

PUTTING IT TO YOU

OFFICIAL MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER OF THE RPAGC

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The big news is that the much maligned **existing handicap system** is at last under review and from 1st April, the 75% allowance for “team” events (alliances, better ball etc) will fall away. The whole system hopefully will be reviewed by 1st September. Good news for the higher handicaps?

The **drought** continues to affect the course and its fauna and our green staff are working hard to minimise its effects and damage.

The **Mad Hatter Festival** is less than a month away and final preparations are being made by your hard working M H committee.

These and a lot more in the 11th edition of PITY, so read on.

Many thanks to all of you who have sent in suggestions as to how we should further enhance this publication; I have taken note and hope to act upon some of them in future editions. One suggestion is that we include an article in each issue on an “RPAGC member of Character”. This could be from the past or present. I think it would be very interesting. Your comments and suggestions will be gratefully received. Also, the odd photo would not go amiss.

Many thanks to George Spieker who has given me a lot of tips on how to improve the content “journalistically”.

CAPTAIN'S COMMENTS

Colin Howard reports: It's Easter this weekend and the Mad Hatter Festival is just around the corner. We are looking forward to a busy time and Colin Reed reports that Mad Hatter bookings are looking good despite the current economic climate.

The much anticipated rain has not materialised and the course is going through a tough time. The odd brief shower greens up the course for a few days and then the heat and unrelenting east winds put us back to square one again. The greens have held up well, but criticism has been received as to their length and slowness. We have been watering 50% less in recent weeks and were loath to cut them shorter prior to the recently held EP/BORDER championship at the club. Verti-cutting has resumed and will continue on a fairly regular basis, but we shall not cut lower than 4 mm until the drought has broken. The dam water is not of the best quality at present and we have only about 2 weeks of water left for the greens and then it is over to nature. Although the bore-hole water has been used to green up the fairways in certain areas, eg Shelly Beach, using it on the greens is out of the question due to its high salt content. This is already evident on the greens from dam water. Natural flushing of the greens is urgently needed.

Cart drivers, including those who hire carts, are asked to please vary your direction around the course, stick to cart paths where you can, keep at least 5 meters from each green and share carts where possible to avoid having 3 or 4 carts per four-ball. This will help preserve the course.

It was a pleasure for the club to have the honour of hosting the EP/BORDER OPEN and thank you to all members who gave up their weekend golf to enable us to accommodate the tournament. I felt it was an opportunity to showcase our club and to put something back into and support the EPGU in promoting the game in the region. The EPGU did away with preferred lies, but this did not deter some players as 16 out of the 90 players finished the 54 hole event under par. I think they were getting better lies in the rough than on the fairways. It was disappointing to note, however, that very

few divots were filled over the two days. Two scores of 64 were recorded playing the 2 loops of nine format. The winning score was 12 under par for the 3 rounds. We have been offered the opportunity of hosting our own EPGU tournament on a Sunday from next year which would be a qualifier for various EP teams, something I believe we should look into as a revenue earner for the club to fill one of the many quiet Sundays on the course.

We still await finalisation on the land deal, the documents of which are with the Deeds Office in Cape Town. Sometimes no news is good news. I know I did say it should be resolved by the end of February, but I now say March/April/May - African time!

Junior golf continues to flourish at the club under the guidance and control of Corrie van Zyl. Should anyone like to assist Corrie and his helpers on a Friday afternoon, please call him on 073 384 3041. Young member Wiaan van Aswegen will captain the EP under 12 team at the Inter Provincial at the Fish River soon. Wiaan is often seen on the course in the afternoons (after having completed his homework, I hope) playing a few holes with dad Gerhard acting as caddie. Good luck Wiaan - practice makes perfect.

The first night of the revamped club draw went off very well with a large crowd in attendance. The total entry of 114 participants was encouraging. The committee will assess the draw as we go along with the new entry fee of R240 due in July for the year July 2010 - June 2011. The winner, Basil Dukas, was not present, but he did enjoy a 25% of the pool. The 2 attendance prize winners were Yvonne Dennison and Alan Corrans. The 75% balance was carried forward to the next draw on Friday 26 March. Remember, if you are in the draw and you are not there, you can still win something.

The handicapping saga is still unresolved with negotiations between SAGA and NGN ongoing . The one positive is that, from 1st April, the allowance falls away and we revert to a one handicap system calculated at 100% of the best 10 of the last 20 cards recorded. This will be used until 1st September by which time, hopefully, the system will have been finalised. I see some big winning scores coming up!

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Kevin Harpur reports: I recently had to return to Johannesburg for a while as my wife Shellie underwent an operation. The operation was successful and she is recovering well. Thank you to all of you who gave us your good wishes and messages during this period. They were greatly appreciated by both of us.

When buying drinks at the bar please insist on a receipt and check to see whether it is accurate. By doing so you will greatly assist us in ensuring good control.

We quite often have large groups of visitors playing the course and on a few occasions have had to ask some members, who pitch and play without going through the Pro-shop, to leave the course as it is booked out. We cannot advise every member personally when there is a big day at the club so we leave it to the members to check the course availability at the main notice board. Please do this so as to avoid embarrassment when we have to ask people to leave the course.

We have also had a problem with members arriving before the Pro-shop has opened in the morning and lifting the locked gate to the first tee off its rails. This results in an expensive call out to have the motor fixed. If you wish to play before the Pro-shop opens (at 7-00am) please arrange this with us in advance and we will gladly accommodate your request.

Whilst on the topic of pitching and playing, please report to the pro-shop first and pay for your round. It appears that some members forget to pay when this happens and we unfortunately can't afford free golf.

As Mike Lamb is leaving us soon, we welcome two new full time members of staff to the Pro-shop: Mark Everton (Pro-shop Supervisor) and Wionel Meyer (Pro-shop Assistant). Lynda Houghton has also been helping out in the shop on a part time basis. The RPAGC welcomes you all and wishes you a long and happy time with us.

Sadly we say goodbye to Mike and his family who are returning to Zimbabwe. Cheers Mike, it was

good to have you with us and we wish you all the best of luck for the future. Also we are going to miss Devon Brittle greatly as he has now been at the club for some time. Good luck, Devon and have a wonderful holiday.

Easter is upon us and before we know it so will be the Mad Hatter!

Enjoy your golf and pray for rain....and remember...Bella and Gilly's steaks are the best in town.

LEAGUE RESULTS

The seedings held true as the RPAGC "A" team beat our "B" team 12 – 6 on 14th February. Both teams play in the same league.

On Sunday, 28th March, both our league fixtures were played at the Fish River. The "A" team beat Jeffries Bay 14 – 4 and Shark River 13 – 5, whilst the "B" team drew 9 – 9 with Uitenhage, but lost 12 – 6 to PE Golf Club.

The Ladies have played Walmer and Humewood. Both Humewood and the RPAGC lost to Walmer 12 – 0, (how did Walmer manage that??), but pipped the Humewood girls 7 – 5.

COURSE AND GREENS

Cecil Jones-Phillipson reports: The March rains we rely on have not fallen and we face a disaster situation with very few days use of water remaining in our top dam. Irrigation of the Greens has been reduced to 50% and in early April the Greens will have to survive without irrigation. Unless copious rain falls our only option will be to install a Reverse Osmosis plant and drill another bore-hole. We are obtaining quotes and checking all options before a proposal is presented to the Committee. The downside would be if we received plentiful rain and fill our dams resulting in the R/O plant not being fully utilised. However, with the dire warnings of global warming, predictions are for more "famine than feast". The dam off Atherstone Road has been cleared of invading weed, a nasty, tedious job particularly well done by casual worker Livingstone.

The leveling and re-sodding of the Ladies 8th Tee-box is completed and it should be back in use by early April. Patches on the 14th Green have been re-sodded again and are improving. All divots have been filled, a tedious and time-consuming job. We appeal to all members to help by repairing them during play. Even if they are not your divots, please fill them as you walk or drive by.

We have stopped irrigating the fairways with bore-hole water because of its high "Total Dissolved Solids" content. We will commence with the paving of paths after the Mad Hatter Week.

Finally, I wish you all a happy Easter and **please** continue to pray for rain.

LADIES' SECTION

Dee tells us: Our Swallows swelled our fields during the past two to three months, but with summer drawing to a close, every week sees fewer of them still here. When they return in 2011 they will be as delighted to learn as the rest of us that common sense has at last prevailed and our handicaps will revert to a single handicap system from 1st April, although this will be further reviewed next September.

The Royal Port Alfred Golf Club Ladies held their Open Championship on Sunday, 28th February, once again magnificently sponsored by D & A Timbers. Fifty-one entrants enjoyed perfect weather conditions: warm and sunny with a welcome cooling breeze. The competition used the Stableford format over 18 holes and attracted players from Port Elizabeth (Walmer and Humewood), East London (West Bank) and Grahamstown as well as many of our local Port Alfred girls.

It was great to see our own long, serving member Lorraine Inglis card 42 points and become the 2010 Ladies' Open Champion. In so doing, she beat off Pat Sonnemann (41 points) into second place and Muffie Parsons (40 points) into third. Muffie counted out our RPAGC Ladies Launa Kirk and Lyn Lake into 4th and 5th positions respectively.

The day was supported by a host of generous co-sponsors, too numerous to mention, to which the

RPAGC was most grateful.

The EP Senior Ladies Championships were held on 4th March at the Humewood Golf Club. Forty-six ladies battled in awesome gale-force winds and there were no less than 11 “No Returns”. We were delighted that Jeannette Brotherton hung in there and emerged as the winner in the 70+ (who would believe it?) category with the best gross score. Well done Jen, we are all very proud of you.

The first round of Monday League was played on 15th March at the Walmer Country Club and the RPAGC girls looked very smart in their new League shirts. This involved much time consuming effort on the part of our League Captain, Ingrid Griffiths, to whom we are most grateful. Sadly our team and the Humewood ladies were convincingly beaten by Walmer Golf Club. The matches between RPAGC and Humewood were more evenly contested. Results are given above. Hopefully we will fare better in April when we play against PEGC and St Francis GC at Humewood.

WILDLIFE MATTERS

Geoff Broom reports that the ongoing drought situation has been hard on our animals, but is pleased to say that most of the animals are holding their condition well in the context of these stressful conditions.

Both herbage and water are in fairly short supply, but we remain hopeful that we get some good rain before conditions become too serious.

The *impala* count now numbers 19 with one dominant ram in the main herd of 15 ewes and offspring and two groups of two rams each. These have been expelled from the main herd by the dominant male in order for him to maintain exclusivity amongst the females. Similarly, there is a main herd of 15 *springbok* consisting of a dominant male and an “ousted” loan ram who is sometimes completely by himself or hanging around close to the less mature group of the *impala* “bachelors”.

Geoff reports that severe drought conditions such as ours produce different behaviour patterns in wildlife and this could be why the spotting of *Southern Bush Duiker* or *Grysbok* on our course has become extremely rare.

Geoff has put an interesting appendix together on the Southern Impala attached to this newsletter which should prove interesting reading to one and all. The 12th edition of this newsletter will see a similar article on Springbok.

“MONTHLY DRAW”

The Monthly Draw seems to be going very well with good turnouts in the Clubhouse pub on the last Friday of every month. Many stay on to partake in the culinary delights provided by Baxters, our super caterers. Apart from the two Attendance Prizes of R250 each, which one has to be there to win, there is only one draw for the main prize. If you are there then you take the lot and if you are not, then you receive just 25% of its value with the balance adding to the main prize the following month.

Both draws have seen absentees winning the main prize so that in April there will be R3 940 up for grabs. This will be reduced to ~ 900+ if the winner is absent. Please note that this month the draw will be **one week earlier on 23rd April** instead of the 30th in order not to clash with Mad Hatter events. Its still not too late to enter, although the fee will still be R100 to qualify for April – June inclusive draws.

The absentee winners were Basil Dukas (R400) in February and Ronel Hough in March (R740) who unfortunately was out on what turned out to be a very expensive date with Elton John.

MAD HATTER PROGRESS

The committee reports that preparations for this year's Mad Hatter tourney (Monday, 26th April to Saturday, 1st May) are progressing well despite it feeling the pinch of the general economic downturn. Nevertheless, approximately half the tee-off times have been booked and paid for and

there are over 200 further commitments that have yet to be paid. There are still many times slots available, especially for Monday through to Wednesday. So if you haven't as yet made your bookings, hurry up and make them now before it is too late. Don't forget there is entertainment every night, including the fabulous *Centre-Stage* on the Friday evening. Entrance costs are R50 for registration plus R100 each for Monday & Tuesday competitions. Wednesday – Saturday competitions will cost R125 each. Those booking for all six days will receive a R100 discount.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS

Ladies' Competitions:

6 th April:	Pick 'n Pay LGU Medal and Putting / Marge Parrish Trophy
13 th April:	Rosehill Superspar Better-Ball Stableford
19 th April:	Monday League at Humewood
20 th April:	3-Ball Stableford Alliance for the Sybil Trophy
26 th April - 1 st May:	MAD HATTER WEEK
4 th May:	Pick 'n Pay LGU Medal and Putting
11 th May:	Woolworths Individual Stableford
15 th May:	GRAHAMSTOWN LADIES OPEN – Compulsory
18 th May:	Homewoods 3-Ball Alliance
24 th May:	Rosehill Super Spar Strokeplay Club Championships and Pick 'n Pay LGU and Putting
25 th May:	Rosehill Super Spar Strokeplay Club Championships 2 nd Round

Gents Wednesday' Competitions:

7 th April:	D & A Timbers Individual Medal
9 th April:	Rotary Golf day
14 th April:	Pick 'n Pay 4-Ball Stableford Alliance
21 st April:	Brandhouse Individual Stableford for Town & Country Trophy
26 th April - 1 st May:	MAD HATTER WEEK
5 th May:	D & A Timbers Individual Medal
12 th May:	SAB Better-Ball Bonus Bogey
19 th May:	Pick 'n Pay 4-Ball Stableford Alliance
26 th May:	Brandhouse Individual Stableford

Weekend Competitions:

3 rd April:	Rosehill Superspar Better-Ball Stableford
10 th April:	PSG Consult Albany 2-Ball Alliance
17 th April:	Sotheby's Realty Better-Ball Medal
24 th April:	SAB Better-Ball Bonus Bogey
26 th April - 1 st May:	MAD HATTER WEEK
8 th May:	GBS Mutual Bank Better-Ball Stableford
15 th May:	SAB Better-Ball Bonus Bogey
22 nd May:	Rosehill Superspar Better-Ball Medal for the Stirk Cup
29 th May:	CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS
30 th May:	CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

LIGHTER SIDE OF GOLF

Herewith some good advice to all golfers:

- Don't buy a putter until you've had a chance to throw it.
- Never try to keep more than 300 separate thoughts in your mind during your swing.
- When your shot has to carry over a water hazard, you can either use one more club or two more balls.
- If you're afraid a full shot might reach the green while the foursome ahead of you is still putting out, you have two options: you can immediately shank a lay-up or you can wait until the green is clear and top a ball halfway there.
- The less skilled the player, the more likely he is to share his ideas about the golf swing.
- No matter how bad you are playing, it is always possible to play worse.
- The inevitable result of any golf lesson is the instant elimination of the one critical unconscious motion that allowed you to compensate for all of your many other errors.
- Everyone replaces his divot after a perfect approach shot
- A golf match is a test of your skill against your opponents' luck.
- It is surprisingly easy to hole a thirty foot putt. For a 10.
- Counting on your opponent to inform you when he breaks a rule is like expecting him to make fun of his own haircut.
- Nonchalant putts count the same as chalant putts.
- It's not a gimme if you're still away.
- The shortest distance between any two points on a golf course is a straight line that passes directly through the centre of a very large tree.
- You can hit a two acre fairway 10% of the time and a two inch branch 90% of the time.
- if you really want to get better at golf, go back and take it up at a much earlier age.
- Since bad shots come in groups of three, a fourth bad shot is actually the beginning of the next group of three.
- When you look up, causing an awful shot, you will always look down again at exactly the moment when you ought to start watching the ball if you ever want to see it again.
- Every time a golfer makes a birdie, he must subsequently make two double bogeys to restore the fundamental equilibrium of the universe.
- If you want to hit a 7 iron as far as Tiger Woods does, simply try to use it to lay up just short of a water hazard.
- To calculate the speed of a player's downswing, multiply the speed of his back-swing by his handicap; i.e., back-swing 20 mph, handicap 15, downswing = 300 mph.
- There are two things you can learn by stopping your back-swing at the top and checking the position of your hands: how many hands you have, and which one is wearing the glove.
- Hazards attract; fairways repel.
- A ball you can see in the rough from 50 yards away is not yours.
- If there is a ball on the fringe and a ball in the bunker, your ball is in the bunker. If both balls are in the bunker, yours is in the footprint.
- It's easier to get up at 6:00 AM to play golf than at 10:00am to mow the grass.
- A good drive on the 18th hole has stopped many a golfer from giving up the game.
- Golf is the perfect thing to do on Sunday because you spend longer praying than you would do in church.
- A good golf partner is one who's always slightly worse than you are....that's why I get so many calls to play with friends.
- If there's a storm rolling in, you'll be having the game of your life.
- Golf balls are like eggs. They're white. They're sold by the dozen. And you need to buy fresh ones each week. It's amazing how a golfer who never helps out around the house will replace his divots, repair his ball marks, and rake his sand traps.
- If your opponent has trouble remembering whether he shot a six or a seven, he probably shot an eight (or worse).

- It takes longer to learn to be a good golfer than it does to become a brain surgeon.
- On the other hand, you don't get to ride around on a cart, drink beer, eat hot dogs when you are performing brain surgery !

And here are some classic caddy remarks. Old, but worth a re-visit.

Golfer: "Think I'm going to drown myself in the lake."

Caddy: "Think you can keep your head down that long?"

Golfer: "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."

Caddy: "Try heaven, you've already moved most of the earth."

Golfer: "Do you think my game is improving?"

Caddy: "Yes sir, you miss the ball much closer now."

Golfer: "Do you think I can get there with a 5 iron?"

Caddy: "Eventually."

Golfer: "You've got to be the worst caddy in the world."

Caddy: "I don't think so sir. That would be too much of a coincidence."

Golfer: "Please stop checking your watch all the time. It's too much of a distraction"

Caddy: "It's not a watch -- it's a compass."

Golfer: "How do you like my game?"

Caddy: "Very good sir, but personally, I prefer golf."

Golfer: "Do you think it's a sin to play on Sunday?"

Caddy: "The way you play, sir, it's a sin on any day."

Golfer: "This is the worst course I've ever played on."

Caddy: "This isn't the golf course. We left that an hour ago."

Golfer: "That can't be my ball, it's too old."

Caddy: "It's been a long time since we teed off, sir."

APPENDIX: SOUTHERN IMPALA **(*Aepyceros melampus melampus*)**



*Two impala at a watering hole
ram at the back and ewe towards the front*

This is one of the most beautiful and graceful of all antelopes, and, although formally classed as one of the Gazelles, it has been separated from them because of differences of bones in the skull and certain glands. The Southern, or Common Impala is distinguished from another, very rare subspecies, the Black-faced Impala (*Aepyceros melampus petersi*).

Ours is the Southern Impala, and is not indigenous to our part of South Africa. It occurs naturally in the savannas and thick bushveld from northern KZN through Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces and into eastern and northern Botswana and north to the Southern part of Tanzania.

The colour is a uniform bright chestnut above, passing through light fawn on the flanks to white below. There is a white area round the eyes, on the lips, inside the ears, and there is a narrow stripe of white on the throat. The ears have black tips. A darkish streak along the back continues down the tail and there is a narrow curving blackish stripe on each hindquarter from the root of the tail for about one third of the length of the leg. Unlike other antelope, the hind legs have two oval tufts of long blackish hair just above the hooves covering glandular areas, and there are no side-hooves.

Only the rams have horns which are lyrate (divided transversely into several lobes), finely ringed only on the front surfaces and almost to the tips. The average horn length is about 50 cm with a record of 81 cm taken in the Limpopo valley.

They are adaptable to environment and can be both browsers and grazers. They normally drink two or three times a day.

Their graceful agility is famous and single leaps of up to 10 meters in length and 3 meters in height have been measured. Speeds of up to 80 – 90 kph can be attained.

The height at the shoulder varies from about 85 to 95 cm and their weight from 55 to 75 kg.

Of interest is that pregnant mothers have the ability to delay birth for up to one month if conditions are harsh. After birth, the mother hides her new fawn from the rest of the herd for a few days before it joins the “nursery”. Suckling continues for 5 to 6 months.

Herds consist of one dominant ram, ewes and offspring. Upon maturity, young males get kicked out of the herd and form bachelor herds of their own. To maintain his dominance, the ram will defend his herd from other wanton males, especially during “rutting” season..