



CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020 SPORTS SECTION REPORTS

MEN'S GOLF SECTION

To sum up this past 15 months, we as the Golf Section have taken great strides in putting together or improving where necessary, transparency and a better understanding for members of procedures which may not have been clear in the past. For example, Golf Vice and Captaincy selection process together with their roles and duties throughout their two years in office. Similarly, the same for Golf Committee members and whether Voting or Non-Voting.

This wouldn't have been possible without the valuable and impartial guidance of our Director of Golf, Darren Everett, who has also always been there to assist where necessary.

Against all odds, we have had a relatively but then very successful internal golf season, managing to start and complete virtually all club knockouts and major stroke play competitions, culminating in the new Race for Topsham finale.

Sadly, there were some disappointments, we were unable to play team matches, either with visiting clubs or by playing away. Up until now we will have lost around 20 weeks of golf and increasing! This of course has taken away from the Club substantial amounts of revenue that would have come directly or indirectly from such matches and events such as Opens and the Pro-Am together with not being able to have visitors' green fees. It is not possible to recover this kind of cash element.

I will be leaving the Golf Section as Captain in very safe hands with Charles Kislingbury taking over later this month as Captain for 2021 and I wish him every success with it, for which I will give him all my support as and if required.

Like all Committees within the Club who are all volunteers, they give their valuable time up to put something back into the sport and Club they love. The Golf team I leave have shown support above and beyond without complaint and I sincerely thank them for their dedication.

In my short term I have served on the Club Committee, I have enjoyed the new company of fellow sports members/Captains from whom I have been able to learn more about their sports. I feel that during the course of this year a clearer and maybe better understanding of the roles we take on the Committee representing our members are closer to being achieved.

Congratulations Maurice on the management of your Presidency in this tough year, and my best wishes to Vic taking over for 2021. And of course, to you all and for the safe return to your sports in whatever the new normality lies ahead for us.

I am of course mindful that without the Management of our great Club, we wouldn't have a Club to enjoy our sports at. I have been able to witness at close hand just how dedicated the

team we have here are. In particular this past year I have witnessed just that, and how through thick and thin from all roles the care and attention they have shown to provide a service that we members have grown to expect in spite of what obstacles they have faced. I thank them so much and look forward to enjoying that again soon.

All the very best to you all and keep safe.

Rick Pillow
Men's Golf Captain

LADIES' GOLF SECTION

The start of my year was not a great one as it decided to rain for several months. However for the first event of our year the spring greensomes, the sun decided to make an appearance, and I thought to myself this bodes well for the year ahead. If only! 2 weeks later on 16th March we went into our first lockdown.

After a lot of house cleaning, car washing and gardening we emerged out of lockdown on quite fittingly Independence Day, 4th July. I was overjoyed to be able to host my Ladies' Captain's day after all. It was wonderful to be able to have the opportunity to see everybody after such a long time, and I had a very good day.

The week of celebrations in June that the club had been planning for our 125th year anniversary, culminating with the Pro Am, had to be abandoned. Instead, we played an Am-Am on 30th August so that the members could take part in a mixed event. Thank you to all of those involved in making it such a great day.

The summer continued to be a good one, and at 6.00am on Tuesday 18th August myself and my committee along with past captain Ali, went out to play a Dawn Till Dusk Challenge raising a phenomenal £2500 for my charity Rainbow Living. My thanks go to all who were involved in the organizing of the day and also to the membership for their continued support and donations. We had a great day and were all still smiling at the end of it.

The Wooden Spoon was played at the end of September, and it now has a lovely blue ribbon on it. I have half a reel left for Lizzie to refresh it next year.

The world handicapping system became live on 2nd November. There were some teething problems, which were to be expected. We have had very little time since then to get our heads around it, but I am sure in time we will get used to it and even see the benefits when playing other clubs competitively.

Due to the pandemic and the lack of time that the vice captains had had to study the role of the captain, it was decided to postpone the AGM until the spring to give everyone more time in their roles

Despite another lockdown in November, we were back out playing in time to be able to hold our Christmas golf day. Once again this gave me the opportunity to see all the ladies whilst giving out mince pies and mulled wine at the half way house. There were some great costumes on the day, and myself and Santa, aka Joy Champion, had fun judging them.

I am very pleased to announce, that through the generosity of all the members, the Ladies section has raised a total of £3688.77 for our charity Rainbow Living. Along with the monies from the men's golf section we have raised a staggering £12,063.02. Rick and I would like to thank everybody for their incredible generosity during such a hard time.

It has been a very strange year, but despite it all, I have found it a rewarding one. Seeing how people can pull together, albeit not physically, but come together through the wonders of technology, and really support each other. We've all become zoom whizz kids! I would like to thank all my committee for their commitment and dedication throughout the year, I couldn't have done it without them.

I can't say that it hasn't been difficult, but on the whole I have enjoyed my time as Ladies' Golf Captain, and am very honoured and privileged to have been asked to play such an important role in this great club. I wish Lizzie every success in the year ahead and I know she has the support of a great committee.

Caroline Harris
Ladies' Golf Captain

TENNIS SECTION

In what has obviously been a very different year to those we have all experienced in the past there has been no conclusion to the winter 2020/2021 or summer 2020 leagues, however we did manage at the start of the year we to complete the winter season of 2019/2020 and the following teams won their respective divisions:

Men's A Division 1 (therefore the league)

Ladies B Division 2

Mixed C Division 5

Despite the lack of any competitive tennis being played for the remainder of the year, we do have some very good news from the tennis section.

Firstly, we won the Chairman's Award at the 2021 Devon LTA Awards night, a significant achievement and one where much of the recognition has to go to James Temple.

The club was praised for its "amazing support of Devon Tennis", hosting multiple events (including tournaments such as the prestigious Nexus Juniors events), and when the LTA President visited he was "very impressed with the club and its hospitality". It also was mentioned that they are "looking forward with excitement to the results of the clubs ambitious plans and the new facilities these plans will bring".

Such recognition for our club can only be a good thing, both on a county and national basis.

Secondly, James has signed a contract with Tecnifibre; "Tecnifibre is one of today's leading racket brands. They were originally known for their famous strings to which they are still the World number 1 squash and tennis multifilament string brand. Formed in 1978 they have a current portfolio of the world's best players for both squash and tennis."

They will be able to support some upcoming tournaments and junior players and more information will follow soon.

Finally, even though for long periods we couldn't get on to the tennis courts, when we could the booking system for members use and club nights worked well. Club nights have been very well attended and often over-subscribed, and I am sure we are all looking forward to getting back on to our courts as soon as possible.

Simon Goldsmith
Men's Tennis Captain

SQUASH SECTION

2020 was a very disjointed year for the section, with high hopes at the beginning of the year for continued success and growth in the section. The men's squash premier team was sitting on top of the Premier League table and fortunately had amassed enough points to have an unassailable lead in the league by the time lockdown arrived and managed to combine a league match with the Devon Cup final to be crowned League and Cup champions just in time for the fourth consecutive season! Which is another record breaking feat for the club. The women's section was also performing strongly, with some excellent performances.

The racketball teams were very solid this season and whilst other clubs put their efforts into the leagues, our teams still performed well, especially given that we had an extra team. Our focus was more on participation.

We were able to hold a very successful PSA (professional) tournament in Jan 2020, giving the club great exposure!

The junior section has been growing incredibly well with multiple county champions and also international representation, with Iwan Sharpe being selected to play for Wales as the No1 in the European Championships and the Home Internationals after finishing the junior season as the top ranked player in Wales and also finished in the top half of the draw at the British Junior Open, along with Billy Whalley (another product of Mike's coaching), meaning that both boys effectively placed in the top 50 in the world.

Mike has enlisted the help of Rob and James Horler to assist with the coaching and the junior groups have grown particularly well and the standard of our juniors is incredible. Mike had to take a huge amount of credit for the Stirling work he's doing.

During lockdown periods last year/this year Mike has initiated many excellent training activities for all section members and had been a great source of motivation for all of us during difficult times. Mike is also training Mohamed Elshorbagy, the most successful player in the world over the last 7 years and current world number 2. This goes to show the standard of coach we have at the club and we are very grateful for the work he does around the club.

Thanks to Mandie and the rest of the committee for such great support over the last 12 months, which have been very trying. We would also like to thank Chris Jones, the Club Committee and the staff for such great work in the face of adversity.

We are hopefully going to be holding another PSA event following lockdown which Mike plans to stream live to the world!

Jon Sharpe
Men's Squash Captain