

AGM Captain's Outgoing Report

Good evening Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen of Oak Park Golf Club. It is with some pleasure that I give this resume of my year as Club Captain. I looked back at last year's speech and I noted that I finished my speech with a commitment to you that I would do my best for the members and to uphold the good name and traditions of this club. I have tried my best to do this, although I recognize that my best may not have reached the standards that some of the members expect and like most of those before me I have made some mistakes. I would like to say that if I have upset any of you by what I did or said in this last year, I apologise and say that I did not do anything for personal benefit.

So what sort of year has it been, I think that it has been a very good year in many ways and because it was the silver anniversary of the club was a very memorable year giving us a chance to celebrate this with a golf competition and some partying. The major events of the year went very well with the weather playing its part in making, the drive in, Captain's day and the charity day great fun. As usual the packed programme of competitions were well attended and expertly run with some very great results over the year. A very big thank you to **Cliff Simmons** and the Comps Com who continue to manage these competitions well and all of the D.O's who do a great job. The competitions culminated in the club Championship where for the first year we had a winner **Paul Desoisa** who won with a gross score under 150 a truly great result. Other majors went well with not only great golf but true competition. The men's teams competed again in the Daily Mail Cup and Hampshire Sevens and as always did the club proud, our

thanks to **Ken Meister** for organizing these events for us. Our friendly matches against other clubs had a strange time with problems in getting the fixtures set in other clubs diaries with some cancelling and one who didn't turn up, we kept trying and hopefully new arrangements for next year will help. **Trevor Bracken** did a great job as team manager, in cajoling people to play and perform well this year, Thank You.

We have had presented the accounts of the club and my thanks to **Roger White** for the efficient and quiet way that he has handled this, as mentioned he has been helped by Brian who not only has been vice captain but vice chancellor this year, our thanks to them both.

The Social side of the club has been vibrant as usual with great events and some very special Club Nights and I would like to pay tribute to **Tracey Hart** and his team who have worked hard this year to make each event special and well organized. Tracey having done this for a couple of years is standing down and I would like to say a big thanks.

Seniors are for me an important part of my golf life and the growing numbers of seniors are now a major part of the golf club. **Gosta Bergkvist** and his committee have kept them all in order and led the TOPS to another successful year winning most matches. The regular events each month are growing in numbers and have become key events for all seniors in the past year. We have however had one tragedy this year when **Bill Greep** collapsed on the 13th and died a great loss to the Seniors and the club. The TOPS winter league under the leadership of **Brian Davis** won for the 5th year in a row and the team entered for the Seniors National competition made it to the

finals and lost to the winners a great result. One other person who has been a stalwart of the club and has worked hard in organising the TOPS matches for some years now is **Doug Johnson** and he has decided that because his trolley is finding it more difficult to get up the hill he is moving to Sandmartins, We would all like to thank him for his work and support over the years and wish him well.

Handicaps are a key component of golf giving everyone a fair chance to compete and I would like to thank **Neil Docker** and his committee in keeping us all on track even though for Brian and I who having played in many qualifiers this year Brian almost 40 still had our handicaps cut at the review. Neil has completed his third year and is handing on the baton this year, thanks for all you have done in this job.

Juniors in our club have grown substantially this year from single figures to almost 100, this has been due in no small part to **Gavin Grenville-Wood** and the academy, the success of which is the envy of many clubs across the region. The work put in by **Linda Warren** and her committee have ensured that many more young people have been properly introduced to this great sport and with the increasing number of juniors gaining CONGU handicaps is a positive boost to the club for the future. This has not come without its complications and will need our continuing understanding as the finer details are ironed out. Thanks again to **Linda** and her team for giving so generously of their time and expertise to this group of young men and women.

New members are as you are all aware the key to continued success of our club and integration has always been important to us at Oak Park. My thanks to **Gill Hawker** who has headed up this group and contacted each new person giving that personal touch to welcome them,

she has been ably assisted by people like **Matt Dunn** and others who willingly have helped people to gain their handicaps and join in with club activities.

I would like to thank **Brian Cannan** for the organisation and preparation of the prizes and vouchers as chore that he has conducted with efficiency and a smile. We have a great web site and computer set up at this club and we are fortunate to have the support and hard work of **Mark Cooper** and **Mike Wilkinson** who have kept it running and innovated new updates in a timely manner.

The ladies, what can I say about this section of the club? Firstly I would like to say thank you to **Lucy Church** for her support this year in so many ways and for the gentle reminders which have kept me on track at times. The Ladies have had their usual large number of competitions and events over this year and this combined with the mixed events which they manage has been both lively and successful I am sure that they will be celebrating this tomorrow night. Success in matches both at home and away have shown them to be a force to be reckoned with in golf and their matchplay exploits go from strength to strength. It has been a delight for me to play with and against them and would like to thank **Lucy** and her committee for their hard work and support over this year.

We are fortunate to have two pro's who have made a big impact on our club this last year and I am sure that more than one person has seen their game improve with either **Gavin Grenville- Wood** or **Paul Mayo's** teaching I believe that they have made a difference to the club and this will impact in the quality of our golf over time. Thank You.

I am now firmly convinced that we at Oak Park have one of the best Course managers in **Craig Earnshaw** and his team of green keepers and this has resulted in a course that many people have commented on very favourably. Craig has responded to all of our comments and made changes and improvements when possible and has also come up with some little touches of his own which have enhanced the course. Even with the recent weather we have a course to be proud of and will be even better in the years to come. We would all like to thank the green staff for their work.

One of the key roles of the club Captain is to be the spokesperson of the members with the current owners Crown Golf I was under no illusion that this would be an interesting part of my role this year. I have been pleased with the response of Richard to our continuing open and frank discussions each month as we have tried to ensure that the members opinions are truly represented at all times. I believe that we are fortunate in having **Richard Pilbury** as the manager here as his understanding of golf helps him appreciate some of the points we make. I also understand that he has bosses to answer to and although we have had some disagreements it has never come to fisticuffs. I would like to thank him and his staff for doing their best to get the funding required for some of the things that we need and I know that he will continue to fight for all that he can for our club in the melee of other managers from other clubs seeking the budgets to make Oak Park Golf Club a better place to play and socialize.

I am getting near the end. I would like to record a thank you to my wife **Rita** and my family who have supported me in this work this year, you may not see as much of them at the club but they have been very much my background support during the past two years.

This year's charity has been special to me as I and my wife have a lot of contact with Disability Challengers and I believe that once again Oak Park has shown by their support and generosity that they are a club who understand the needs of others and are willing to give generously to them. The amount of just over £21, 000 shows this is a club with a big heart. A big thank you to all who worked hard to make this happen, whether it was a bike ride, two's, sponsor of holes, Captains challenge or of donating things to the auction and even more having donated then bidding so much for them I and Lucy are deeply grateful for all that you have done. For the charity committee **Linda, Sheila, Kate, Helen, Brian, Lucy & Margaret** a big thank you. A special thank you to **Michael & Lucy Church** who pulled in so many favours to enhance the range of items for the auction and for finding the auctioneer. All of these things and many more have made this year a special year for me and I would like to offer my grateful thanks to you all for your support of me this year.

My final responsibility is to hand over to Brian. Brian has been the most supportive person I could have asked for, nothing is ever too much trouble and he has always been there with support and advice this year, so I have great pleasure in asking him to stand up and accept his Captain's jacket in the knowledge that Oak Park will have a very capable Captain this year. Ladies and gentlemen welcome your new Captain **Brian Matthews**.