketing Committee are busy working on ideas to encourage new members. We hope the Associate Membership, due to be launched in March, will encourage younger golfers who find it difficult to justify full membership of a golf club due to work and family commitments. This class of membership will carry a £300 joining fee, £100 on their card and a guest green fee every time they play. The normal requirements for applicant interview and playing-in will apply. This offer will only be available to them for two years, in the anticipation that they will then be in a position to become full members.

Several members who only play during the week have approached us stating they would like to become five-day members. This has been discussed again by the Board and it

has been decided to allow current playing members who have been with the Club for three years to transfer to five day membership. We have contacted those members who left last year, because this option was then not available, to ask if they are interested in rejoining.

We are pleased to announce that Chris Holdsworth will be holding another Academy this spring. It is very difficult for a total beginner to know even where to start with golf and this is the ideal way to learn the game and etiquette with like-minded people. So, if you have any friends who are interested in taking up golf or think that any of our current membership offers will appeal, please spread the word. Remember, there is the added bonus of an extra £150 on your card for each new member introduced.

We have written to the Winter Members inviting them and last year's new and Academy members to an informal social evening on Friday, 20 March. This will give them a chance to meet members of the various committees and discuss any problems they may have encountered as a new member. This also helps the Club as it allows us to see things through fresh eyes and gives us an opportunity to see where improvements can be made.

We have been approached by the Chaplain from the Base in Northwood asking if we could offer men from the Base who have served in places like Afghanistan an opportunity of complimentary golf as part of helping them forget some of the awful scenes they have witnessed. We have agreed to this and are also arranging a golf match between Northwood Golf Club and the Base to be held during the summer.

A very interesting article appeared in The Times in January with the eye catching headline of "Clubs staring at

closure as demand begins to fall" Maybe some of you saw it - it doesn't make comfortable reading. They reported that, although more people than ever are playing golf, fewer are committing to golf club membership. In the Eighties and Nineties 850 new courses were built and there are now about 2,500 in Britain. This is probably a few too many and it seems inevitable that some will close.

Although these are difficult times, NGC will survive and happy golfers will still be losing balls in the stream in 2109. The Club holds the freehold to the course and clubhouse, owns valuable assets, has an excellent course and a loyal membership base. However, we need to be flexible in our approach to attract new members from a shrinking pool and need to be well managed and proactive with our marketing to keep costs to a reasonable level. But we do need help: the Membership and Marketing Committee is short of a member and appeals to any member of the Club with a marketing background to join us to help promote Northwood Golf Club.

### **A Smile**

*None is so rich or mighty that he can get along without it,  
and none is so poor but that he can be made rich by it.*

*A smile creates happiness in the home,  
fosters goodwill in business,  
It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and it is nature's best antidote for trouble.*

*Yet it cannot be bought, begged,  
borrowed or stolen,  
for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away.  
Some people are too tired to give you a smile.*

*Give them one of yours,  
as none needs a smile as much as he who has no more to give.  
With thanks to George France*

**Women don't gamble as much as men because their total instinct  
for gambling is satisfied by marriage**

*Germaine Greer*

# Just a Little Tidying Up

## General Principles

- Whilst at the Club, members, their guests and visitors should dress in appropriate clothing.
- In the absence of any specific guidelines, **smart casual** clothing is considered appropriate.
- If you are in any doubt as to whether something is appropriate then please don't wear it.

## On the course

- Recognised golf attire is appropriate, as dictated by golf fashion and convention for both men and ladies.

## In the Clubhouse

- Clean, dry, smart casual clothes to be worn at all times unless notified otherwise in advance by The Club.

## The following are inappropriate at Northwood Golf Club

- Denim jeans, tracksuits, paramilitary clothing, trainers, rugby/football shirts, other sports and beach wear.

- Short socks, other than white or colour coordinated sports socks when worn with shorts.
- Bare midriffs
- No footwear
- Shirts without collars or not tucked in, with the exception of fitted shirts designed to be worn untucked.
- Golf headwear worn back to front or in the clubhouse
- The wearing of golf shoes in the clubhouse other than in the spike bar.
- The changing of clothing or footwear anywhere other than in the locker rooms (except when the locker rooms are closed).

Members are requested to respect these guidelines at all times and to make sure that their guests are made aware of them. This will avoid staff having to ask members or visitors to leave the course or clubhouse.

**Steve Derbyshire**  
General Manager

## The difference between http:// and https://

The main difference between http:// and https:// is that it is all about keeping you secure. The important thing is the letter S which makes the difference between HTTP and HTTPS.

The S (big surprise) stands for "Secure". If you visit a website or webpage, and look at the address in the web browser, it will likely begin with the following: http://. This means that the website is talking to your browser using the regular 'unsecure' language.

In other words, it is possible for someone to "eavesdrop" on your computer's conversation with the website. If you fill out a form on the website, someone might see the information you send to that site.

This is why you never ever enter your credit card number in an http website!

**But** if the web address begins with https://, (note the S that has been added after the http) that basically means your computer is talking to the website in a secure code that no one can eavesdrop on.

If a website ever asks you to enter your credit card information, you should automatically look to see if the web address begins with https://. If it doesn't, there's no way you're going to enter sensitive information like a credit card number. Are you?

*With thanks to Stephen Lee*

## Ties wait for no man

*The subject of the wearing of ties was raised in The Times recently and three letters published might be of interest to NGC members.*

Sir,  
Sir Simon Jenkins seeking open-neck environments might try the Chelsea Arts Club, where ties, to quote the Chairman "are tolerated but not encouraged".  
*Brian Angel*

Sir,  
A tie helps the older man hide the rapid progression of a wrinkled neck.  
*B.W.Rogers*

Sir,  
The tie, depending on its knot and approximate position in relation to the Adam's apple, is useful in a really good domestic bust-up.  
*Mary Hodgson*

**She may be good for nothing, but she's never bad for nothing**

*Mae West*

**Norman Bennington**  
*House Report*



As always, with an old Club House, we are still experiencing several problems which we are gradually overcoming – maybe not speedily enough for some, but we are endeavouring to listen and act.

In early March we will be installing a secondary stair-lift alongside the second flight of three stairs. This will enable everyone to dine more easily in the upstairs restaurant and to enjoy the splendid views.

Whilst writing about stairs, I can now inform members that the replacement stairs that run from the clubhouse to the terrace are near to completion and, with hope, they will be fitted

## More rapid and efficient serving of food

during the course of the next few weeks. Then our terrace will be even more inviting with the warmer weather approaching.

Refurbishment and upgrading is continuing on both the Annex and Greencote (the bungalow near the previous Secretary's house) to prepare both for letting. Prospective tenants are already viewing the properties at present. In the Club's kitchens we are soon to install an additional bain-marie to assist in more rapid and efficient serving of food.

At long last we now have the zone sensors working in the gentlemen's locker rooms and it is pleasing to

hear so many positive comments. Members might be unaware that hitherto lights have remained on all day when, sometimes, no members have been in the locker rooms. These zone sensors will assist in reducing our expenditure on electricity.

Captain Jim Thorpe has agreed, in addition to his heavy work load, to head up a new Social sub-committee and I expect we shall learn some exciting plans soon.

Finally, I extend my thanks to Steve Derbyshire and to the House Committee for their valuable contributions and hard work.

**Peter Emery**  
*Foxes Section Report*



Another season of Foxes golf is upon us. The Winter Four-Ball is well under way and, other than a small delay which was inevitable because of the enforced course closures, is progressing on schedule to finish in early spring. Thanks to everyone for playing matches so promptly – it really helps.

Now, let's look forward to the new season. Watch out for the notice for entries to the Reynard Cup (singles match play) that will probably be on the Foxes Notice Board by the time you read this. Let's hope we get an outstanding number of entries this season because there are a lot of Foxes in the Club who seem to miss out on this, our biggest trophy

## Foxes hungry for real competition

competition of the year. It's just £3 to enter and gives you the chance to play some competitive golf through the summer season. I'm told there are a lot of Foxes hungry for 'real' competition, so prove to me that you really exist by entering the Reynard, please. There will be a date for close of entries on the notice, but expect it to be around the end of March.

And, of course, there are seventeen inter-club games in the calendar for 2009. We are lucky enough to play on many of the best courses around this area and although they are only friendly matches in theory, the golf is normally highly competitive. But the matches are always followed by a meal and the chance to make some golfing friends from other clubs, an opportunity that is much appreciated by many of the people who do manage to make themselves available to play. We do understand that it is not easy to play

regularly during the week if you work full-time but, even if you can only play in two or three matches, please put your availability on the board. Give me a ring if you know that it's those games or nothing at all. We really do want new people involved, so make yourself known and we'll do our best to give you an outing or two. You'll probably enjoy it, so come on all you new Foxes, let's be hearing from you. (Good grief, I'm starting to sound like Delia Smith!)

Just to remind you, the section has joint captains for this season, Stephen Lee and Keith Brogan, and they will take charge of all matches 'on the day'. As Secretary it is my job to get teams together for the matches and I am probably the best initial contact if you have any problems or questions relating to the section or matches. Now, all that remains for the moment, is to wish all Foxes an enjoyable season with at least some outstanding golf!

## Chris Holdsworth

NGC Professional



I am looking forward to some decent weather this spring, which I am sure we all are. Those of you who frequent the Pro Shop have probably noticed there has been a gradual change in the nature of the stock and prices. There have been two major developments since the refurbishment in 2005/06. The first change was a personal choice of stocking fewer brands, allowing me to purchase in more depth and getting better relationships and deals with those suppliers.

The second change is in the selection of suppliers. For some years there have been several elite buying groups, of which possibly the largest and most well know is Foremost. This group in its heyday had 300 members, all Golf Professionals. The basic idea was to buy in bulk and create a central invoice base to alleviate paperwork in order to create more time for other aspects of their work. It also went to certain companies for exclusive, branded products.

This worked very well for a period of time, until the golfing public became more brand conscious and also better educated on the different products out on the market through the internet and, lastly, very price conscious through the same medium.

The group started to break up, so it was decided to invite the medium sized Golf Pro Shops and the rules were relaxed, allowing ordering more tailored to the needs of each particular shop. The type of golfing facility, i.e. championship course, public course, driving range etc, determines this.

The group was re-branded as Foremost-Alliance. I joined this

group in 2004 enabling me to buy popular stock at reasonable prices without setting up more supplier accounts. Likewise, I didn't have to have large stocks to offer the best prices. The group has gone from strength to strength and there are now 1,000 members. We now control over 50% of the golf retail market and our purchasing amounts to 60% to 70% of some companys' business – for example Powacaddy. All the larger popular brands supply our group.

There is also a lot of support and back-up, with trade shows and working groups headed by experts in their field. Last year Foremost-Alliance set up a series of business seminars fronted by Bill Sanderson, a motivation and business analyst. He has the experience of working with companies such as Barclays, Asda and Tesco. His talents include motivation, personal time management, customer psychology, stock managing, display and stock rotation.

The rules apply whether you are Tesco or Chris Holdsworth. I went to the series of four seminars at Garforth Golf Club in Leeds. I rubbed shoulders in working groups with Professionals from Lincolnshire and North Yorkshire. Interestingly, their Clubs have the same problems and issues that we have in the London area.

I attended my second Foremost-Alliance trade show at Harrogate. All the companies that supply our group were showing their 2009 products. Also, because of the impact we have the PGA accompanying services such as BMW, Jaguar and Peugeot were there as well. Invited to lecture at the show was Tom Wishon, who is a leading club designer whose designs

# The Group has gone from strength to strength

have been used to win tournaments on the US PGA Tour, Champions Tour and in the Ryder Cup. Also invited was Peter Cowan, who tutors most of the top PGA Tour players such as Stenson. He is based in Dubai and is recognised as one of the world's top coaches.

2009 could be a very tough year for golf. I feel people will still play but where and how they spend their money will be interesting. People will spend less on their golf. With this in mind, I am going to offer all the goods in my Pro Shop at very keen prices. One of the other problems looming is that nearly all goods manufactured in golf either come from the Far East or the USA. Everything is US dollar controlled and, with exchange rates unfavourable, the suppliers will at some stage increase the trade prices.

Here are some of the offers I can make now – and there will be many more to come:

**Pro V1 golf balls** - £30 per doz  
**Titleist Tour Extreme** - £20 per doz

**Hill Billy Terrain trolley** - £249  
**PowaKaddy Freeway trolley** - £339

**All 2009 FootJoy golf shoes**  
**10% off list price**, eg men's and ladies' Aqualites - £49.50

**Ping G10 drivers** - £173  
(inc. ladies Rhapsody)

**Ping G10 hybrids** - £99  
(inc. ladies Rhapsody)

**Sun Mountain 3.5 carry bags** £79.95

This is just a selection of goods that I will be selling at very competitive prices. Please come and talk to me, if you see anything I stock, or I can order for you. I will match or beat all prices whenever I can..

I hope you all enjoy your golf in 2009 and I hope the weather gods will be with you.

One good prejudice is worth twenty principles

Samuel Johnson

## ***Nigel Gornall***

*Juniors Section  
Organiser*



# **It is important for Juniors to be rewarded - and to be seen being rewarded**

**F**irst of all, a big thanks to everyone who supported our Junior Dinner and Raffle. The Dinner was extremely well supported, with 90 juniors, guests and members attending. Our raffle was also exceptionally well supported, raising in excess of £1,100 for our year's activities. Thank you to everyone who bought tickets. As for the Prize Giving, we think it is important, not only for our Juniors to be rewarded for good play, but to be seen being rewarded, and I am sure everyone who attended this year's Prize-Giving was impressed with the display of Trophies. It was pointed out to me afterwards that, notwithstanding the golfing element of the evening, how important it is for young people to be able make speeches, accept prizes in front of an audience, act as MC, etc - a great way of helping children develop into young adults.



*James, Paul and Robbie suited and booted*

Congratulations go to James Memory and Robbie Johnson on being elected Captain and Vice Captain respectively of the Junior Section. I hope they enjoy their

year and they lead the team to success. Well done to Paul Hopkins for a wonderful speech and a good year as Captain.

We again arranged a three-way match Tigers A v Tigers B v Juniors on March 8. I thank both Tigers' Sections for accepting to play in this match. Unfortunately, due to torrential rain only four holes were played, Let's hope we can set up the match next year.

Our League games start on May 10, a home game v Stanmore. We will also be playing Ruislip, Hillingdon and Pinner Hill this year.

Our season started during the School half-term in mid February. Although the course was shortened to 14 holes, 9 juniors played with Tom Wells winning the first medal of the year.

Everyone who came to the Annual Dinner and listened to me going on about our "small" section, will no doubt want to skip this paragraph, as it may be a repeat my speech. However, our numbers are now down to 22, with only 12 - 14 active members. We have started to formulate plans to solve this problem and have recently formed a working group of Jim Thorpe, Steve Derbyshire, Chris Holdsworth, Andy Williams and myself, to come up with some new ideas and initiatives on how to attract new Juniors to the Club. Our first meeting was positive and, with the new Assistant Professional, Jon Darby, I am sure it will not be too long before we see a new crop of young golfers at

Northwood. We will be repeating last year's *TRY GOLF*, where we will arrange open nights for juniors to visit the Club and "give golf a go". We will be looking at developing a Family Academy, where mum, dad and 2.4 children can all come to Northwood and be given lessons / introductions to golf. You may soon see mini golfers using the plastic clubs and soft balls as a way to introduce children into golf. This will not be a short-term fix; it will take a few years to get the Junior section thriving and successful again. I hope and trust the Club, as always, will bear with us and, wherever possible, offer some help if needed.

Our Junior Open is on April 16 this year. The date has been brought forward in an effort to increase the entry list instead of competing with several other Summer Opens. We will be one of only a few Opens played in the Easter School holiday. As well as changing the date, we have also made the competition open to under 21s; this again should increase the number of entries. Bearing in the MCGU Youth Championships will be held at Northwood in August, this may be a good opportunity for aspiring Middlesex Champions to "practise" on the course.

### **Life get tedious don't it?**

My wife said, "What are you doing today?"

I said, "Nothing."

She said, "You did that yesterday."

I said, "I wasn't finished."

*As reported by Ian Seely*

**These are my principles. If you don't like them, I have others** *Groucho Marks*

## Tribute to Ted Marshall 1912 - 2008

**D**ad was born in 1912 and often said that he was the second disaster of that year as it was the same year that the Titanic sank. One of five children, he lived in East Anglia in a farming community.

Apparently, he always knew his own mind and always did what he wanted to do. This meant that he often took his Dad's car, regularly without permission, even at the age fifteen. This was curtailed somewhat when, one day, he ran out of petrol a mile from home and he and a friend had to push the car home for about five hours. He did not do that again in a hurry.

When he left school he became a carpenter and worked for an undertakers, making coffins. For those of you who missed the funeral Dad was cremated in a bright emerald green coffin with yellow and orange flowers. To the end, Dad was not the most colour co-ordinated person I knew. I even thought he might have been colour blind.

When the war started he worked for the airforce, building amongst other things, mosquito fighter planes - which, for those who don't know, were built mainly of wood. After the war he lived in Tanzania, Africa, and helped with the planning and building of towns there. Dad, at the time, was married to Agnes and had two daughters Tina and Jan. Agnes died in an automobile



accident and, shortly after, Dad returned to England.

After his return, he met my mother Frances and we all lived as a family with Tina, Jan and my sister Sonia. Shortly afterwards my brother David was born.

Dad worked for several councils in the building regulations department and finished his working life with Brent Council. He seemed to have plenty of days off and regularly come home early and that's why I have tried to emulate him. He had a terrific influence in my career choice and, as a result, I became a surveyor. After Dad retired from Brent council he was not ready to take it easy, so he worked part-time

looking after the maintenance of blocks of flats and planning applications for my company. He was wonderful at obtaining planning permission, as he would always chat up the planners and had a magic ruler that always came up with the required size to suit the plans for the Council.

Dad enjoyed many years at Northwood Golf Club and I can still see him at the bar with Paddy, both of them with a drink and a smoke. He would call everyone "my boy". It was while talking to Paddy that Dad learnt about "lazy" winds. They were called that because they could be strong and cold and, instead of going around, they went straight through you.

He did more at the age of 80 than many at the age of 60 would do. Even after we persuaded him that his eyesight was so bad he shouldn't drive, he bought himself an "all-singing-all-dancing golf buggy". He was the scourge of Northwood and Northwood Hills, undertaking and overtaking all the traffic and going on the pavements as well, nearly running pedestrians over. Then, latterly, he drove a Red Devil electric car that everyone avoided when he was driving through Northwood. I do hope that those who knew him will not be sad at his passing but that they will remember and celebrate his life.

*Paul Marshall*

### R L (Bob) SAUNDERS

It is with regret that we announce the death of Mr Bob Saunders who died on 7 February 2009.

He had been a member of the Club since 1979 and will be greatly missed by all his friends.

### DOROTHY OLIVER

It is with regret that the death is announced of Mrs Dorothy Oliver who died on Sunday 1 March 2009 at Ipswich, at the age of 95.

She was a former active member of the Ladies Section. Remembered fondly for her skills as a gardener and as a noted pianist, she will be sadly missed by all her friends at NGC.

### A C B (Alan) GRIMES

It is with regret that the death is announced of Mr A Grimes who died on Tuesday 13 January 2009.

Mr Grimes had been a member of the Club since 1950 and all his friends will miss him.

## THE ST LUKE'S CHARITY DAY - MONDAY 13 JULY



One of the premier days of the NGC golfing year. Teams are now being organised - £70 pp per day or £260 for a four person team (only £240 if all NGC members). The format will be afternoon shotgun start, followed by three course meal with coffee, prize giving and an after dinner speaker. Singles or teams now booking. Full details from the Office.

## PRESIDENT'S DAY SUNDAY 24 MAY 2009



The President would like to invite all members to join him for a spectacular day of golf, wining, dining and entertainment

Members may enter their own teams of ladies, gentlemen or a combination

*Please watch the notice board for further details and entry form*

It will be a very sociable occasion so book the date in your diary now

## JON DARBY'S COACHING PHILOSOPHY

*Maximise potential through individualised coaching*

*Whether you are a high handicap golfer or a low handicapper I treat each person as an individual, as each person hits the ball differently. Whether you need a one-to-one single lesson, or you feel that your game would be better served by a course of lessons, I will be only too willing to help by preparing a performance plan for each member or visitor at the Club.*



### LESSON PRICES:

£20 – ½ hour Lesson      £40 – 1 hour Lesson

**Book a course of 5 x ½ hour lessons and receive a FREE LESSON ONLY £100 (usually £120)**

**Book a course of 5 x 1 hour lessons and receive a FREE LESSON ONLY £200 (Usually £240)**

*For further information please contact me direct on:*

Tel **07746 322856**

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Unspoilt and quiet, less than one hour from Faro

*Apartment sleeps six, balcony overlooking pool with sea views, maid service, shops, restaurants and beach nearby*

*Convenient for Parque De Floresta, Boa Vista, Palmares and Penina golf courses. Discounted green fees available.*



Contact John Simmons on 020 8421 2925  
or email [JohnandJen141@aol.com](mailto:JohnandJen141@aol.com)

### WANT TO ADVERTISE IN LINKS?

Initially, members' advertisements are printed **free of charge**, subject to available space. For any product or service sold as a result of this advertisement, it would be expected that a 5% donation would be made to the Captains' Charities. Commercial advertising is also welcome. Prices upon application to the Editor.



**Northwood  
Jazz Nights  
Great Line Ups  
with Great  
Music  
starts at 8.30**

**Make a note - Jazz Nights on  
20 April 11 May 15 June**

**£7 on the door - no need to book - public welcome**

# Results & and recent events

## Gentlemen's Results

Competition	First	Second
December Stableford	M Ginger	C Yates
January Stableford	A Stratton	M Ward
February Stableford	R Holden	P Collins



Muntjacs are often seen if there is little noise *David Leach*



A lot of puzzled faces at the Quiz Night in March - and it was also the Captain's turn for the temperamental microphone



Winter scene by the 12th green in early February *Brian Clark*

## Ladies' Results

Qualifying Competitions	Silver Division	Bronze Div 1	Bronze Div 2
December Medal	Penny Dark	Beth Heritage	Dilys Welch
December Stableford	Marg Bacon	Melanie Roberts	Angela Butler
January Stableford	Sallie Bowen	Ursula Garner	Angela Butler
January Medal	Denise Crouch	Rachel Rooker	(One Div)
February Stableford (14holes)	Julia Ginger	Melanie Roberts	Angela Butler
<b>Competition</b>			
Middlesex Eclectic	Silver: Brenda Goldie	Bronze: Trish Lanning	
LGU Medal	Silver: Penny Dark	Bronze: Tracey Bohane	
Leigh Handicap Cup	Margaret Batchelor		
Hole In One	Alison Somek		



The final touches to the new paths by the terrace



Kim Darton from The Shooting Star Hospice acknowledging grateful thanks for over £27,000 raised by NGC - pictured with 2008 Captain Ted Gray and his wife Esther



A view from the Clubhouse after the heaviest snowfall for 20 years in early February *Brian Clark*