

**SOUTH OF SCOTLAND GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING 26 SEPTEMBER 2017**

Held at the Selkirk Arms Hotel, Kirkcudbright at 7.15 pm

Present:

Stephen Kingston, President, in the Chair; T Clark; A Millar; G Sharp; P Watson; J Forrest; W Tyrrell; R McKnight; B Duguid and I Robin, Secretary.

Apologies:

D Moore

In Attendance:

Peter Haslam, Gatehouse GC; Jimmy Caldwell, Wigtownshire County GC; Mick Casson, Bryce Kelly and Michael Dickie, Lochmaben GC

President's Welcome:

The President welcomed the members and in particular the Golf Club representatives.

Executive Meeting 22 August 2017

The Minutes were approved by Graeme Sharp, seconded by Jean Forrest

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

Secretary's Report:

Iain Robin reported that the letter to the each of the Members of SGL Board was sent on 7 September. He had had 7 positive responses from Clubs and six from Members of the Executive. Sanquhar were concerned about the timing of the introduction of the new per capita fee as their AGM was in November and they would not know to add it to the Subscription. Wave did not like the word "blackmail". Brian asked for a minor improvement to add "financial budgets" to facts and figures and this was included.

All other correspondence to do with the SGL Draft Strategy and had been forwarded to the Executive and Clubs.

Invitations had been sent to Gatehouse, Wigtownshire County and Lochmaben Golf Clubs to send a representative to this Meeting. All were present.

Iain reported that he had a phone call from Eileen Scott, Dumfriesshire Ladies, on 8 September to say that at their recent committee meeting it was agreed that they would ask the Clubs at the Dumfriesshire Ladies AGM to change the Dumfriesshire Ladies Constitution so that all ladies in Dumfriesshire would pay the per capita fee, as set by the South. The Clubs are already collecting the £3.50 and keeping it!! The South would collect the monies by using the same form as the men and then pass the money to the Ladies. This is a positive step towards amalgamation and should be applauded. There was no problem with this as it is the same procedure as with the men's counties. Eileen has also agreed to donate 5p per head to the D&G Golf Partnership. Eileen is going to encourage Pat to do the same with Galloway Ladies. Eileen seems keen to progress amalgamation but needs some guidance on certain aspects from SGL which is not forthcoming. SGL is too involved with the draft strategy to sort out any other problems. Because of their lack of interest the other Areas and Counties which were progressing with amalgamation have decided not to proceed meantime.

The SGL Special General Meeting regarding the draft strategy is to be held on Saturday 2 December at Stirling. Agenda and papers will be sent out in due course.

Iain's computer crashed during the writing of the letter to the Board and he had to purchase a new one. All information had been transferred successfully and he was up and running again. He thanked all who helped him out.

SGL, in response to a request from Lochmaben, informed all Clubs on 11 September that a temporary ruling on the use of "preferred lies" could be brought in for Qualifying Competitions till 18 September. As all the courses in this region were suffering from very wet conditions he had permitted all Clubs to use their discretion till the end of the month including for general play.

It was with regret that the Secretary reported the deaths of Duncan McFarlane and Dorothy Hill.

Dumfriesshire Ladies had been unsuccessful in retaining their inter-Counties title at Glenberrie last weekend.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer reported that the Summary of Accounts up to 31 August 2017 was as follows:-

Income		Expenditure	
In bank 1/9/16	9,632.09	Sundries	494.45
Comps	1,514.00	Coaching	3,205.00
IMT	700.00	ATC	2,989.97
Sponsor	1,300.00	NCF	4,583.88
Subs	16,719.50	Vouchers	2,555.00
Coaching	1770.00	Matches	2,397.13
Areas	<u>534.00</u>	Areas	5,578.00
	32,169.59	In bank 23/3/17	<u>10,366.16</u>
			32,169.59

The Treasurer reported that the accounts show total expenditure of £21,803.43 and income of £22,537.50 which gives a surplus of £734.07. However there are outstanding cheques of £2,653.88 and debtors of £267.00. This gives an actual deficit for the year of £1,652.43.

Iain was very reluctant to leave the Northern Counties Federation League as it gives the boys enormous experience in playing in a competition against boys of similar and better ability and an opportunity to reach their full potential as golfers. Playing the "away" matches, whereby they travel together, stay overnight together in an hotel and play on different courses, builds their character, their team spirit, their golfing knowledge and friendships with their opponents. Iain had watched these boys enter the team as raw and naïve young teenagers and mature into confident, pleasant and level-headed young adults. They take great pride in wearing the "South" shirt and representing the South of Scotland.

These improvements to their golfing abilities and character would be lost if they had to play games against the men from each of the three Counties. In addition these games could only be played at weekends when courses are not available due to club competitions. He and Pam had carried out an extensive examination of the itinerary of the Juniors to reduce expenditure and by reducing the coaching budget by £1,000, reducing Performance Days from 4 to 3, two professionals to one and vouchers for individual coaching from £1600 to £1000; reducing the total balls given for playing each match from 24 to 12; and asking the boys to buy their own drinks at matches could save £2,000 in total.

Notwithstanding, he would still recommend a rise in the per capita fee from £3.50 to £3.75 to cover any further increases SGL have in the pipeline to expect the Areas to pay to reduce their costs. The per capita fee has not been increased for four years and this increase would bring in approx. £1,000.

It was agreed that the Junior team continue to compete in the Northern Counties Federation League provided expenditure was reduced. Any increase in the per capita fee would require to be taken to the AGM in November.

SGL Draft Strategy:

The Club Representatives expressed their appreciation for the comprehensive letter which had been sent to the Board members and to Donald Shamash's input. The SGL response to the letter to the Board had not been helpful.

The tone of the latest correspondence from SGL was becoming more conciliatory and less aggressive and demanding but there was still a distinct lack of detailed information. The general opinion was that the latest correspondence "Frequently Asked Questions" did not allay the concerns or change the opinion of the majority of the Clubs in South Area.

There was to be a meeting at Dunblane Golf Club on Sunday 15 October from like-minded Areas and Counties and it was agreed that Jean Forrest and the Secretary should attend. The President also hoped to be present.

The SGL Special General Meeting regarding the draft strategy is to be held on Saturday 2 December at Stirling Court Hotel. The statutory timeline for issuing formal notification and relevant papers for a General Meeting is 21 days. It is therefore anticipated that papers etc will not be received before Saturday 11 November. It was suggested that a meeting with the Clubs be held between this date and the date of the General Meeting to determine their wishes. This may be difficult as this time of the year is when some Clubs, and the South, hold their AGM and a clash of dates may occur. It was agreed that the meeting be held on Thursday 23 November following the South AGM. The South AGM could be curtailed if all Convenors' reports were prepared early and sent out to the Clubs with the notice of the meeting and taken as read at the meeting. An earlier start for the AGM of 7.00 pm was also suggested.

It was suggested that the method to be used to adopt the new strategy by SGL would be by alterations to the Articles of Association. This would enable SGL avoiding having to give more facts and figures and budget details. The main changes would be alterations to the Affiliation Fee to give SGL the power to set the monetary value and additions to the composition of the Board to include the CEO and possibly the President.

There had been an item on BBC Scotland 6.00 pm News regarding Draft Strategy on 20 September. It also intimated that the latest amendments would be announced by SGL on Monday 25 September. On 26 September articles appeared in the national press extolling the perceived virtues of SGL draft strategy.

It was again emphasised that if Clubs wanted a vote they had to complete the appropriate SGL form to register. Clubs were seemingly doing this but were not getting confirmation that their request had been received. The Secretary was asked to contact Craig Chalmers, South Development Officer, to find out which Clubs had a vote.

CONVENORS' REPORTS

Championships 2017

Graeme Sharp reported that Chris Corbett (D&G) beat Danny McConnachie (D&C) by one hole in the final of the South Championship at Stranraer.

The six man team in the ATC at Newmacher did not perform to their potential and finished well down the pecking order.

The Senior team in the Senior ATC fared better but did not come home with any prizes.

Nineteen players took part in the Shamash Trophy at Thornhill on Sunday 24 September. The weather in the afternoon was horrendous and the competition was just completed before the course became unplayable. Liam Carruthers (Powfoot) was the victor with a score of 141, second equal were Neil Hamilton (Powfoot) and Chris Corbett (D&G) with 149 and fourth equal Ross Murray (Southernness) and Michael Grunwell (D&G) on 152.

Coaching

Pam Watson reported that the coaching pathway begins at individual Clubs, using either their own professional or via the Clubgolf programme. The next stage is development academies of which our Area has currently none and then for a select few the Scottish Academy.

Our performance coaching concentrates on course management, practice routines, fitness, nutrition and not swing coaching. We have reduced this year's performance coaching to three sessions and the squad from 24 to 18 This should enable Chris Robinson to manage the sessions without the need for an assistant pro. The savings made will allow us to create a couple of development squads to fill the gap created by having no development academies. These sessions will be taken by Ross Murdoch out of Tower Wood.

Pam intends to apply for Tesco's bags for help scheme to raise more money to put towards the Junior coaching programme

Senior Team Manager

Graeme Sharp reported that he had had difficulty getting a team to represent the Association in the Area Team Championships due to work and family commitments. It used to be that players would fight to get into the team but nowadays it was not considered such an honour. He thanked Mike Grunwell for his help.

Junior Team Manager

Iain Robin reported that he and Pam had taken a six-man team of U16's to Glenbervie to play in the Scottish Junior Team Championship on Sunday 24 September. The format was 18 holes stableford with the 5 best scores to count. The conditions were wet overhead and underfoot with some ponding on the greens and not conducive for good scoring. The team came in 6th with a score of 157 points and Taylor Kerr (Sanquhar) was in a three way tie for best individual score with 38 points.

As none of the ties in the Peat Salver have been played this year Pam and I have decided to revert to the previous format next year where the competition is played on one day similar to the Drennan Salver.

Course Rating

Robert McKnight reported that the proposed rating of Powfoot took place on Thursday 24 August as planned. It was however Ground Maintenance Week so work was being done on the greens, and consequently Eileen Scott agreed to do the necessary Stimpmeter readings this week, when the greens were back to their usual speed.

The ratings at Castle Douglas and Gatehouse were completed on Wednesday 20 September.

When all the paperwork is completed it will be sent to SGL where they will review the figures and decide whether any changes to the Standard Scratch Scores are required.

The seven Clubs re-rated this year, namely St Medan, Wigtown & Bladnoch, Brighthouse Bay, Lockerbie, Powfoot, Castle Douglas and Gatehouse will be advised of their Standard Scratch Scores around the beginning of 2018, before the competition season begins.

D&G Golf Partnership

Jean Forrest reported that landings on the website had dropped this month in comparison with the past three months. Hopefully the Facebook promotion by VisitScotland will improve these figures in October. The video to be used then is being reduced in length by Andy himself, at VisitScotland's expense. The promotion is due to go live on 16 October for 3 weeks. The present contact at VisitScotland, Keith Campbell, has a 6 month secondment to focus marketing on the Americas. His replacement for this period will be Sheena Smith, with whom Jean will be having a meeting next week.

The final advert in the Scottish Clubgolfer Magazine will be in the next edition. These adverts do not seem to have been very successful in driving landings to our website according to our figures, but we have no way of knowing if there has been increased activity at Club level. However, she suggested that this advertising campaign had been expensive without any increase in visitor numbers which can be measured, and perhaps, should not be repeated.

A meeting with P&O Ferries is still not arranged and as her own diary is pretty full for October and into November, she was not pushing it at this time.

Hetland Hall was not quite on board but progress is being made.

Jean expressed doubt as to whether there was any mileage to be made in continuing with the partnership as the Clubs were not showing much interest. It was agreed that the Clubs would be asked at the AGM.

Webmaster and Fixtures Secretary

Wave Tyrrell reported that used the same dates as this year in compiling the draft Fixture List for 2018 As soon as Clubs had agreed the dates for open competitions they should make the necessary alterations. The Gatehouse fixtures had been amended.

Wave had had no information on new contracts between Clubs or packages. Kirkcudbright were investigating a new concept and Castle Douglas and New Galloway were looking at something.

Child Protection

Iain Robin reported that he was waiting on Jim Burns finding the necessary information. Jim believed it was on a floppy disc somewhere in his archives.

Dumfriesshire

Tony Clark had nothing to report.

Kirkcudbrightshire

Brian Duguid reported that three Clubs had taken up the coaching offer. Kirkcudbright, Castle Douglas and New Galloway would use Ross Murdoch and fund themselves.

Greig Blayney won the Douglas Maxwell

Clark Riddick won the OOM by 1 point from Ross Murray.

Jeff Sutcliffe had agreed to allow his name to be put forward as the next Vice-President of Kirkcudbrightshire.

Connor Syme was to be congratulated on being selected to represent GB and I in the Ryder Cup and on his 12th position in his first pro tournament.

He thanked Peter Haslam for arranging a meeting with Castle Douglas, New Galloway, Kirkcudbright and Gatehouse to arrange dates of open competitions for next year so dates did not clash.

Playing the Kirkcudbrightshire Junior Championship in conjunction with the 3 Counties had been a success this year and it was proposed to continue with it next year. As the Kirkcudbrightshire Senior Championship was due at Kirkcudbright next year it was proposed to move the event from Thursday to Friday to coincide with a Kirkcudbright EGGS weekly competition. Both these events would require to be ratified at the AGM.

Wigtownshire

Stephen Kingston reported that the Wigtownshire Senior Championship was won by Alan White (Newton Stewart) at St Medan.

The Seniors league was won by Newton Stewart.

Chris Robinson has got a coaching scheme organised for the winter.

Club Representatives

Peter Haslam was disgusted with the attitude of SGL and their draft strategy. He was grateful for all the information he had received but Gatehouse would be a NO for the key proposals.

Mike Dickie reported that he had approached SGL to enquire about the costs to the Clubs for their bulk buying of stationery and beer and found he was already getting it cheaper.

A O C B

Brian Duguid reported that he had been approached by the Co-op as no one from Stewartry had applied for funding from their Community Activity Sports Clubs (CASC). He had filled in the forms and was waiting to hear

Iain Robin reported that he had received a letter of thanks from Thornhill to the Executive for keeping them informed of the SGL draft proposals.

There being no further business the President thanked the members and Club representatives for their attendance. The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 14 November at 7.15 pm in the Selkirk Arms Hotel Kirkcudbright.