

# ***PUTTING IT TO YOU***

## ***OFFICIAL MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER OF THE RPAGC***

**ISSUE 10**

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Here we are into 2010 with the first month nearly completed. The “mad season” has come and gone and we are now getting back to normal. Well, not quite normal, because this is the month when many of our overseas swallows (sp *Homo sapiens*) arrive for their summer sojourn in the Southern hemisphere. A very, very big welcome to all of you. We hope you enjoy your stay here and, even though we are desperate for rain in these times of drought, we wish you a lot of warm, sunny, weather (intermingled with some precious rain). With the snow, ice and temperatures well below zero in Europe, it would appear to be a very good time to be away.

The continuing drought remains the biggest topic of conversation in Port Alfred, both within and outside the confines of the RPAGC. There are notes pertaining to how this is affecting the course and the wildlife in reports below.

Our captain reports a glimmer of light on the horizon with respect to the land issue, so here's hoping that this matter will be resolved at long last. Also included are proposed plans for a monthly draw for your valued comment.

This Newsletter has now been running well in excess of a year. Any suggestions as to input in order to improve the contents would be gratefully received. Please use the email address above.

### **CAPTAIN'S COMMENTS**

Well as we move into the new year, the latest news on the land deal is that the sale of the land has been approved by the M E C, documentation is being drawn up and, dependent upon when it is received, hopefully the transfer can be registered by the end of February. This certainly is a nice positive way to start the year but, having been waiting for over 4 years for a simple decision to be made, a celebration now maybe on the premature side. The heavy interest burden the club has had to bear has taken its financial toll but, under the watchful eye of our manager and finance committee, expenditure is being closely monitored.

The course stood up well to the unrelenting heat and dry conditions over the festive season, the greens playing particularly well considering the amount of traffic on the course. We say “well done” to Graham and the course staff and Cecil and Bob on the greens committee. It seems our Gauteng members and visitors left all the rain up north. Predictions for heavy rain do not seem good for the immediate future, but I hope I am wrong. In the meantime I ask members to be patient with our ongoing course maintenance and assist with the filling of divots and pitch-marks when enjoying your game.

The rumours that our caterer Bella Crabtree will be leaving the club are unfounded. Despite having catering interests elsewhere, she will continue to control the clubs catering needs and provide us with the excellent fare for which she has become well known. Gillian Clayton will be back assisting Bella where necessary.

### **MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

Well, the silly season has come and gone and life has slowly returned to normal. By all accounts everybody had a great time and we have received many compliments apropos the course despite the lack of rain. The Royal Port Alfred Open, the Kingswood day and “Periwinkle” were all

extremely successful and tested the beverage delivery capability of our bar staff to the limit. Thank you Ollie and Gideon for your great service during this time.

Sally and Brenda were also very busy in the back office and I'd like to put on record how much both your efforts were appreciated.

During this time, it was as difficult as always to control our prescribed standards for dress code and, even though some of them were relaxed, many pushed these concessions to the limit. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of February these concessions will be dropped and our dress code rules will return to normal. We ask all members and guests to comply with these requirements.

When buying drinks in the bar or loading money into your account using your NGN card, please check your receipt to ensure no mistakes have been made.

The New Years Eve party was most enjoyable, but somewhat poorly supported. We plan to have a more "budget" type party next year with less emphasis on the cuisine and more on the dance floor.

We are receiving numerous enquiries for group bookings this year and more than likely this is as a result of the World Cup. I am feeling very optimistic about 2010, a feeling that it is going to be a good one.

In order to stimulate golf on Sundays we have introduced a heavily discounted green fee structure for members and visitors. Please enquire at the pro-shop for details. We would also like to have a monthly mixed competition on a Sunday followed by one of Bella's scrumptious lunches. Watch the notice board for details.

#### **Herewith forthcoming events for your diaries:**

<b>Mad Hatter :</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> April - 1<sup>st</sup> May</b>
<b>Club Champs:</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> May.</b>
<b>Royals Tournament:</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>Kelly Foursomes :</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>

Unfortunately the club lettering at the entrance gate has been vandalised and the letters have disappeared. Please bear with us, they will be replaced in due course.

During the season a visitor from Johannesburg was robbed at a local guest house and all his important documents, ID card, passport etc were stolen. Thanks to the honesty of one of our ball collectors, everything was found dumped in the bushes next to the 15<sup>th</sup> tee. The visitor was elated and was most impressed with the honesty of the finder. It's nice to know that there are still some honest people around.

Enjoy your golf and please support us on our steak nights. I hope that you all have a great 2010.

### **LEAGUE RESULTS**

Not a great start to the year.

At the PE golf club: our "A" team lost to PE 14 – 4 and drew with Uitenhage 9 – 9.

At Shark River, our "B" team lost to Shark River 11 – 7 and to Jeffreys Bay 16 – 2.

Both teams are playing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> League and the next fixture is our "A" and "B" teams up against each other.

### **COURSE AND GREENS**

Cecil Jones-Phillipson says: I am happy to report that, although we are experiencing one of the worst droughts in more than 50 years, we have been able to cope with the many rounds that were played on the course during the "Crazy Season". We have no water in our dams and the TDS (total dissolved solids, mainly salt) of the municipal supply is 2 000 ppm (parts per million). The normal blend of our own water supply and that of the municipality is between 600 & 800 ppm). We have established a sub-committee to look into the viability of feeding the excess water from the clubhouse roof into our general system. We were happy to receive 10 mm of rain during this last week. Let us hope it is the beginning of a plentiful supply of late summer downpours.

All our greens have been de-thatched, verti-drained and top dressed. We will continue to de-thatch and top dress.

Repairing divots takes a lot of time and effort and once again I must appeal to all members and caddies to repair such damage during the course of play. As we all know, the time it takes for new growth when mending is done straight away is infinitely faster than when repairs are carried out retrospectively.

The ladies' 8<sup>th</sup> tee-box is currently undergoing leveling and is being re-sodded.

We are able to water the 7<sup>th</sup> fairway daily from our bore-hole and the grass there is responding well. During the Holiday Season we experienced a number of mechanical failures: the radiators on the Toyota bakkie and the spray machine had to be replaced, the tractor had its injector pump overhauled and the clutch was replaced on the EZ-GO bakkie.

We have submitted a request for a quotation for a path to be built from the halfway house up to the 9<sup>th</sup> tee-box. Please note that carts are NOT to be driven off the path on the left of the 6<sup>th</sup> green and the 7<sup>th</sup> ladies' tee-box.

The mashee course is at present only being utilized by our juniors and not by our adult members. Why don't you give it a try? Its great fun and can provide a bit of chipping practice.

We are awaiting the delivery of a second hand Sidewinder from TORO. Among its many attributable functions, it will cut down the time it takes to mow the sides of the tee-boxes. We will arrange a demonstration for interested members when it arrives in mid-February.

We have a large quantity of "fill" at our bottom dam available for any Contractor or Builder who might want to collect it. Those interested can contact me on 082 497 8300.

Lastly, many thanks to Bob Shaw for filling in for me whilst I was away on holiday.

## LADIES' SECTION

Many of our swallows have landed. Once again, a big welcome to you all and we trust that you'll have an enjoyable stay here in Port Alfred with excellent weather and great golf.

May February herald an improvement in weather as January has been windy and "damp" without any really meaningful downpours. There was enough, however, to rain off our competition on the 26<sup>th</sup> January.

Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> February is the day targeted to play our Ladies Centenary Cup competition. This is a Better-Ball competition and will be sponsored by the Rosehill Superspar. The men will be playing their Centenary Cup competition at the same time. Please diarise this day and help us celebrate one of the biggest milestones in our club's history.

A fortnight later on the 28<sup>th</sup> we will hold our Ladies Open Championship sponsored by D & A Timbers. This is a very popular event and we hope to see all our regular supporters and as well as meet some new golfing ladies.

Our first League Match of the season is scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> March at the Walmer Country Club in PE. We will be up against both Walmer and Humewood Golf Clubs.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS

### Ladies' Competitions:

2 <sup>nd</sup> February:	Pick n Pay LGU Medal and Putting
9 <sup>th</sup> February:	Highlander Individual Stableford
11 <sup>th</sup> February:	Internal League
16 <sup>th</sup> February:	Homewoods 3-Ball Stableford Alliance
23 <sup>rd</sup> February:	Individual Stableford PAHS TROPHY
28 <sup>th</sup> February:	RPAGC Ladies' Open Championship
2 <sup>nd</sup> March:	Pick n Pay LGU Medal and Putting
9 <sup>th</sup> March:	2 <sup>nd</sup> round Easter Shield Eclectic Individual Stableford
16 <sup>th</sup> March:	Homewoods 3-Ball Stableford Alliance
23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Medal Stableford

30<sup>th</sup> March: Rosehill Superspar Better-Ball Stableford

### **Gents Wednesdays' Competitions:**

3<sup>rd</sup> February D & A Timbers Monthly Medal  
10<sup>th</sup> February PSG Konsult 2-ball Alliance  
17<sup>th</sup> February Pick 'n Pay 4-ball Alliance  
24<sup>th</sup> February Brandhouse Individual Stableford  
3<sup>rd</sup> March D & A Timbers Monthly Medal  
10<sup>th</sup> March PSG Konsult 2-ball Alliance  
17<sup>th</sup> March Pick 'n Pay 4-ball Alliance  
24<sup>th</sup> March Harcourts Properties Better-Ball Bogey  
31<sup>st</sup> March Brandhouse Individual Stableford

### **Weekend Competitions:**

30<sup>th</sup> January (Sat) GBS Mutual Bank Better-Ball Stableford  
6<sup>th</sup> February (Sat) Rosehill Superspar Better-Ball Stableford  
13<sup>th</sup> February (Sat) S A B Better-Ball Medal  
14<sup>th</sup> February (Sun) CENTENARY CUP Better-Ball mixed  
20<sup>th</sup> February (Sat) Sotheby's Better-Ball Bogey  
27<sup>th</sup> February (Sat) Better-Ball Stableford  
6<sup>th</sup> March (Sat) Unique Properties Better-Ball Stableford for the KEITH GRANGER CUP  
13<sup>th</sup> March (Sat) Rosehill Superspar Better-Ball Medal.  
20<sup>th</sup> March (Sat) S A B Better-Ball Stableford  
27<sup>th</sup> March (Sat) GBS Mutual Bank Better-Ball Stableford for the GRAHAMSTOWN CUP

## **WILDLIFE MATTERS**

Geoff Broom reports: There has been no rain of any real consequence in our area for far too long with the result that conditions within the confines of the golf course are both "dry and tough" for our wildlife, with very little plant growth having taken place for either the browsing or the grazing animals. Nevertheless, I am pleased to be able to report that our animals are holding their condition very well under these circumstances and so long as we get some good rain within the next few weeks, I don't envisage any problems.

The 100% calf crop which our herd of springbok mothers produced are all doing very well under our golf course conditions and their growth achievement over the last month or two has been remarkable. This herd is really doing well and looking very colourful.

Five impala females have calved during the past month. This appears to be consistent with their normal behaviour under 'drought' conditions. It is my opinion that the females of this species have the ability to control their calving percentage to a minimum in seasons with adverse rainfall. It will be interesting to see if any of the other females drop further youngsters over the next few weeks if the drought continues.

No other new babes have been seen, but it must be remembered that Bushbuck, as well as our other small species are very shy and protective of their young, so it could be that there might be a few calves which are "well hidden" and have yet to be seen.

## **MONTHLY DRAW: SUGGESTION**

The monthly draw has not been as successful in pulling in members for drinks and/or dinner on the last Friday evening of the month as was the original intention. Many of our members are "out of towners" and cannot make it to the club on a Friday evening and therefore would not participate in the draw as one **has** to be there to **win**. There are others who cannot attend as they have other plans for the weekend etc. All of these are good reasons for **not** participating.

There has been a suggestion that a compromise is necessary, i.e. to at least partially satisfy the

aspirations of those that cannot attend whilst providing a fun evening for those that can and to raise some money for the club. This is how it would work. The proposal is that there should be a voluntary donation of R20.00 per month (R240.00 per annum) of which the club would take 10% as an administration fee. There would be two attendance prizes (the percentage of the monthly take has still to be decided, but in the example below is arbitrarily set at 12.5% each) and the balance would go to the winner **if** present. If the winner is not present, then she/he would receive 25% of the prize and the other 75% would be rolled over to the next draw.

Here is an example of how it could pan out.

Let's say there are 200 participants who would generate an income of  $200 \times R20 = R4\ 000$ . The club would take 10% for "admin" purposes leaving R3 600 for prizes. If, for instance, each attendance prize was 12.5%, then that would amount to  $2 \times 12.5\% \times R3\ 600 = R900$  leaving R2 700 for the winner. If the winner is present, then the whole R2 700 would be given to that winner. If the winner was absent, then 25% of R2 700 = R675 would be banked for him/her and the balance ( $R2\ 700 - R675 = R2\ 025$ ) would roll over to the next draw. If the starting money was the same as the previous month, then the prize money would amount to 90% of ( $R2\ 025 + R\ 4\ 000$ ) = R5 422.50. After two or three roll-overs, this sum could become very significant and generate a lot of interest.

What do you think of the idea? Your comments should be written and addressed to the attention of the committee or emailed to Kevin Harpur at [rpagc@border.co.za](mailto:rpagc@border.co.za)

### **LIGHTER SIDE OF GOLF**

- Tiger Woods is so rich that he owns lots of expensive cars. Now he has a hole in one.
- What's the difference between a car and a golf ball? Tiger can drive a ball 400 yards.
- Tiger Woods wasn't seriously injured in the crash, but he's still below par.
- What were Tiger Woods and his wife doing out at 2.30 in the morning? They went clubbing
- Tiger Woods crashed into a fire hydrant and a tree. He couldn't decide between a wood and an iron.

## APPENDIX: BUSHBUCK (*Tragelaphus sylvaticus*)



**MALE**



**FEMALE WITH CALF**

It is probable that bushbuck constitute most members' favourite antelope on the course, the ones that they would most like to see. Unlike *springbok*, *blesbok* and *impala*, they are indigenous to our area, along with *Blue Duiker*, *Southern Bush Duiker* and *Cape Grysbok* (see PITY Issue # 7).

Bushbuck are the most widely distributed antelope in Africa and Rowland Ward's "Records Of Big Game" has identified twelve different sub-species. [There is also a separate, smaller species found in the forests north of Angola (*Kéwel* or *T. scriptus*)].

Our bushbuck (*Imbalala* or *T. sylvaticus*) occur throughout the continent south of the Sahara to the Cape, with the exception of the damp, dark equatorial forests of the west and all deserts/semi-deserts.

Our South African bushbuck can be characterized by their colour. In adult animals, they are practically a uniform dark brown with no white markings other than a few indistinctly defined spots behind their shoulders and on the hindquarters. Usually, there is a white stripe along the back following the line of the dorsal crest. The neck has a short-haired collar band. Young males and females are lighter and more reddish in colour, and bear nine white spots on their hindquarters. A line of spots indicates what would have been a lower longitudinal flank stripe, but these die out in the males as they become adults. The inner ears and the inside of the legs are white and there are white spots above the hoofs, a white patch on the throat and two white spots on the cheeks.

This antelope has an elegant aspect: the head being delicately formed, the muzzle naked and the eyes large and liquid. The ears are also large and broad, the neck slender, the tail short and bushy and the body slightly higher at the rump than at the shoulder. The hoof has the outer edge of the tip rounded giving an easily identifiable track. There are no face glands and the horns are borne by the males only, although in extremely rare instances, females have been found to carry them.

These appendages are smooth and very characteristically shaped giving a flat triangle when viewed in section, and bearing a keel on the anterior and posterior edges. Towards the tip they turn like the thread of a screw to form what would be the first loop of a spiral if the horn were to continue in this course. Their direction is at an obtuse angle to the plane of the face and the horns have been known to grow up to a record of 50 cm in length.

They are generally solitary animals and usually frequent dense bush in which they often lie in seclusion during the heat of the day. They can become very attached to one particular spot and have been known to dwell in one patch of bush for more than ten years.

They are almost entirely browsers, eating various tender shoots, leaves and pods and also dig up various tubers and other roots. They eat grass very occasionally and then only when it is young and tender.

Males stand from 70 – 100 cm at the shoulder and weigh 40 – 80 kg. Females are smaller, standing 65 – 85 cm at the shoulder and weighing 25 – 60 kg. Both sexes are active up to 24 hours per day, although they tend to be mainly nocturnal.

Bushbuck have been known to become very aggressive and may even kill each other, particularly in enclosed areas, if they do not have sufficient "space". Some interesting work has been done on this aspect of their behavior by the Natal Parks Board in recent years. These studies have shown that, in enclosed areas, a stocking rate of at least twelve hectares per bushbuck must be allowed regardless of the carrying capacity of the area concerned.

Bushbuck are strong swimmers and can jump six foot fences. The males can be very dangerous to

man when cornered or wounded.