

Men's Golf Captain's Blog

I'm delighted to write my first blog as Captain of the Men's Golf section. While I've only been in post for less than a fortnight, there's a lot to cover and some very good news to report.

First, I would like to thank **Gerry Dennigan** for his captaincy over the past two years. When he assumed the post, few if any of us knew that Covid was heading to our shores which would affect all of us in so many different ways. For Gerry, and Angela Atkins – the Ladies' Captain, it sadly meant that the enjoyment of captaincy was lost on them for many months as the Club was in lockdown. Thankfully golf returned earlier this year, and while we didn't quite have the full programme of golf, it was great to see so many of us playing (far more than ever) and for Gerry and Angela to be able to resume normal duties. Gerry played a good number of his *Captain and Pro* matches; Gerry has acknowledged these matches (partnering Ricky and occasionally members of the Pro team) as being the highlight of his captaincy and his record ranks among the best. I hope that I can do just as well when these matches get going.

The Men's Golf Dinner on Friday 19th November will give us a superb opportunity to thank Gerry for his captaincy. The evening should be a great occasion, and it will be a chance for me to meet those of you who are still for me just names on IG but not had the pleasure to meet in person.



That said, I would like to thank everyone who were present for the Captains Drive-in and competition on 16th October. Tricia Morgan, the new Ladies' Captain, and I, got our drives away – 327 yards in total (well done Mike Kappler for guessing right), played steady in the competition and we appreciated the warm words of welcome and encouragement that we received throughout the day from so many Members. Thank you to everyone. And I wish Tricia all the very best.

The winners of the Captains Competition were Daniel and David Birn (amazingly - 6 better ball/44 points), with Justin Thesiger/Andy Nowell finishing as runners up with 42 points (c/b) and Niels Verbeek/Peter McGovern coming third, also on 42 points. Great golf guys.

The quality of golf being played at Roehampton Club was highlighted in the 48 hours after the Captains Drive in. On the next day, Scott and Max Stanley won the **London Amateur Foursomes** at Moor Park – one of the biggest scratch competitions, dating back to 1907- beating the Burhill pair 5&4 in the final. The competition was held over three days: a



tremendous achievement by Scott and Max. An historic win and the trophy is in the Clubhouse.

The same day, our **Scratch team** (captained by Vince Thorne) welcomed the Surrey A team, led by our former member, Andy Inglis. The Club won 8-6, with some great performances – not least Tom Reed who needed half a point for Roehampton Club to defeat Surrey. He did more than that - he birdied 17 and 18 to win 1 up, rolling in a 30ft putt on the last to win, in front of a full and boisterous balcony (rightly so!). Apparently, he became the team's very own Ian Poulter when the putt was drained. The team's performance really demonstrated the strength in depth of the squad and bodes well when they resume their fixtures next year.



These two great wins surely inspired our Surrey John Ling Team, led by Neil Anderson as, on the next day, they defeated Silvermere in the final of the John Ling Salver competition. The match (for those aged 55 and over), took place at Tandridge Golf Club and our team won 3-2, with the final match won on the 21st by Roy Martin and Frank de Freitas. Congratulations to the team and indeed all of Neil's squad who played in the previous rounds.

I'm afraid that I couldn't make it a clean sweep of Roehampton Club wins in my first 48 hours of captaincy, as I led an eight-man team to a narrow defeat (4.5 to 3.5) to the Senior Golfers' Society at Woking Golf Club. It's a match the Club has been playing since 1929. A lovely day's golf was had by all.

The **England vs Rest of the World** match was played last weekend (last year's match was cancelled because of Covid). Peter McGovern led the ROW to an impressive 4.5 to 2.5 win, with Craig de Silva the stand-out player (playing off 12.9, he shot 4 over to win his match 7&6 partnered by Raphael de Botton). It was good to see Raphael and a couple of other new faces playing in this match, and I hope that for friendly matches in the future (internal ones and against other clubs) that more of you will want to sign-up. The next intra-club friendly - **Scotland** (captained by Campbell MacDougall) vs a RoW team led by me, takes place on Sunday 28th November.



Left to right: me, Craig de Silva and Peter McGovern

There are still a few places left (16 a side): the sign-up sheet is on the noticeboard in the Men's Locker Room.

The **Men's 4BBB Knockout** started in June and it's now reached the Final with Ben Walmsley and Adam Musikant to play against Craig de Silva and Andy Nowell.

Congratulations to the two pairs in reaching the Final, and my commiserations to the losing semi-finalists - Mike Kappler and Jonathan Perkins, and Stuart Loggie and Greg Waunford-Brown. Stuart and Greg have a chance to revenge their defeat when they play Craig and Andy very soon in the final of the 2020 Men's 4BBB – another competition that was delayed because of Covid.

At the **Men's Dinner on 19th November**, all of these and the other guys who have been successful on the golf course will be honoured by the Men's Section. It should be a fun evening. And we have John Inverdale – the BBC sports presenter, as our guest speaker. I do hope that you can attend. Tickets are £35, sign-up at Reception.

The Men's Dinner will also look to raise money for Gerry's charity (Prostate Cancer) and my chosen charity for my year of captaincy – **ReGenerate** (it's also Tricia's chosen charity).



ReGenerate, chaired by Lisa Jones – a Member of the Club – is a youth charity based on the estates in Roehampton and Putney; Roehampton is one of Europe's largest estates and is just a 9-iron distance from the 14th tee. The charity mainly works with children on the two estates (but also the Lennox Estate at rear of the Club) to help them navigate the challenges that many of them face on a daily basis – at school, at home and in finding employment. As well as raising money for ReGenerate, Tricia and I will be exploring other ways that Roehampton Golf can support it over the next 12 months – by the Club and by individual members (for example mentoring). For more information, please visit www.regenerateukco.uk

Competition golf to note between now and end of November:

- Season Finale Shotgun (mixed): 30th October (start sheet full, please contact Louis to be put on reserve list)
- Men's Winter Foursomes: 1st rounds to be played, ideally on 6th/7th November weekend, no later than 21st November.
- Men's Stableford: 13th November
- Club Roll-up (mixed): 21st November
- Club Roll-up: (mixed: 28th November

I will be using my blog to keep you informed on what's going on with men's golf being played at Roehampton Club. I also want to hear your views – good and not so good. Hopefully more of the former, as I think men's golf is in a pretty good place (including the

very active Seniors' Section), and that is thanks to a lot of people – our committee members who volunteer their time (more about the Men's Golf Committee in my next blog), and of course to Tristan, Louis, Ricky and the Pro team, our course marshalls and our greenkeeping team. Issues do occasionally arise but let's not forget what we've got and the efforts made to make golf at Roehampton Club such a pleasure.

That's it for my first blog; I promise that my next one won't be so long!

Paul Taylor, Men's Golf Captain