



BRACKEN GHYLL GOLF CLUB

Mens AGM – 5th October 2018

Captains Report

Mr President, past officials, gentlemen. Thank you for taking time out to attend the 2018 Mens AGM this evening.

As I understand things, it is customary for the outgoing Captain to review the season and also say a few thanks. I can assure you I have plenty of thank you's to mention.

But before I do, I would like to give a mention to two special gentlemen we saw pass away suddenly this year in the form of Jon Stones and George Burrell. Both were extremely valuable and highly respected members of our club and they will be missed greatly but will never be forgotten.

Firstly I would like to thank the Mens section and the membership for allowing me to represent Bracken Ghyll Golf Club this year, it has truly been an honour and especially in our 25th Anniversary year. When I was asked by Mike to be his Vice Captain it was a tough decision, Mike being one of my best friends and next door neighbour added to the pressure, being Captain and having a demanding full time job was not going to be easy. Mike and many other members, including past captains and officials assured me there would be help, and I can tell you they were correct and I am extremely grateful for this.

Golf Clubs like ours rely on a vast number of volunteers to make the club tick. They are not salaried and often those who help out do it of their own free will and goodness of their heart. Whereas I have been involved in Bracken Ghyll in some shape or form since joining 5 years ago, it wasn't until this year I realised just how much time and effort is given by so many people. It is important we remember this when things go well, and when things get forgotten or missed, it is simply a mistake by someone trying to do their best for the members and the club.

So if I forget anyone in my report, I do apologise.

I would like to take the credit for organising the weather this year but I guess you wouldn't buy that one, but we have had a great year weather-wise which was good for the golfers, but a headache for the greens staff. Despite this, Rob, Ali, Tom, Matt and the volunteers have presented our course in fabulous condition yet again. The comments again this year from visitors have been nothing short of incredible. Rob, you and your team have really done this club proud again – please let your team know how grateful the Mens section and membership are.

This year has seen a number of changes on the course. One of those being the removal and relocation of a few walls. Some you may not have noticed that some walls were originally buried deep in the trees and rough but I can assure you from the places I hit my shots I was extremely familiar with their location and the challenge they gave me. When the news first emerged of the wall "relocation" some members were concerned, but I am sure most, if not all, will agree the holes such as the 7th look better and the new walls on the 4th and 6th are a great addition. Thanks to Dave Gilbert for driving this and bringing in valuable funds to the club.

Bracken Ghyll remains one of the best adverts for retired golf in the area with a buoyant seniors section. It is therefore important we ensure the course is accessible for as many members as possible all year round. The latest addition of the paths around the course have been made possible by an extremely kind member donation, and these will ensure buggies and trolleys can remain in use as often as possible throughout the winter months If people stick to them.

On the competition front I would like to thank all those involved with C&H and Competitions. George you have been a great sounding block for me this year and have become a very good friend, you are a valuable asset to C&H. Those people who process competition cards and supplementary cards, those that allocate handicaps, the team that



BRACKEN GHYLL GOLF CLUB

do the draws, update spreadsheets, print results and setup V1 so you can sign into the competitions. George (Auterson) / Duncan (Hall) / Pel (Stephen Pelkowski) / Colin (Graveling) / Brian (Lamb) – you are like the elves that come in at night and just make things happen. Jonty (Hawkes) our BRS man. Some may think that when we logon to BRS to book a time things appear like magic, well Jonty is our BRS magician. Jonty – thank you for all your support, hard work and patience this year you do a fantastic job for the whole club.

Mens nights have remained a great success this year, thank you to everyone for supporting these and also a huge thanks to Richard Beilby. Richard puts plenty of time into organising the evenings and his presentations are not to be missed. I would also like to call Richard out for his continued work on the machinery and buggies. Richard spends many hours over the year repairing various items and saving the club plenty of costs had we had to go externally. Thank you.

To my Mens committee for the season, Mike / George / Duncan / Roger and my Vice Captain – Simon (Thomas), it has been a pleasure working with you this year. I have tried this year to bring a consultative approach to proceedings and allow discussion and debate to various ideas and changes and it seems to have worked in the main!

The Senior section continues to flourish and I am sure some of this is down to the time and effort put in this year by Roger Lucas our outgoing Seniors Captain – thank you Roger. I am pleased to announce that Martin Collins has accepted the role again this year and has a fresh faced Brian Lamb as his Vice – have a great year guys.

Golf is going through a tough time at present at all ages, and this is reflected in the level of junior members throughout English golf. Indeed our section had only 14 active competition members in 2018. Despite this we managed to play most competitions and often getting 7 to 10 competitors. Hopefully with the resurgence of Tiger Woods this may bring a little life back into the sport – who knows, but I would welcome any ideas on how we can further promote junior golf at Bracken Ghyll. I would like to thank Will Mawson for being our Junior Captain this year and also for flying the Bracken Ghyll flag when selected to play for the Bradford Union Boys Team. Being the eldest of the group Will often organised the players on competition days and on Junior Masters week ensured each day ran smoothly and the leader board was updated. Thanks Will for a great year and I hope you have continued success in your senior golf.

Onto the League and Union golf. Thank you to everyone for representing the club and again to our 3 Captains - Peter Knowles (Rabbits), Chris Jones (8-15) and Andrew Coates (Scratch) for organising a team each week and also ensuring we were represented at the relevant Team Championships and various Union Competitions. Our Rabbits retained their position in Division C and also did well in the Team events. Our 8-15 Team went very close to gaining promotion only narrowly missing out in the last match. Although we did have success in the 2nd Division Team Championship at Northcliffe with a win with a team of Robbie Miller, Alan Pritchard, Richard Beilby and Mike Robertson. In the resulting pairs knockouts Mike Robertson and Robbie Miller made the final and unfortunately came runners up, regardless a great achievement. Finally to the Scratch Team. It is custom for the Captain to support the scratch team on a Friday night and racing around to different courses can be hard, but being a playing member of the scratch squad this killed two birds with one stone! (Although I did manage to get to the odd 8-15 and Rabbits fixtures). I must say this year the bond in the squad was as good as I have experienced in my 28 years playing team golf around the Bradford Union – the power of WhatsApp cannot be underestimated. Week after week the team seemed to return the points yet it came down to our last match of the season which would decide the title. A home fixture against 3rd place Bradford Moor was our last fixture and a good result was required as both 2nd place Keighley and Bradford Moor had a game in hand the following week. So with a full 8-0 win and Keighley only able to manage 4 points at Calverley, mathematically the 3rd Division title was confirmed. So for the first time in 22 years our scratch team have a League win and two of the squad played in that first season in 1996 – Pete Rishworth and Andy Cox – I know they were extremely proud. When we talk about members going out of their way to represent the club I must give a



BRACKEN GHYLL GOLF CLUB

mention to Jack Lampkin. Jack this year has lived and worked in Derby – to get to the Rawdon away fixture he took 3 trains, a Megabus and a local bus to get to the match – that shows some commitment. Well done to the 2018 squad of Andrew Coates, Jack Lampkin, Simon Thomas, Alex Mawson, Peter Rishworth, Andy Cox, Henry Croft, Alistair Auterson.

I would like to wish Chris Jones all the best next season as Vice President of the Bradford 8-15 Section. Bracken Ghyll are very proud Chris.

The Captains Charity this year was Manorlands Hospice which is close to my heart and I know a very special organisation to many. Over the year we had numerous fund raising events including the Charity Ball last month. On behalf of Julie – our Lady Captain and myself, I would like to thank everyone for supporting the Charity this year your generosity has been overwhelming, I can assure you all monies raised are put to very good use. Our running total so far is over £4,000.

Over a year ago we welcomed our new Professional in the form of Ed. I am sure you will agree Ed has been a great addition to the Bracken Ghyll setup and I do hope his first year's success continues for many years to come here.

There are many more to thank but I would be here all night. So just a few final thank you's: Mr President – Ian Penny for the many meetings you chair over the year, some more difficult than others! Mike Robertson (a very close and special friend) for the tireless work including posting results and updates online for me – may I wish you all the best next year as Club President. Duncan for your support all year including your generous help on my Captains Trip, Ross in the office, Chloe and the ladies for the time they put in on functions, Becky and all the bar staff that have worked over the year and our caterers "The Barn" – you all help to make this operation tick.

And finally to our incoming Captain – Simon Thomas. Simon has been one heck of a Vice Captain this year, he has also been our Mens Secretary and has managed to keep me organised which is no mean feat. For those who came along to my Captains Trip I am sure you will agree he did a sterling job – it ran like clockwork. There are various strengths required to be Club Captain and Simon ticks all the boxes and he is also a fantastic golfer. Next year sees some significant changes to the rules of golf and I am sure this will pose Simon and C&H one or two challenges, but with the resource available to you Simon – you will be fine. At the Club AGM I will hand over the reins to Simon and I have no doubt he will have a successful year. He has selected a strong, hardworking and knowledgeable Vice Captain in Duncan Hall and they will be a great team for the next season.

Once again, thank you for allowing me the opportunity this year and thank you to every member for their support.

Alex Mawson

Mens Captain 2018