

SOUTH OF SCOTLAND GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING 8 MARCH 2016

Held at the Selkirk Arms Hotel, Kirkcudbright at 7.15 pm

Present:

Alastair Millar, President, in the Chair; D. Moore; G Sharp; J Burns; P Watson; N Wright; W Tyrrell; R McKnight; S Kingston; Jean Forrest: and I Robin, Secretary.

Apologies:

B Duguid

Presidents Welcome:

The President welcomed the members with a special welcome to Jean Forrest who was attending in place of Brian Duguid. He congratulated Jim Burns on his election to the Presidency of Scottish Golf Limited and wished him well in his year of office.

He reported that he had attended the last two Junior Performance Days at Brighthouse and was impressed with the enthusiasm of the boys and their team spirit. He had also attended the AGM of the SGL the previous Sunday.

Executive Meeting 12 January 2016

The Minutes were approved by Stephen Kingston, seconded by Graeme Sharp

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising

Secretary's Report:

The Secretary reported that SGL had held a Conference at Gleneagles on Sunday 31 January to discuss the implications of regional and national forums. Unfortunately the three South delegates were unable to attend.

Jim Burns reported that there were no tangible outcomes. The Board members had discussions with the Area and County representatives on how to amalgamate larger and smaller areas. The idea of forming Regions was growing momentum but no definite proposals were agreed. The Board had also discussed the report submitted by the previous SGU Council. The whole concept will probably be passed to the new Chief Executive. The Ladies were concerned that they were poorly represented. It was noted that the recognition of Ladies' golf was a concern. The Board was determined to get the Clubs involved and improve communications with them to forge the way forward. Jim suggested that the Areas and Counties had to get themselves positioned to have a role to play or their only role would be to organise Coaching, Course Rating and Championships. Better communication was required between the three levels. There was a great difference in the method of the per capita charge between the Areas and Counties. The Gents method of charging every male playing member had some mileage but needed refined. The rules had to be defined. The Board intended to discuss this issue with the Areas, Counties and Clubs. Jim recommended the meetings already started with the two Ladies' Counties be continued and a coherent body formed which could be projected as an autonomous group.

South Executive Members, Alastair Millar, President; Jim Burns, SGL President-Elect; Neville Wright, Stranraer Golf Club representative and Iain Robin, Secretary attended the Scottish Golf AGM at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow on Sunday 6 March 2016.

After welcoming the delegates, Eleanor Cannon, Chair, introduced the Board Members present and reported that the Board had held two Meetings since its inception and had had a weekend seminar with senior staff. She then announced that Hamish Grey, Chief Executive, was leaving the organisation after agreement between the parties. The process to find a replacement had already started. Her vision for Scottish Golf was to bring back the fun into the game for all players and leave the game in better shape for generations to come. She was aware that the current climate was of an ageing membership with no more waiting lists of players wanting to join Golf Clubs. It was tough to attract young people and men and women who work and share childcare at weekends. This was a massive challenge for the Board and the leadership culture needs to change with the changes affecting society. Malcolm Kpedekpo, Non-Executive Director for Finance, gave a short financial review. At amalgamation the Ladies finances were incredibly stable with strong reserves. The Men's finances were in a similar position which gave a great start to the new organisation. By the end of the 2016 financial year it was expected that the Amalgamation Costs would amount to £169,300 of which £101,000 would be spent on professional fees and £40,000 on marketing. In his opinion these costs were

higher than he liked. He had set up a working group with a broad representation across Clubs, Areas and Counties to review the present subscription model. It was important that any model was equitable and fair and was the right model to move forward. A full consultation would be carried out with the Clubs, Areas and Counties before any action was taken. He was also concerned that the monies, promised from the Scottish Government over a 4 year period, are not guaranteed and that they might not materialise. He was resolved to make sure there is not another financial disaster. He was aware that communication has been a problem in the past and this was noted and would be addressed.

At the first AGM of Scottish Golf Limited the accounts of the Scottish Golf Union and the Scottish Ladies' Golf Association as at the date of amalgamation, 1 October 2015, were approved and the auditors, Henderson Loggie were re-appointed until the next AGM. James Burns was elected President of Scottish Golf, as were the nominations for Vice President and Junior Vice President. All the nominated directors and the independent co-opted persons were elected. The proposed changes to the articles of association were passed. However, the proposed changes to regulation 2.2.3 of the regulations of the Company whereby the Board could increase the Annual Per Capita charge by up to 5% without the approval of members was defeated in a poll by 218 votes to 91 despite it being explained that this was for one year only.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer reported the Summary of Accounts up to 25 February 2016 were as follows:-

Income		Expenditure	
In bank 1/9/15	11,322.55	Sundries	341.37
Comps	310.00	Coaching	860.00
IMT	580.00	Travelling	109.50
Sponsor	300.00	ATC	725.00
Subscriptions	10,503.50	NCF	453.76
		Matches	54.00
		Vouchers	1,720.00
		Returned Subs	574.00
	<u>23,016.05</u>	In bank 25/2/16	<u>18,178.42</u>
			23,016.05

14 Clubs had paid their subscriptions. Gatehouse had been granted an extension till March and 8 others (Brighouse, Colvend, D&C, Kirkcudbright, Lochmaben, Moffat, Portpatrick and Stranraer) had still to pay. Crichton, Thornhill, Wigtownshire County and Lockerbie had overpaid and the overpayment returned. An e-mail has been sent to the forgetful Clubs to remind them their subscriptions were overdue. The cheque from Brighouse had arrived that day. Jim Burns passed the IMT Booklets to the Treasurer for distribution.

Convenor's Reports:

SGL PRESIDENT

Jim Burns reported that he was honoured and privileged to be the first President of Scottish Golf Limited and to follow in the footsteps of Val Plant and John Sommerville from South Area. He would do his best to be the good ambassador that the job requires over a busy year. The SGU had been renowned for running very good championships but cost cutting was necessary and they would now be manned by a small team of Events staff assisted by volunteers. There would be a Championship Committee and a Rules Panel and each championship had been categorised to determine the number of officials required.

CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Graeme Sharp reported that he was grateful to Wave Tyrrell for updating the posters for the website and sending out to Clubs. His work was very much appreciated. Graeme said he would be unable to get time off work during the month of July. Several offers of help were offered.

COACHING CONVENOR

Pam Watson reported that the Secretary had kindly prepared and submitted reports on the 3 Performance Days that had been held at Brighouse Bay. These had been sent to all Executive members and published in the local press. She thanked the President for attending and giving encouragement. The Performance Days had all been very positive and had a better turnout than last year. She was going to do a 'Survey Monkey' questionnaire for the boys to get their feedback. The Professionals had suggested a coaching session in the summer to keep the development going. She had thought of a Development Squad, under the Performance Squad, next year as none of the Counties took up the SGL programme for Development Squads. The Junior Order of Merit is organised and the rules have been sent out to all the

boys. The Secretary was asked to send the rules to Wave Tyrrell to post on the website.

The President congratulated Pam on the work she was doing. On his visits to the coaching sessions he was impressed by the atmosphere of the squad and their togetherness should stand them in good stead in the matches.

SENIOR TEAM MANAGER

Graeme Sharp reported that the venue for the match against Cumbria had been changed from the Eden to Brampton. He was having difficulty in getting a team for the match on Sunday 27 March as a lot of players were unavailable. He was going to try Scott Gibson, Greig Marchbank and Liam Johnston.

JUNIOR TEAM MANAGER

Iain Robin reported that three boys, Finlay Copeland (D&G), Cameron Gray (Kirkcudbright) and Callum McMillan (Kirkcudbright) had been selected to represent South Area in the annual match NCF Select v Yorkshire at Catterick on Friday 8 April. Pam and he would take them to Catterick. A practice round at Grangemouth, the venue for the Boys ATC, had been arranged for Tuesday 29 March. Pam and he will take 6 boys from whom the team of 4 will be selected. The first match of the season for the Juniors takes place at Southernness on Sunday 27 March against Ayrshire. The team consists of 4 youths; 4 at under 18 level and 4 at under 16. The Juniors will be selected from those competing in the Scottish Boys at Murcar the following week to give them much needed competitive practice. So far 13 boys from the South have decided to make the long trip north to Aberdeen. An additional under 16 match has been arranged against Dumfries & County on Sunday 12 June to give the younger boys the opportunity to gain representative experience. A return match will be arranged for later in the season at Kirkcudbright. The Rules for the Peat Salver and Fraser Shield (3 Counties) have been amended to allow girls to play. These have been sent to the Counties and I am awaiting notification of the dates for the Peat Salver. The Secretary was asked to send the new rules to Wave Tyrrell for posting on the website.

COURSE RATING CONVENOR

Robert McKnight reported that Lochmaben has a member who is qualified and willing to do an official measurement of the Course; this will allow both the Ladies & Gents to complete new forms and consequently update their SSS. A temporary SSS has been issued by the SGU until the alterations are completed and the rerating takes place later this year. Course Raters have been issued with amendments for the 2016-17 season although we have still to be issued with the new System Guide for 2016-2019. He had replied to the SGU query regarding Colvend explaining that he used the 'Tweener' to increase the rough height as this would allow for a bit of growth between cuts as he felt it would be a more accurate average figure .

D&G GOLF PARTNERSHIP

Neville Wright reported that dates for the International Marketing workshops are 15th and 22nd March in the Gailes Hotel, Irvine. It is now fully subscribed with 6 attendees from DGGP:

- Jim Burns – Stranraer GC
- Neville Wright – DGGP
- Jean Forrest – Dalbeattie GC & Kirkcudbrightshire Golfers Association
- Douglas McMillan – McMillan Hotels
- Chris Robinson (PGA PRO) – Portpartick GC
- Maurice Halliday – Kirkcudbright GC

The Overseas Membership scheme will soon be available for Clubs to get involved. The idea is to sign up overseas members via a Scottish Golf portal. This could provide additional income to clubs. A strategic document, "The Opportunity to Grow Golf: Female Participation", relating to female participation in golf has been published in order to grow the female side of the game. This will be sent out to Clubs in the new future. A small sub group met on Friday 15th January at Castle Douglas GC, to discuss the development of an outward facing visitor website and its contents. Since then the website has been set up and is in mid development. Wave has done a tremendous amount of work on the site. It is very pictorial.

It is proposed to demo it to the Partnership at next DGGP meeting. <http://dumfriesandgallowaygolf.com/> I attended a meeting on 4 March with Keith Campbell to launch website through VisitScotland advertising and on 16 March he has a meeting with VisitScotland to look at Tourism Strategy.

TBA D&GGP Meeting – items for agenda

- DGGP Update
- Advertising
- Website Demo and Discussion
- Craig Chalmers (Scottish Golf Club Development Officer)

He had been corresponding with Ian McAndrew (Visit Southwest Scotland). Last year the Partnership provided £1,000 to advertise on their site and advertise in their leaflets. He had been trying to reduce this annual cost to approximately £500. The Visit Southwest Scotland is very good and shows off our Clubs well. However, he was not sure how much it has assisted our business. His opinion is that we need to be there but not at £1,000. The cost to individual Clubs would be £50 per Club if they were to advertise individually. Approval was given to spend £500 to advertise on Visit Southwest Scotland website on behalf of the Clubs. An advert had been placed in Golf North, again this year. All future adverts need to direct potential visitors to the <http://dumfriesandgallowaygolf.com/> website. Alan Grant from VisitScotland would like to carry out tourism visits to local golf clubs in the South Area. Neville will coordinate the visits with the clubs. He may not have a choice of which clubs they want to visit but he will try to direct them towards those that support the Partnership.

WEBMASTER AND FIXTURES SECRETARY

Wave Tyrrell took us first to the Association's website and described all the improvements he had made. He explained that the Fixture List seems fine with search and printing now OK. He asked all to spread the message that there is no longer a final version. As the online version is kept up to date, it can be quickly updated. He had inserted on the fixtures page a menu item to a new page for contact details of Match Secretaries but had not had replies from all clubs. He found in checking club websites that contact details for opens was skimpy and could be improved. Club information on SOSGA website had now been improved. He will email clubs shortly for verification of information on both SOSGA and DGGGOLF on club pages and give the opportunity to amend what is presently online.

Wave then took us to the new D&G Golf Partnership website which was still under construction. The design of the site is a responsive one suitable for the range of devices now available. Site Structure summed up as; Come, Stay and Play. One should determine a structure for a website beforehand but he had to confess this has been an iterative one. There was a need to add a slider for accommodation and possibly organisers and feedback on his efforts was critical. The club pages need score card details to include yellow tees and he also needs:-

- a list of hotels that cater for golfers
- a list of golf tour organisers and packages offered
- Partner's details for bottom of page
- more photos for hotels. Ian Findlay had sent copies of photos used in the brochures.

A link to club opens could be useful. The Google map on front page will be improved to give more information when hovering and Visit Scotland material will be included. Some colours are tied in with the brochures as he was trying to have some commonality between the brochures and the website. He had spent some time recently swotting up on Search Engine Optimisation. There is no use in having a great website if you do not get visitors to the site. It is about getting as high a rating as you can on Google so that golfers find the site.

The President congratulated Wave and Neville on the progress made and thanked them for producing an informative website and hoped it would bring a lot of visitors to the area.

DUMFRIESSHIRE REPRESENTATIVE

There was no report from Dumfriesshire

KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE REPRESENTATIVE

Jean Forrest, in the absence of Brian Duguid, reported that coaching of the Development Squad was going well. Derek Douglas had stepped down as Team Captain and been replaced by Clark Riddick

WIGTOWNSHIRE REPRESENTATIVE

Stephen Kingston reported that coaching of the Development Squad did not take place during the winter due to the inclement weather. It was hoped to have some sessions during the summer. He reminded everyone that the Drennan Salver was scheduled for Portpatrick on Sunday 17 April. The trophy had not yet been engraved for the last 3 years and asked for the names of the winners. The secretary agreed to let him

know.

A.O.C.B.

Jim Burns reported that Kevin Weir and Danny Sommerville were leaving SGL to join the R & A. The Scottish Golf Awards were being held on Friday 11 March and Lee Sterritt (Crichton) was one of the nominees for Volunteer of the Year.

The President thanked all members for their attendance

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 8.45 pm

The next Meeting was arranged for 7.15pm on Tuesday 26 April 2016 at the Selkirk Arms Hotel, Kirkcudbright but this was later changed to Tuesday 3 May.