

Speech for AGM

Mr Chairman, Mr Past Captain ladies & Gentlemen or should I say fellow golfers good evening.

Thank you very much Phil for your kind words of support and for all the advice given in the past year, as you said in your speech last year, the year has gone very quickly and suddenly this night has arrived. Thank you for presenting me with my blazer, one which I will be proud to wear on as many occasions as possible. I thought of getting a tartan one but good sense prevailed.

The many thoughts that pass through one's mind when first being asked to take on the role of vice captain and then Captain of this great club move from disbelief, through fear to the pride that this honour bestows. I have much to live up to as I look around at the many past captains here and the legacy they have left for others to follow. I have been very happy to watch and learn from Phil over the last year and it is with great pleasure that I would like to ask him to accept this gift as a token of the esteem and thanks from all of us for all the hard work over the past year. This gift is given with a wish that you will be able to enjoy it and as you use it to think with great pride on your successful year as Oak Park Captain.

Ladies & Gentlemen as I stand before you I am very conscious of the honour that you do me in accepting me as your Club Captain and as I put on this Jacket I accept that with it come the many responsibilities that are part of this role. I am sure that I like many others before me will make some mistakes and blunder into areas that may be controversial but I trust that you will accept my efforts in the knowledge that I will do everything to maintain the good name of Oak Park Golf Club Members Association at all times.

It is not many years ago that I joined this club as a bit of a rookie I was keen to join in and become part of the club, it was not long before I was recruited to committee life and have worked on Seniors, Comps Com, head of seniors, and in the last year Main Committee, Charity committee and Crown Golf Committee. This has given me an insight into the many people who give of their time and expertise to make this club function so well.

Tonight is the opportunity to lay out the plans for the year ahead and to point out highlights that we will be part of. In looking at the very busy diary that we run at Oak Park it is difficult to see where new additions can happen. Therefore as with many of the past Captains there will not be any major changes to the programme as we continue with our range of men's competitions both mid week and weekend, punctuated with the majors and the occasional fun competition. The ladies continue with a full programme and mixed programmes. The Seniors have increased their competitions and this area will be consolidated during this coming year.

The club continues to run the full range of summer & winter knockouts which I know many enjoy and these matches are carefully slotted into the busy weeks, eclectics and order of merits will continue.

Inter club matches continue with men's, TOPS, ladies & mixed matches dotted through the year given Oak Park the chance to demonstrate their strength against other clubs and at different venues. In addition to these we have men's teams entered in the Hampshire 7's and Mail on Sunday 5's and the ladies are entered in the Stoneham Cup in which they did so well last year.

I would like to expand on some of these points as I introduce you to the heads of the various committees. I am delighted to say that the

committee positions have been posted for the required time and all are ratified unopposed. It is indeed fortunate that the Club Captain is not expected to do all of the work but is supported by a goodly number of people who give willingly of their time and expertise to make the whole thing run so smoothly. I would like to ask them to stand up when introduced and you can all cheer, jeer or clap as appropriate.

Brian Matthews as our vice captain has shown in his time as Head of Comps Com how well organised he is and I am delighted he has chosen to join me in this year as I will not only benefit from his support but also his knowledge of the club workings which will be invaluable when I make the odd error along the way I could not ask for a more able person who is generous both with his time and advice. This left us with the key post of Head of Comps and I am pleased to announce **Cliff Simmons** in this position, a very busy section, so if you want someone to do a busy job find someone who is already busy, but conscious that he would need a lot of help I am greatly encouraged by the good number of people who have agreed to join that Committee to help Cliff. One of the important items that this group will be taking over is the two's competition, started by **Dave Newdick** and run very successfully by him for some years now, this has been added to the Comps Com to oversee, with the new comps book having space for the two's comp in it I am keen that this should have a higher profile and we are indebted to Cliff and his company **Synergy** who once again are supporting this with 5 dozen balls. If you don't know about this then please ask.

Neil Docker has agreed to continue as Head of Handicaps, this role has had some changes in the past year as they have had to adapt to yearly reviews of handicaps, supplementary scores and some changes that CONGU like to make along the way and Neil and his team work

hard to ensure that we have an even playing field for all of the competitions run by the club and a means of having a valid certificate for all who wish to play elsewhere.

The social side of Oak Park has always been good and we are fortunate to have **Tracey Hart** and his team to run this, I am always amazed at the quality of the advertising and the work that goes into each of the events that are run by the Social Committee if you haven't made it to a club night yet then I would strongly recommend that you come to one or indeed all as the nights are always well organized and a lot of fun, we will be running some of the popular ones again like Race Night and all of the larger functions have that special touch that the Social team bring to it so I look forward to more of the same.

The Senior's section has a special place in my affection as I have been very much part of this since joining Oak Park and to have **Gosta Bergkvist** as Head of Seniors is both a joy and a comfort as I know he will perform this well. The TOPS have started already with a win under their belts and will be going all out in the 18 or so matches to maintain the high level of match play that they are well known for. It is also the intention of the Seniors to expand some of their regular competitions over this next year as we all get older this section grows and provides a good number of competitions both competitive and fun for us to enjoy.

The Ladies section continues to grow and this vibrant group covers the mixed events also and I am very pleased to have **Lucy Church** as Lady Captain to head this up. This section has a very busy programme both for competitions and matches and with their committee they will make this a welcoming place for all lady members. I have had the pleasure of working alongside Lucy in the

last year and am sure that this will continue as we tackle all the challenges that this year presents.

New members to any club presents a challenge and this year I am pleased to have **Gill Hawker** join the main committee to represent this section. I am sure that her organizational skills and pleasant manner will help those people who join us to feel part of this club quickly.

The grass roots of any Golf club is the Juniors and for the last year this has had limited support. I am very pleased to see **Linda Warren** step back up to the plate to take on the role of Head of Juniors. I know her heart has always been in encouraging youngsters to take up golf but her renewed enthusiasm has been fuelled by the coming of **Gavin** who is tackling the whole area of junior play and the setting up of the Academy with the new tees for juniors on the village should make a huge impact on young people not only to play golf but to join in the Oak Park club atmosphere.

Finances are an important part of any golf club and we have heard the final report by **Ian Wilson** on this a job well done. This year our new treasurer is **Roger White**, he has been in place now since the beginning of the year and is well settled into the vagaries of OPGCMA and I am delighted at the conscientious way that he is dealing with this very important part of the club.

These are the members of the main committee a veritable group of worthies who I know will help to ensure that we have a very healthy club in 2009.

I would like to make mention of a few others who beaver behind the scenes for the benefit of the members and should be recognized for their efforts. We are very fortunate in having a great web site which I know is the envy of many others clubs and gives us all a

means of sharing thoughts and information with even some funnies from DV. The work that has gone into this and continues to go into it each week to keep it up to date is due to two people who even with busy jobs manage to keep it relevant. I would like to say thank you and keep up the good work to **Mark Cooper & Mike Wilkinson**. One of the other jobs that goes on behind the scenes is sorting out the prizes, writing the vouchers and various other jobs has been done so well by **Roy Poynter** for the last three years this job has now been passed over the **Brian Cannan** and I am very grateful for his willingness to take this one on.

Being part of the Crown Golf group gives us benefits and part my role is to liaise with the manager here at Oak Park and to ensure that we are represented in their thinking and plans. I have been very encouraged with the relationship that we have with **Richard** and his staff and because he is a golfer he has that thinking firmly in his mind in our discussions. The growing relationship with all of the staff was further improved with the annual staff V Committee match where in case you hadn't heard we won. We have a great ground staff and I intend to work closely with **Craig** to the benefit of the members and the course. The monthly meeting with Crown Golf will continue as will course walks where our open and frank discussions will take place to reach mutual benefits where possible. I have been very pleased with our new Pro Gavin who has, in the short time here, raised the profile of a local pro to where it should be and is willing to get involved with the membership much more than the previous incumbent. This can only be of benefit to the club.

Now to the chosen charity for my year as Captain, and I am delighted that Lucy has agreed to join me in this years charity. We at Oak Park have become a bit of a legend in charity terms and following Allan & Angie, Phil & Alyson is not going to be easy. The

charity I have chosen is a very small and local charity. Disability Challengers. They have two sites one in Guildford and the other site is what used to be East Street School in Farnham. Their aim is to provide opportunities for children with disabilities to improve their social life. For many of us we joined and enjoyed clubs of varying types cubs, scouts, girl guides football, cricket, rugby etc. And in those we had the opportunity to meet with like minded people who could participate in activities and gain much from the social interaction that these bring. For children with a disability this is not possible as many are bussed or taxied to and from special schools and do not have that chance to mix. Disability Challengers are set up to do this and provide after school activities and Saturday clubs which with the volunteers give those special children a chance to do things that able bodied children enjoy. They also take the children on trips and weekends away. One of the key things that this charity provide is respite for the parents from often very demanding children and we who have children will know how nice it is to have a break from our children at times. This is a fairly small local charity and our efforts will have an impact which we will be able to see, our intention is to look at a project that could be named after our club. As in the past we will be setting up a Charity Committee and have had some volunteers already, but if you would like to help then please talk to Lucy or I. There are some leaflets here and there is a web site that you can look at for more detail. Sue Pressey will be with us at our first club night in April to give us more details.

There will be a Captains bunker for you all to visit and it is my intention to make a special effort with the Captains challenge for this year. I am pleased to say there will be lots of opportunities to challenge the Captain and Gavin has agreed to be part of this. I will put up a list of possible dates for these challenges. You can a)

Challenge the Captain and the pro, b) challenge the Captain and the vice Captain, c) Challenge the Captain and the Ladies Captain, d) Challenge the Lady Captain and the lady vice Captain. So there are no excuses for not having a chance to pit your skills against any of these but also to put together a score to beat the other challengers and get the Coker trophy and your names on the board. Plus you will be giving to the charity in a very enjoyable way. Again I am indebted to Gavin who has agreed to raffle some of his excellent lessons on some club nights, this I know will benefit not just the charity but also people's golf.

I trust that I have managed to cover all the bases during this speech and to enthuse you all about the year ahead. We all joined this club to play golf but there is so much more to Oak Park Golf club than golf and we will all get more out of it the more we participate in all aspects of the club. I look forward to seeing and talking with you all over the year, to playing golf with you and to enjoying your company at all of the various functions. I am delighted at the large number of people who will be joining us on Saturday to watch the outgoing Captains perform their final duties at the put out and to watch me attempt to hit a little white ball as far and as straight as I can.

Thank you for your confidence in me and your continued support.