

PUTTING IT TO YOU

OFFICIAL MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER OF THE RPAGC

ISSUE 4

30th March 2009

Can you believe that its nearly April and that we are a quarter of the way through 2009? It really came home to me when UK based annual swallows Launa and Dave Kirk said goodbye to me before returning home, wishing me a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2010 before they come back next January. Its said that time flies and the older one gets, the faster it goes. I've heard a logical explanation for this; as one gets older, a unit of time, (e.g. a year), becomes a smaller proportion of one's age. For instance, a year at age 25 represents 4% of one's life, but at 50, only 2%. So as you grow older, you might as well accept that time will go more quickly.

Enough waffle! Welcome to issue number 4 of the *Putting it to You*. In this issue we welcome Kevin Harpur to the RPAGC as its new General Manager. We have further updates on fauna, course and greens, our ladies' section and plenty more.

Breaking news is that preferred lie on fairways will cease as from Weds 1st April (not an April Fools' joke).

We also take this opportunity to express our warmest thanks and congratulations to Sally Greasley and Corrie van Zyl for managing the club so ably and keeping it operational during the past 4 months during which we have had no full-time, long-term manager. This period covered “the mad season” when we have a plethora of visitors from all over our country and overseas, long summer days with the course open for more than 12 hours and at a time which most of us spend with family and friends, enjoying a well deserved holiday. Yet the club ticked over like clockwork with Sally and Corrie at the helm, putting in the hours so that the rest of us could benefit.

We should not forget the rest of our valued staff during this period, Dawn, Devon et al, who helped Sally and Corrie perform so well.

Thank you to one and all for a job well done.

CAPTAIN'S COMMENTS

Colin Howard reports: Firstly, on behalf of the committee and all members of our club, I should like to extend a warm welcome to our new general manager, Kevin Harpur and his wife Michelle (or Shellie as she prefers to be called). We wish Kevin great success in his new venture and hope that his stay at the RPAGC will be a long, happy and beneficial one to all parties.

One cannot help but notice how colourful, neat and manicured our gardens are looking around our clubhouse. Marge Henley is doing a wonderful job in this precinct and I would like to congratulate her and her staff for a job very well done. We all really appreciate your efforts in this respect.

I would like to add my thanks to Sally and Corrie for the superb effort they have put in, in running the club since December. You stepped in when the club needed assistance, helped put systems in place ensuring a smooth run over the busy festive season and beyond, putting up with all the moans and groans with a polite smile or nod of the head and occasionally a moan of your own. From all of us a very big thank you.

To my committee as well, my thanks for all your efforts, ideas and support as we sat through many meetings discussing the way forward for the club.

The financial position at the club is rather tight at the moment with the land deal or lack thereof a major problem and concern, costing us and the developer a lot of money. Noel Stotter, who is handling the matter on our behalf, is constantly thwarted in his efforts by the lack of action/ decision making of the government department concerned. We have now decided to seek the legal

advice of an advocate with a view to approaching the attorney general for assistance in order to finalize this unexpectedly long process.

The long awaited and most welcome rains have done marvels for the course and my thanks go to Graham Oliver, Cecil Jones-Phillipson and the staff for their efforts around the course. Preferred lies will soon be a thing of the past !! Happy golfing. "

OBITUARIES

In issue 3, we included an obituary on the decease of life member Ian Lloyd. In addition, sadly we have to report the passing away of Neil Painter, an honorary member, Brian Ault, a keen member with the 1820s and Jean Andrews, lady vice-president and captain in during the period 1987 – 88.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

There are frequent comments / complaints from members about the quality and the branding of wines that are stocked at the club. It is obvious that we cannot stock a list that satisfies all member preferences, but if you would like to make suggestions as to what you believe should be stocked, please let either Sally or Kevin know in order to find commonality to this end. After all, it is you, the member, who will be consuming what's on the wine list.

Our biggest event of the year, the Mad Hatters Festival, which is to be held from Monday, 27th April to Saturday, 2nd May is fast approaching. For those of you who don't know, there will be a sponsored competition every day and party-time (entertainment, meals, live music etc) during the evenings. Four-ball Alliance, Better and Individual Stableford formats are available, depending upon the day(s) that you choose to play. There are a few slots still available, especially Monday through to Thursday, so if you haven't already done so, get up to the club and sign on.

And here is fantastic news!!! The entertainment in the evenings will be provided by none other than the well renowned *CENTRE STAGE*, who will be playing live on both the Tuesday and Friday evenings, and running a disco on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. For those of you who are not familiar with *CENTRE STAGE*, they are the cream of Eastern Cape entertainment with great humour and fabulous music, something that you cannot afford to miss.

For the past four months or so, Sally Greasley and Corrie van Zyl have been holding the fort as far as day to day management of our club is concerned. This comes to an end with the arrival of our new manager, Kevin Harpur.

Here is a message from Sally:

"I should like to thank all members for their support, patience and understanding over the past few months. If I have had a sense of humour failure with anyone – please forgive me! After a few golf lessons, I'll be back playing".

Corrie adds, "Thanks to all members for their support and help".

INTRODUCING KEVIN HARPUR

As you know, Kevin Harpur has accepted the position of General Manager of the RPAGC and will assume his duties from Wednesday, 1st April. As reported in an earlier issue, Kevin has enjoyed a career in various aspects of banking, but retired early to open up a restaurant at Grosvenor Crossing in Bryanston, Johannesburg. (For those of you who are familiar with the area, it was the Brazen Head Restaurant on the premises of the old Keg, which was well known there back in the 1990s). The combination of a financial background and running his own food and beverage business makes him ideally suited to take over the managing of the RPAGC.

Kevin is no stranger to Port Alfred and the Eastern Cape having studied at Rhodes University and by spending many holidays here in PA with his family up until 1992. At one stage or another, Kevin's father, Kevin himself and his son Nic have all been country members of our club. His wife Michelle (Shellie) will be joining him down here in about a month. They have two children, Nicolas (Nic) and Georgina, both in their twenties and living independently in other parts of the country.

Shellie and Kevin are very excited to be back in Port Alfred and The Eastern Cape, an area having so many fond memories for them.

Kevin says that his initial approach will be to make the RPAGC a more friendly, profitable and Service Friendly organisation. Kevin certainly has the credentials to achieve just this and we all wish him well in his endeavors.

COURSE AND GREEN MATTERS

Cecil Jones-Phillipson reports: The good news is that the course is in excellent condition and we look forward to welcoming members and visitors to our annual Mad Hatter Tournament from 27th April to 2nd May.

The bad news is that the *Land Sale* is no nearer the transfer stage and receipt of payment. As a result it has been necessary to cut back running expenses wherever possible. With respect to Course Maintenance, our opportunities exist in tighter control of capital expenditure and fuel and fertilizer usage. We have purchased a second hand *Toro* fairway mower for R50 000 instead of a new one which would have cost R650 000. I appeal to all members to bear with us during these stringent times and support the decisions of our committee in addressing such problems. Cutting the fairways only once per week will result in a saving of about R30 000 per annum. Please bear with us!

The *14th Green* is back in play and, although somewhat slow at present, it should settle soon.

The *Ladies' and Seniors' 9th tee-box*, which has been rebuilt, is coming along nicely and should be re-commissioned in April.

Kikuyu grass growing on fairways and tee boxes is being sprayed monthly to either limit its further spreading or to kill it off. A new product to this end is being used and the results so far are most encouraging.

The laying of the steps and grass to the *elevated tee-box on the 12th* is complete.

Geoff Bladen has donated aloes which will be planted along all par four and par five fairways to enhance the visibility of the 100m indicators from the greens.

Replacing the netting on the fence along Greenmantle Drive (i.e. from the *Happy Valley green to the Shelley Beach green*) will commence soon to enable us to obtain a *Certificate of Adequate Enclosure* in accordance with our objective of legalising the presence of antelope on the course. We will not be purchasing new netting as we have *Bonnox* in stock and the fencing will be done in house.

Before the Mad Hatter Festival, we will trim a further 10 to 15 m of rough on either side of the semi-rough bordering our fairways. We will also trim under the trees on the 11th.

I note that there has been a positive response to mending divots for which we thank you. Please remember to continue to do this as this is of great help to us.

Finally, just a further reminder to all golf car drivers to obey the signage that has been put in place and not to drive their cars within 10m of the greens themselves. Your efforts to protect the course in these respects will be most appreciated.

LEAGUE FIXTURES AND RESULTS

The latest league fixtures took place on Sunday, 8th March. The results were:

“A” Team:	Lost to Walmer CC	10 – 8
(1 st league).	Lost to Walmer GC	10 – 8

“B” Team:	Beat Humewood	11 – 7
(3 rd league).	Beat Hankey	14 – 4

The next league matches will be in Port Alfred on the 26th April when our first team will play Port Elizabeth Golf Club and Walmer GC, whilst our seconds take on PEGC and Northwood.

Both leagues contain six teams and after the 3rd round the firsts are lying 4th in the first league, whilst our seconds are way out in the lead of the 3rd league.

WILDLIFE MATTERS

Geoff Broom reports: The course and the wildlife are looking really good and the herbage yield over the last couple of weeks has been great, which should ensure reasonable grazing for our wildlife into the foreseeable future.

More good news is that negotiations for a Springbok ram, which started some time ago are starting to bear fruit and I am told that we should be taking delivery of two new Springbok rams early next month.

I'm also sure sure that the seven springbok ewes will be extremely grateful.

We have not received any reports of anyone having seen a mature Bushbuck ram in the last few months, so it has to be assumed that the young ram which was frequently seen around the number 8 green area has either escaped, or come to some kind of sticky end. We now need to initiate arrangements for a replacement ram during the coming month so that we do not miss the breeding season. With this in mind, will members please contact me if they have any useful ideas or a close friend who might like to donate a ram to the Club.

MEMBERSHIP

It was thought that members might be interested in the present membership of the club by category. For those that are interested, the table below gives the status as at 18th March:

CATEGORY	GENTLEMEN	LADIES
Full	703	219
Country	193	45
Junior	37	1
Prentice	41	6
Social	65	56
Honorary	5	3
Life	19	4
Associate	8	
Pending	1	
Others *	6	

* Visitor members

This adds up to a grand total of 1 412 members.

LADIES' SECTION

We will miss the larger fields we have enjoyed during the past few months as most of the swallows, barring Finula Pepper who will be with us for a couple more weeks, have flown home. As in the past, we greatly enjoyed the company of our overseas members.

A deluge during the early hours of 1st March made the course unplayable with water in the bunkers and pools on the greens and fairways. The *D and A Timbers Open* was rescheduled to Sunday, 5th April.

On 24th March the westerly gale was so horrendous that we were forced to cancel the *Homewoods 3-Ball Alliance*. In the past competitions have had to be canceled due to rain but I cannot ever recall having to cancel due to wind.

Competitions in April:

Sunday, 5 th	D and A Timbers Open
Tuesday 7 th	Pick 'n Pay Medal and Putting and the Marge Parrish Trophy
Tuesday 14 th	Super Spar 4BBB and the Centenary Trophy
Thursday 16 th	EC Senior Ladies at RPAGC
Tuesday 21 st	Kwik Spar 3 Ball Alliance

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF GOLF

US PRESIDENTIAL GOLF:

From Ulysses S Grant to Barack Obama, 17 of the last 20 American Presidents have played golf to a greater or lesser extent. John F Kennedy was rated the best of them, Dwight D Eisenhower the keenest and Gerald Ford the wildest off the tee. Bill Clinton earned a reputation for creative scoring; the best wood in his bag being his pencil. Richard Nixon was also no stranger to cheating on the golf course.

The seminal work on Presidential golf is *First off the Tee* by New York Times columnist Don Van Natta, who devoted plenty of space to Clinton's shenanigans. Van Natta had first hand experience having played with Clinton while researching the book. "He doesn't take Mulligans," wrote Van Natta, "He takes a type of do-over shot that is more devious and entirely of his own invention. He takes Billigans".

"On the 5th hole, Clinton hits a drive into the trees and takes a second, practice tee shot. He hits this one short. He hits another tee shot; this one long and far. He drives the cart over to the trees and takes a drop but hits the ball short. He then plays three more practice shots from the fringe and ends up playing the second of his practice shots. He is on the green in four but picks up without putting. On his scorecard he takes a 4 on the hole. It's a no-putt 4".

"It is not until the round is over that I have a sense of what Clinton has done. He cards an 82: a 41 on the front and a 41 on the back. His scorecard shows eight pars and one birdie. He plays extremely well on some holes: 300 yard drives and very nice touch shots around the green. But it does not feel like he shot an 82, perhaps because he takes so many swings. Clinton easily hit 200 shots during a 6 hour round". (From Business Day's Sports magazine, Feb 2009).

LETTER TO THE AGONY COLUMN:

Dear Abby,

I've never written to you before, but I really need your advice. I have suspected for some time now that my wife has been cheating on me. The usual signs. Phone rings but if I answer, the caller hangs up. My wife has been going out with "the girls" a lot recently although when I ask their names she always says, "Just some friends from work, you don't know them."

I always try to stay awake to look out for her coming home, but I usually fall asleep. Anyway, I have never approached the subject with my wife. I think deep down I just didn't want to know the truth, but last night she went out again and I decided to really check on her. Around midnight, I decided to hide in the garage behind my golf clubs so I could get a good view of the whole street when she arrived home from a night out with "the girls".

It was at that moment, crouching behind my clubs, that I noticed that the graphite shaft on my driver appeared to have a hairline crack right by the club head. Is this something I can fix myself or should I take it back to the pro shop where I bought it?

Signed

Perplexed

