

Dalhousie News

Dalhousie Golf Club, Links Parade, Carnoustie, DD7 7JE



Courtesy of Photopolis

Issue 4

Winter 2007

So another season has come and gone; another Dinner – the Club's 139th, if your editor's arithmetic is correct – has brought a very quick year to a close. Trophy winners were congratulated, runners-up received commiseration, some members consumed FAR too much alcohol, though the evening will surely be remembered for a quite brilliant address by Emil Pacholek.

The morning after, the sound of club on ball therefore rang round Buddon Links with extra resonance. Our captain was in splendid form; a gross 76 off 15 easily winning the day. When asked about his new driver (only once did it let him down) he confirmed it was the 11 degree model.

It was, in truth, almost identical to the angle reached by at least one of the members at the bar on the previous evening....

It has, of course, been a memorable year. A magnificent Open Championship produced a thrilling climax, with a truly great, yet gracious, champion in Padraig Harrington. Several of the Dalhousie members who worked so hard with the R & A during the Open have since attempted to claim the credit for his victory (advice on club selection, direction of shot, nearest toilets etc. etc. all being offered in evidence) but the victory was his and his alone.

The hope for us ordinary mortals, of course, is that the lessons learned from observing these great players

will lift our own standards as season 2008 dawns. Experience, however, suggests otherwise.

At the end of the day, we in the Dalhousie may simply recognise any improvement in our golf in exactly the same way as ex-President Gerald Ford of the United States.

"I knew my game was getting better" he remarked before the second round of a U.S. Pro-Am some years ago. "I am hitting far fewer spectators than I used to".

Enjoy the Christmas break and get ready for 2008; it will be even better than 2007!

The Editor

FROM THE LADIES' TEE.....

Despite the lack of numbers – and, of course, the interference of the 2007 Open Championship, Dalhousie Ladies still derived considerable enjoyment from their season on the links. In June, 25 ladies took part in Captain's Day, the annual competition which tests their putting skills (non-golfing members are always welcome) then, afterwards, their ability not to over-indulge in afternoon tea! Mary McKenzie confirms that a good time was had by all and that most who took part are now sober again!

The AGM, annual dinner and prizegiving was held in the Station Hotel in November. Poor weather had

prevented several competitions from being concluded but a successful Tri-Am was won by Pam McEwan, ably supported by Earle Smith and Bill Smith. The Kydd Cup was won by Mary McKenzie herself and Pat Robb.

Christmas lunch at the hotel is now eagerly anticipated, though one sad note, which has dampened proceedings this year, has to be reported. Long-standing member and Past Captain Irene Muir passed away during the year; she will be greatly missed by all lady members and friends.

THE DUNHILL LINKS CHAMPIONSHIP

This year's Dunhill again produced some thrilling golf over Kingsbarns, the Old Course and our own Championship Links.

It remains a mystery, however, that so many avid followers of the

game continue to turn their backs on proceedings; attendances were again sparse.

Granted, few are enthused at the prospect of personalities or 'wannabe' celebrities duff their

way around three great courses, yet the performances of the professionals (particularly this year) more than compensated for deficiencies among their partners.

Our Club Captain and your editor were each privileged to watch record-equalling scores of 64 being compiled magnificently on the Championship Course. Adrian's encounter with Peter O'Malley, however, was in stark contrast to that of yours truly, as I followed 1999 Open Champion Paul Lawrie.

Adrian became more and more excited as he watched the various scoreboards around the course reveal that Peter O'Malley was threatening to demolish the hardest links in the world. Keen, naturally, to see history being made, he hastened to the fifteenth green.

He was just in time to see O'Malley miss a holeable putt to record par, rather than ANOTHER birdie, then was bitterly disappointed when he bogeyed the sixteenth. Somewhat deflated, Adrian retired to the sanctuary of the hotel. Roughly an hour later, he was more than a little surprised, when visiting the hotel toilet, to find himself standing "next door" to the great man himself!

Now, whether Peter O'Malley took our Captain's advice on the mistakes he made, grip and stance corrections etc (with, we trust, his golf clubs) remains to be established.....

Paul Lawrie, on the other hand, compiled an almost flawless 64 on the Saturday. (I watched all but forty minutes of the six-hour marathon.....surely this timescale MUST be examined?)

He hit only two poorish shots – a bunkered drive at the second and a pulled iron shot – his second – at the sixth. Aside from that, it was superb; a ten foot putt on the ninth green (his last hole) needed to drop for a new course record 63 but it slipped agonisingly past the hole. It was, nevertheless, an awesome display of golfing skills which was deserving of a far greater audience. Members' observations on this aspect would be more than welcome!

A SIGN OF THE TIMES?

Your editor was privileged to be invited as guest speaker to the annual dinner and prizegiving of the Caledonia Club. After the inspirational performance – only the previous week – by Emil Pacholek at our own function, there was more than a hint of nervousness at the prospect of creating similar entertainment for the gathering of another legendary Carnoustie golfing institution just 'across the road'.

Alas, though an excellent evening ensued, the numbers in attendance were, frankly, really

awful. One felt for the Captain, Stuart Brown, who was patently embarrassed by the poor turnout; nevertheless, why did more than two thirds of the prizewinners fail to turn up? In our opinion – allowing of course for illness, prior commitments, or other unforeseen circumstances - that was insulting to both the captain AND the club itself.

Perhaps, however, it highlights the malaise which appears to be afflicting all clubs at present – and not just the local ones.

PROPER membership of a club demands much more than mere payment of an annual subscription and subsequent enjoyment of the facilities on offer for purely personal reward. Certain responsibilities, in my experience, have always been attached to the individual who joins any organisation of a non-profit nature. It is time this fundamental principle was taken on board again; many seem either to have forgotten it – or are ignoring it completely. It does not bode well.....

GREETINGS FROM THE DALHOUSIE CLUB – USA!!

As development of the Club's new website begins to gather pace (it will, hopefully, be fully operational for the commencement of season 2008) there was a surprise, though welcome, exchange of greetings between Captain Adrian and Cord Dombrowski, founder of the Dalhousie Golf Club, Missouri, U.S.A. This, we understand, was the first ever formal contact between the two clubs, although several of the members from America visited Carnoustie earlier this year. Regrettably no liaison with our own members was made or attempted at that point.

The link to our "sister" club in the United States will, of course, be available through the new website. Cord confirmed to Adrian that he "would be honoured to be referred to as caption of the Dalhousie Club, U.S.A." Despite the obvious temptation, our own "caption" was decent enough not to chastise his opposite number in the States for his innocent mistake! It is to be hoped that a stronger bond might now be established between the two clubs and – who knows? Could exchange matches be a potentially exciting prospect in the years ahead?

Do You Know the Rules?

In the last issue the question was:-If your ball moves when you remove the coin that marked its position on the green, can you replace the ball without penalty?

The answer is yes. No penalty would be incurred (Rule 20-3a/1).

This issue's test on readers' knowledge of the rules is one which may well affect more than a few Dalhousie members as Christmas approaches and wives,

daughters or other enthusiastic family members go out to buy a Christmas present for Dad. You have all been warned!!

If you take part in a competition or tournament with a "hot" driver in your bag, which is against R & A rules – **but you do not use it** – will you be disqualified if the non-conforming club is discovered?

Answer in next edition.....

(Anyone found guilty of phoning Graeme Paton for the answer will be disqualified from winning the prize.)

MORE PROFESSIONAL ADVICE FOR THE NEW SEASON

With Christmas just around the corner, many of you may be asking Santa for that new club which you hope is going to work wonders next season.

This WILL be the case if 1) you have good technique and 2) the club is fitted correctly to YOUR GOLF SWING.

I have always been a strong supporter of custom fitting. Though this is not a facility I can personally provide, it is essential when buying new clubs.

I see too many of our members playing with clubs that are ill-fitted. Clubs are not to be bought 'off the rack' without establishing first....."do they fit me?"

Recently I have suggested to some of our members that they try the wonderful custom fitting facility at St Andrews

Links Golf Academy. Every time we hear that they have, they invariably confirm that they also enjoyed the experience. It lasts approximately one hour with all necessary information such as clubhead speed, spin rates and launch angles being analysed.

From all of that you will have the correct data to allow you to be fitted with the correct club. This is fabulous technology, which may not **guarantee** straight shots all the time but it removes the doubt from the mind if the club is correct for you.

If any members would like more information on club fitting, please

come into the shop where Nikki or myself will be more than delighted to explain the benefits and arrange

an appointment at facilities in the area which offer these services.

It just leaves me to thank all the members for their support and custom over the last action-packed year here at Carnoustie and to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy (and prize-gathering!) 2008.

**Good Golfing
Colin Sinclair**

CELEBRATIONS FOR THE TREASURER!

Our esteemed Treasurer, Aidan McColgan, had his preparations for the New York Marathon rudely – though excitingly – interrupted in September. A hole-in-one at the fifteenth on the Buddon was achieved courtesy of a "perfectly struck six iron". (We quote from his modestly prepared three page report sent – unstamped - to Dalhousie News). Understandably, the repercussions created the equivalent of a minor earthquake, both across the links and in the hotel.

Quick to recognise the financial opportunities suddenly offered by this "stroke of genius" (note the editorial

licence, Dear Reader, in deliberately omitting the "a" from this last phrase) Aidan shot back out after his round and filmed the 165 yards of the 15th from tee to green (complete with commentary) on his mobile phone.

Countless 'Inboxes' subsequently pinged around Angus as the epic pictures sped across the airwaves and through Broadband cables to an unsuspecting public. Naturally, as word spread, congratulations began to flood in and, happily, there was an obvious bonus.

The additional excitement and adrenalin that subsequently pumped

through Aidan's veins pushed him up to a highly creditable 6,987th position when he finally reached the "Big Apple" and completed the inevitable anti-climax of the race.

(There **was** a disappointment, however, in the aftermath of Aidan's triumph. Dalhousie News understands that Warner Brothers turned down his suggestion that the time was now ripe to produce "The McColgan Story", despite his having succeeded in persuading Padraig Harrington to play the key role as the caddy and Angus Hay to take a supporting role as Aidan's Fitness Instructor.)

This story, Dalhousie Members, might not YET be over.....

A LOOK AT THE SOCIAL SCENE

By the time this newsletter drops through the letter boxes of our avaricious members scattered around Scotland, Christmas celebrations may well be a distant memory – though the editor hopes that he can put enough in the meter to ensure this reaches everyone before the big day.

It probably **won't**, however, allow enough advance notice to prompt more bookings for this year's Christmas dinner in the hotel on December 15th. (If the meal is anything like that at the annual dinner, it will be a splendid night.)

Thoughts will then turn, socially, to Stuart Gearty's next extravaganza at the same venue on January 26th.

Fresh (well, utterly freaked out would probably be more appropriate) from the success of the enormously successful supper-dance in April, the follow-up, Dalhousie News understands, will understandably have a "Burns' flavour (note the date – it was as close as Stuart could get).

As those present last year will recall – indeed we believe legal proceedings are still ongoing - Stuart as M.C. performed his three-in-one impersonation of Bruce Forsyth, Archie Macpherson and a British Airways pilot attempting to land at Heathrow; with such success that the People's Friend held the back page until it got the facts right.

Stuart promises another cracker this time around and, if you haven't already done so, you better get booking your table now because places will be hard to obtain. Remember the date – 26th January – contact Stuart on 01382 225111 or by e-mail at stuart.gearty@btconnect.com.

STOP PRESS!!

Dalhousie News understands (despite fierce rumours to the contrary circulating around the Carnoustie Golf Hotel and among the local clubs) that the Director of Public Prosecutions will NOT be called in by Council to investigate claims by certain members that match fixing is rife - particularly on Saturday mornings among the "Ten O'Clockers".

The claim followed mysterious goings-on witnessed at several holes - on different occasions - when Arthur Coleman, Pat Robb and Frank Swan (is this banking connection significant?) - plus another member who is currently anonymous but whose initials are Colin Connell - were seen to disappear together into the silver birch trees

at the ninth then, later, out of sight towards the pond at the fifteenth on the Buddon.

Suspicious were aroused among their partners as, some minutes later, they each returned to the matter in hand with broad smiles on their faces.

The members in question subsequently went on to LOSE every match. However, they were seen in the hotel car park (after coffee, shortbread and announcement of scores) by a reliable witness who confirmed that a black Mercedes, driven by the manager of the local William Hill (Bookmaker) office in Dundee Street, sped off along Links Parade with a trail of brown envelopes in its wake.

..AND FINALLY.....

Your editor, in his innocence, has yet to enjoy the pleasures of mixed foursomes. If the experience last summer of one 'husband and wife' team from a local club (no names, no pack drill but we'll call them "Stuart" and "Margaret" for the purpose of the exercise) is any guide, I can't wait. They were drawn in the Cant Cup against a young couple (newly engaged, as it happened) from Letham Grange. As one good shot followed another from

the youngsters, they enthusiastically launched "high fives" and loving smiles at each other; when a big putt dropped, it was kisses and cuddles all the way to the next tee. After one such – on the tenth – Margaret turned to Stuart and, with obvious exasperation and envy, said "why don't you do that, Stuart?" The response was immediate – and blunt. "I can't do that, Margaret.....I've not even been properly introduced to her!"

If you have any stories, letters, comments (or complaints!) you wish to be included in the next edition please send these to:

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