



Communications Group
(On behalf of the Management Committee and Club Members)

Newsletter

May/June 2023

Dear Members

The season is well under way, the course is thriving, and we have plenty planned for the summer. This Newsletter also looks at the bigger picture, notably the World Handicap changes.

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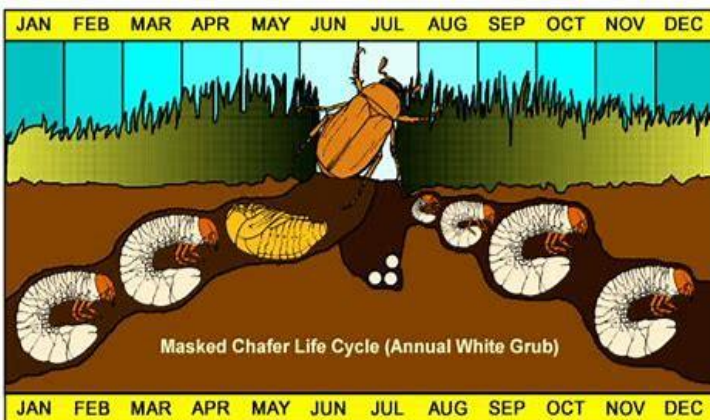
On the Course

After several months of challenging weather, chafer bug damage, and vandalism, we are seeing recovery on the course, and our greens staff are catching up on lost time. We felt members would appreciate that we provide here a detailed commentary on all the issues and progress we are dealing with, often with matters that are not obvious at first sight.

General Maintenance

- DN22 completed the tree felling on 3rd. The hole was out of play just for that day and the work was carried out satisfactorily. The trees around the 3rd hole are still restricting grass growth. We ask members to keep to the path with buggies and trolleys.
- With the approval and cooperation of Whitakers Estates, we will hopefully be able to go ahead with working on tree thinning around the 7th green; this was further identified during the STRI visit as a problem causing issues with the 7th green.

- Maintenance work and replacement of white OOB posts has been carried out – we have purchased 150 new posts and these have been located in appropriate areas. This has made an improvement around the course with more clarity of OOB areas.
- Our thanks go to the Seniors committee who donated money to buy the new posts and to Charles and Andrew Cook for their time and effort in placing the new OOB posts.
- A key task during April was to get all the fertilizer out on the greens, tees, surrounds and fairways. These areas are showing dramatic improvement. Again, the weather has determined when the products can be applied and then how they affect growth.
- An ironic spin-off of the work done to enhance grass growth has been the thick growth and height of the first cut next to many fairways and greens surrounds, whilst our first-cut mower is being repaired. Hopefully that situation will be soon resolved.
- New laid turf on tees has been cut to the same height as other tees. To continue to protect these newly turfed tees we will continue to hand mow (3rd, 11th and 12th medal tees).
- The 9th tee turf damage, caused by chafer bugs/birds, has been re-turfed and pegged down. The damage from bugs and birds does appear to be under control but we are still vigilant around key areas.
- Here are the culprits! Apologies to any who find the images distressing – but that’s Nature for you.



- Where the new turf has been laid it has been clear that, already, divot damage will cause a problem. We therefore urge members to use sand/seed when divots are taken.
- A new strimmer has been purchased which gives us another piece of equipment that will support the general maintenance around the course – additionally with two strimmers

we can give the greens team more training time to be more effective when using the strimmer.

- We have now ordered a replacement tining machine which is a new Toro Pro core . This is currently the best machine on the market which allows us to tine to a greater depth. Doing this allows for stronger and deeper root growth. Additionally, this new machine is wider, enabling us to tine the greens much faster. We are waiting for delivery.
- The majority of posts and ropes have been taken down and stored. It is very clear to see the areas where the ropes have been and how those areas have been protected. The use of roping areas is now very much acceptable practice across all golf courses as a strategy to protect vulnerable areas of the course.

Greens Programme

- A program of work has been put together to help the greens recover from the winter period and the adverse weather. It should be noted that all the greens require individual attention and a “one size fit” does not meet the needs of all 18 greens. Carl and the team have put together a series of activities to help bring the greens to an acceptable high standard.
- We have taken delivery of our new Sorel rollers. These will allow us to aerate the greens without disrupting the putting surface. To use these rollers allows the work to be carried out across the course within 2 – 3hours. These rollers, along with our other methods being used, will help our current focus on restoring the few problem greens and bringing them up to our planned standard. Using the Sorel rollers also allows us to seed regularly to a planned programme and therefore promote grass growth.
- Greens will be Sorel rolled and seeded in a planned and timely approach – the idea being that the rolling and seeding will overlap to give the strong growth on and around the greens.
- Greens will be dressed again once there is sufficient growth but this again is weather/temperature driven for best effect.
- The 3rd, 7th, 9th & 17th greens may take slightly longer but the planned program will ensure these are given the more intensive treatment; for these greens we will also include a different fertilizer application which is currently being undertaken.
- The 11th green is showing most signs of stress and this requires more attention and while it will have the same approach as above it will be with a reduced dressing so the current level of grass is not covered, allowing ventilation across the surface; any dressing will also reduce the target area when we spray. The aim is to promote more grass cover by using the sorel roller and a vigorous period of seeding.
- The greens can now be placed into three different brackets.

- Firstly, apart from greens 3/7/9/11/17, all greens will be ready on time and already these can be seen to be reacting positively to the current maintenance programme.
- Secondly greens 3/7/9/17 are recovering but have taken until May to begin looking their best.
- Finally, the 11th green is about a month behind the rest. A combination of frost damage, lack of ground warmth, damage from chafer bugs and the effects of surrounding trees has put this under stress and has required quite a lot of attention. Carl and the team will be closely monitoring all these five greens and adjusting his programme of maintenance and repair as they show signs of recovery.
- Following issues faced during the winter months with temporary greens we will be focusing on planning for the 7th green and temporary hole.
- Drainage work for the 1st and 15th greens has been provisionally booked for the end of the current season. However, the work will depend on available funds – a quote was also requested for drainage on the practice field .

STRI Report

- As a further update we had previously reported booking STRI for a visit. This took place on 25/4/23 and was a very informative intervention. Initial feedback was very positive about the course and, more importantly, backed up the maintenance and recovery programme Carl and his team have in place.
- The issues Retford GC face are not unique to us. As the STRI inspector explained, the adverse weather has had a major impact on many golf courses. There are a number of factors that can affect the condition of the course and unfortunately we are experiencing quite a number, all together. We will share any further conclusions when the full Report comes through.

Problems and Solutions

- The divot repair bags and mixture has been put out around the course and we urge members to take and fill a bag and fill divots as they walk around the course.
- Sadly, vandals have again been on the course and have been stealing and damaging fencing, flags, rakes and the seed and bag bins, so we are having to add that to our workload and expenditure to replace and repair these items; they have also set up camp in the woods by the 7th.
- We have been in contact with the Police who are being supportive and have been making visits to the course. We have purchased cameras that will be place around the course which was suggested by the Police as a measure that will allow them to

use any picture taken of vandals to identify culprits. Local residents and dog walkers have also been providing us with evidence.

- In the chipping area, mats were put in place to protect the surface. However, with recent grass growth, these will be removed and chipping can be done off the grass.
- Can members note that chipping onto the practice putting area in front of the clubhouse is not permitted?
- Can members please note that while the course is returning to good health they should still continue to keep to paths with buggies and trollies on the par three's?

Skywatch

Members will be used to seeing and hearing buzzards soaring across the woods and fields around the course, often being crows.



and hunting mobbed by

But recently a new silhouette was seen trespassing on their territory; the red kite.



This magnificently graceful bird of prey is unmistakable with its reddish-brown body, angled wings and deeply forked tail. It was saved from national extinction by one of the world's longest-running protection programmes. It has now been successfully re-introduced to England and Scotland. (RSPB)

Red kites are listed under Schedule 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act.

Competitions

Nottinghamshire Golf Union

Inter-Club Foursomes Knockout 2023

Round 1 – Match Report

Retford team recorded a memorable victory over Hollingwell in the first round of the County Foursomes matchplay knockout. Played at Rufford Park on Tuesday 9 May 2023 the final result was Retford 8 up.

The first match featured Mark Nicholson and Andrew Cooke and they finished 6 up over 18 holes. Following them in were Alex Woodcock and Peter Wheatcroft who also won 2 up.

A great result and the team go forward to Round 2 on 5 June.

Nottinghamshire Golf Union Scratch League Division 3 Matches 2023

Date	Opponent	H/A	Result
27-Mar-23	The Nottinghamshire	H	Won 3-2
17-Apr-23	Radcliffe on Trent	A	Won 3-2
22-May-23	Beeston Fields	H	
12-Jun-23	Mapperley	H	
19-Jun-23	The Nottinghamshire	A	
03-Jul-23	Radcliffe on Trent	H	
07-Aug-23	Beeston Fields	A	
14-Aug-23	Mapperley	A	

Seniors Friendly Matches

Date	Club	H/A	Result	Date	Club	H/A	Result
Thurs 06/04/2023	Ramsdale	A	Lost 3-4	Wed 19/04/2023	Styrrup	H	Tied 31/2 – 31/2
Tues 02/05/2023	Thonock	A	Lost 3-5	Mon 15/05/2023	Mapperley	H	
Wed 24/05/2023	Ramsdale	H		Wed 31/05/2023	Town Moor	A	
Mon 05/06/2023	Wath	A		Wed 14/06/2023	Doncaster	H	
Tues 20/06/2023	Styrrup	A		Mon 10/07/2023	Carholme	H	
Mon 17/07/2023	Mapperley	A		Thurs 20/07/2023	Rufford	A	
Thurs 27/07/2023	Wath	H		Thurs 03/08/2023	Doncaster	A	
Mon 14/08/2023	Worksop	A		Wed 23/08/2023	Carholme	A	
Thurs 31/08/2023	Worksop	H		Wed 06/09/2023	Thonock	H	
Thurs 21/09/2023	Rufford	H		Thurs 28/09/2023	Town Moor	H	

Should any member over 55 years old wish to play, please let Ian Littlewood, John Flavell or the office know, with your contact details.

Local Rules Update

Following the adoption of new local rules, members may have noticed some changes including how the boundaries of the course are being defined.

- Fences and lines of white posts are now largely the only ways in which the course boundaries are laid out.
- A new cohort of white stakes has been provided by the Seniors Section and used to replace broken fences and hedges, mainly beside holes 1, 5, 14 and 18.
- The line by the hedge on Hole 1 represents an internal Out of Bounds, only applying to play of Hole 1.
- Whilst there are push-in stakes to allow easy removal and replacement for hedge cutting and maintenance, they are not, under the Rules, movable obstructions and no relief applies. Others had been placed to the side and rear of Hole 11 but these were vandalised and will be replaced with driven posts.
- The blue stakes placed to the side of the Green on Hole 8 define a drop zone which can be used for a ball coming to rest on or over the path at the rear of the green.

R&A Rule 8.1a

Actions That Are Not Allowed

Except in the limited ways allowed in Rules 8.1b,c and d, a **player must not** take any of these actions if they improve the conditions affecting the stroke:

(1) **Move, bend or break any:**

- Growing or attached natural object,
- Immovable obstruction, integral object or **boundary object**, or

- Tee-marker for the teeing area when playing a ball from that teeing area.

(2) Move a loose impediment or movable obstruction into position (such as to build a stance or to improve the line of play).

(3) Alter the surface of the ground, including by:

- Replacing divots in a divot hole,
- Removing or pressing down divots that have already been replaced or other cut turf that is already in place, or
- Creating or eliminating holes, indentations or uneven surfaces.

(4) Remove or press down sand or loose soil.

(5) Remove dew, frost or water.

Penalty for Breach of Rule 8.1a: **General Penalty.**

Women into Golf

The initiative to encourage more women to play golf has been a great success. After two 'taster' sessions, both coached by James, twelve are looking forward to coming back for our third session and appear very enthusiastic!

The team of Bryony, Barbara, Lin and Jacky have worked hard to encourage interest and are grateful to members of the Ladies Committee who have given up their time to help. We are particularly grateful to the Ladies Section who have provided the funds to cover the events. Our next session will be on Saturday 20th May at 3pm and newcomers are very welcome.



World Handicap System

This is quite a technical item for the Newsletter, but we think it's worth getting the details clear.

The World Handicap System (WHS) is now in use and every golfer needs to understand its impact on handicapping.

The guidance below has been updated from our website.

Course Rating

To prepare for the introduction of the new system, our course has been assessed, and rated based on how a scratch golfer would view the course. RGC Course Ratings for the various tees are Blues 71.4, Whites 71.4, Yellows 69.7 and Reds 73.4.

Slope Rating

This rating represents the relative difficulty of a course for a bogey golfer as compared with a scratch golfer. In this context, bogey means a 20 handicap for men and 24 for women. Slope Rating has been set separately for each tee colour. Slope Rating will be higher on a course with long carries, narrow fairways, thick rough, etc.

Slope Rating falls within the range of 55 and 155. In GB & Ireland the average Slope rating is 125. For Handicap purposes, a Neutral Slope rating of 113 is used.

RGC's Slope Ratings are: Blue tees – 139, White – 139, Yellow – 135, Red – 135

Handicap Index

As a Member, you previously had a playing handicap. Under the WHS you have a "Handicap Index" instead.

This is computed as the average of the best 8 of your last 20 qualifying scores posted since 1st January 2018. If you have not posted 20 qualifying scores since that date, a method similar to allocating a new handicap is used.

Course Handicap

Your handicap on a specific day is calculated by reference to the particular course and tee that you are playing from. This is the same process whether playing at home, or elsewhere. Your Handicap Index is multiplied by the Slope Rating for the course and tee, and then divided by the "Neutral" Slope Rating of 113.

Charts are available at all clubs, and in the PSI software used on the club terminals and phone Apps will take the strain, so you will not need to do this calculation yourself. Our chart is on the wall next to the door to the Pro's Shop.

Whilst the Rules of Golf do not require you to record your handicap on your card, it will be of assistance if you can add your Handicap Index, course handicap and strokes received in relevant boxes. It will also help you keep track of how you are doing.

Submitting Scores

On completion of the round, as soon as possible on the day, you must post your scores electronically on the PSI of the club you played at. If using phone Apps, scores must be posted before midnight. Your Handicap Index will be updated in the "Cloud" at 5 minutes past midnight. There will be sanctions for non-submission of scores.

Please also register for your England Golf account at <https://www.EnglandGolf.org/my-account-member/> To do so, you will need a valid email address which RGC knows about. You can also track your handicap through the England Golf WHS Platform.

Adjustments to your Handicap Index

We no longer have a "ratcheting system" of handicap adjustment. Previously, a good score results in a much bigger handicap adjustment than having a poor score. A spell of poor form is rewarded by multiple 0.1 increases in handicap. Under the WHS your Handicap Index is likely to vary a lot more over the short term, the advantage being that it will better reflect your current form.

Your Handicap Index is calculated as the average of your best 8 out of the last 20 "Acceptable Scores" (see below). It is recalculated (just after midnight) whenever a new score is returned.

The upward movement of your Handicap Index within a defined period of time is however CAPPED, to limit the rate of increase during a period of particularly poor form.

For handicap purposes, a big score at any hole will still be reduced to a net double bogey. There may also be exceptional score adjustments after a very low score is returned.

"Acceptable Scores" for Handicap Purposes

There are two categories :

1. Competition Scores – scores in all singles competition rounds of Individual Strokeplay (Medal or Stableford) played over a qualifying measured course from a specific tee.
2. General Play Scores – scores in non-competition and social golf can be used but pre-registration with the Pro or on an app is required. As with Supplementary Scores currently, you must register your intention to submit a score for handicap purposes prior to commencement of the round.

Team and Matchplay scores are currently excluded in England.

Playing Handicap

After deciding your course handicap, you will then need to determine your Playing Handicap (strokes received) by altering your Course Handicap, dependent on the format of the competition. For example:

In 4 ball Matchplay the restriction is 90% but 100% in 2-balls.

Individual Strokeplay (Medal and Stableford) the restriction is 95%.

A full list is given on the R&A website at

<https://www.randa.org/en/roh/appendices/appendix-c>

So a bit of juggling is necessary when it comes to getting the right handicap for recording scores on your scorecard.

Playing Conditions Calculation

Adjustment for course conditions on the day is made automatically by the software. It looks at all the scores submitted on the course for that day and determines if the course or weather conditions on the day differed from "Normal". This is similar to the previous CSS adjustment. If there is a howling wind blowing, most scores will be lower than normal, and the software will detect this and make appropriate adjustments.

The adjustment is however conservative in nature. In easy conditions it may adjust the gross score for the round by 1, or increase the gross by up to 3 in tough conditions.

Further Information

England Golf's dedicated website for the WHS is at <https://www.englandgolf.org/whs/>

In the Clubhouse

RETFORD GOLF CLUB'S LADIES

INVITE YOU, FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO A **COFFEE MORNING ON
SATURDAY 20TH MAY FROM 10A.M.**

£3 A TICKET WILL ALSO BUY YOU A CUP OF TEA OR COFFEE PLUS A BISCUIT

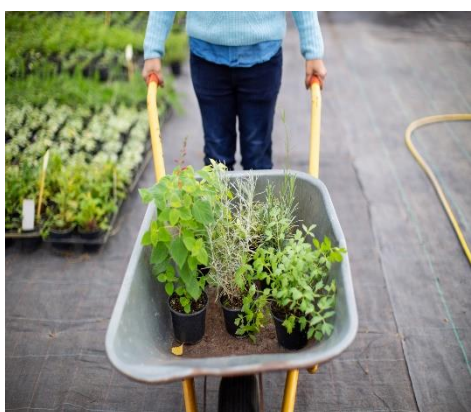


PROCEEDS IN AID OF OUR LADY CAPTAIN'S CHARITY, BREAST CARE NOW, AND THE LADIES' SECTION.

**BREAST
CANCER
NOW** The research & support charity

REFRESHMENTS AND MUCH MORE!!!

VEGETABLES AND FLOWERS TO PLANT



CAKE STALL AND WINE TO WIN

BUY QUALITY CLOTHING



EXCITING RAFFLE

COME AND JOIN US

Charity Presentation for 2022.

Last year's Lady Captain, Mary Saddington, would like to thank all Club members who supported her charity. She recently presented a cheque for £3220 to Hannah Goulding from the Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice.

She was joined at the presentation by some Lady members, Pat Eccleshall, Ros Waterhouse, Wendy King and Marion Slingsby, who are fundraisers for Bluebell Wood.

Congratulations to everyone who helped to raise this superb total.



Let Us Know

We have further improved the ways members can communicate with the Committee about what's happening in the Club. To repeat from previous Newsletters

- The *Suggestions Box* has been relocated to the reception area, below the computer terminal used for entering competition scores. Members can put any ideas or suggestions to the Management Committee but please make sure each has your name clearly marked on it or no action can be taken.
- There is also a printed leaflet available in the foyer and bar area of the Clubhouse, giving details and photos of the Management Committee members.
- The Club Room TV has been set up with a scrolling information display with various elements, including current month diary and notice of social events. Any ideas for further slides to add to this can be suggested to retfordgolfcomms@gmail.com or in the suggestion box.

- If Club members want to raise any points/issues/queries for the Committees, please contact the chair of the appropriate sub-committee, via the e-mail address retfordgolfcomms@gmail.com, or through the Suggestions Box. If members have any golf related news items please let Andy Massey know, via retfordgolfcomms@gmail.com.
- The Club has a re-activated Facebook Page, “Retford Golf Club”, for regular general updates and information for the general Public. A group “Retford Golf Club Members” has also been created where information aimed just for members will be posted.
- The next full Management meeting will be on **16th May 2023, at 6.00pm. * If members have any points they would like to raise for future meetings, please write to the Chairman, via the Office.**

Best wishes, from □

Andy Massey, Mary Saddington, Charles Cooke, John Flavell

Communication Group (on behalf of the Management Committee)