

Good evening Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

Well the year has come and gone and it all seems like only yesterday that I was sitting where Norm is now, waiting for Allen to move aside and for my turn to begin. I must say that the twelve months have been very much as I expected with ups and downs, trials and tribulations but overall an exciting experience which I am proud to have been offered and recommend to each and every one of you.

I think it is only fitting that I now acknowledge the people who have supported me in my Captaincy year and mention a few of the highlights.

Let's start with the social side of things. Where would we be without our Social Committee? In a fairly bland place I think, with only golfing events to keep the membership together. I know that would sound ideal to some of our members but I also know it would soon lose its appeal. So congratulations to Tracey Hart and all of his committee who have worked so hard as a team to invigorate our social activities. The Club Nights have had something different for every evening, not an easy feat but certainly accomplished with aplomb.

While talking with other members in the Crown Golf stable of clubs I have come to realise that we have something fairly unique with our regular club nights and I hope we all continue to support these going forward, especially those with prizes to collect. My formal evenings were a great success with a full house present for the Drive-In Dinner Dance through to the Christmas Dinner Dance which for me was one of the most enjoyable evenings that I have experienced at the club with good food and continuous music delivered by the DJ. I congratulate Tracey and his team for the

work done in my year and thank them on behalf of the membership.

Over to Brian Matthews and his team on the Competitions Committee which has once again overseen and administered the large number of competitions we have here at Oak Park very efficiently. It is a perpetual motion committee with never any down time. Like all of us involved with the committees it is done on a volunteer basis, often meaning giving up family time to benefit other members. We have moved into the 21st century with the new computer system and despite a few teething problems both front and back of screen it has now become the norm within the club.

Our other IT component is the member's website which has continued on from strength to strength since its beginnings in 2003 and has become a true focal point of the club. The visitor clock is approaching 230,000 which goes to show just how important it is to us. I am certain that very few clubs in this country would have anything approaching it and so it amazes me when people complain that the result of the competition played a few days earlier has not yet been posted. We must remember all the work is done by volunteers who have jobs and families to consider. Please appreciate it for what it is and use it properly especially the discuss page. My thanks go to Mike Wilkinson and Mark Cooper for all of their work.

The men's inter club matches were well supported by a regular group of players who were well organised by Trevor Bracken. After a slow start to our programme we turned things around to finish with an 8.5 to 2.5 win/loss record, we won all of our home matches and stole half a point from the jaws of defeat away at

Milford with the final three pairings all winning to halve our last match of the year 3 all. Thanks to all those who played particularly to those of you who were ever present. And good luck to next years team especially away to Old Thorns.

Now no talk of Oak Park teams in 2008 would be complete without mention of the Ladies Stoneham Cup Team which made it out of the round robin section and through to the finals day for the very first time in our clubs history. Losing gamely to the eventual winners but providing the club with one of the highlights of the year, many congratulations to every lady who played in the team. The good news is that they have already started training for this year's competition under the tutelage of Gavin; my best wishes go to the team for another great year.

Speaking of Gavin I must congratulate Crown Golf for its initiative in introducing the Crown Academy's; I believe we have been very fortunate to have Gavin come in as our teaching pro. I know from first hand experience that his lessons are well worth the investment and with Gavin we have an enthusiastic and dynamic addition to the club. His work with the juniors, not only within our club but throughout the region, with his involvement with local schools will be great for the future growth of this club; it is also good to see a newly formed Juniors Committee back in action for the coming year.

Moving from embryonic golfers to more experienced ones I can report another successful year of seniors' golf with the recent retention of the Winter League. Well led by John Scott throughout the year it is a section which due to demographics and advances in medicine will I am sure go from strength to strength. Not only successful in interclub competitions I know this section will be

further vitalised with new blood coming into the committee next year to further promote this important part of our club.

Another team performing very efficiently this past year has been our Handicaps Committee. This understated yet vital cog in the engine of any golf club has a fairly unglamorous role to play but we would be lost without it. Neil Dockar and his team have steered us through an ever increasing amount of new regulations coming down from both the EGU and CONGU, this has created a bigger workload especially the annual reviews. Neil also produced our new Competitions Book which saved the club close to £150. Thanks to you and your team Neil.

The Ladies Section has been well organised and headed by my club partner this year. Everyone knows what a great job Alyson has done as Ladies Captain and I thank her sincerely for her support these past twelve months. I could not have wished for a better partner. The ladies have managed their extensive list of competitions as well as running the Mixed and at the same time keeping their own handicaps in fine order. Keep up the good work ladies and very best wishes to Lucy Church for the year ahead.

Now Jon Pope has often been the first to offer his hand to welcome new members into our midst and he has continued at the helm of the New Members committee this past year. Fully deserving of a well earned rest Jon is stepping down from committee duties but I have no doubt he will be involved again sooner rather than later. Thanks Jon for your support throughout my year and enjoy your break.

My gratitude also goes to Ian Wilson for his work as Treasurer over the past three years and I know my thanks will be endorsed by each Club Captain he has served under.

Another stalwart of our club is stepping down from his recent role; Roy Poynter has been invaluable to me this past year, he has organising the men's prize voucher allocation and trophy ordering. Thank you very much Roy, for all your help and support.

We have had a new face at the helm for Crown Golf this year and I have enjoyed my time working with Richard Pilbury and his team both inside the clubhouse and out on the course. While not always agreeing on every issue I feel Richard has generally tried to keep the golfing side of things to the fore when making decisions which have financial consequence for his employer. A difficult job especially in these less than buoyant times and I expect the committee and he will continue to butt heads on issues in the coming year. I believe we are also very fortunate to have Craig Earnshaw as our course manager. His dedication, enthusiasm and knowledge have and will keep our course on an upward curve for years to come I hope.

I think the club overall is in a good state, of course each and every one of us here tonight will have a different view on that and some may even strongly disagree. But taking a balanced view I believe Oak Park, through its proprietor and the members association, strive to give both value for money and opportunity for all members to participate fully in the activities open to them.

The charity for this year has been an undoubted success with a massive effort from our more active members which has left Alyson and myself feeling humbled by all the goodwill shown. The fact that our efforts will mean people less well off than ourselves will benefit should make us all very proud. I will not repeat my full message of thanks here tonight as most of you have heard it at least once already but sincere thanks again on behalf of Alyson and me to everyone who has contributed in some way to the

£24,500 pounds raised. We even got a mention and a photo in the latest Farnham Herald, showing again what a good community club Oak Park is.

Now it is time to hand over the reins to our new Club Captain, Norm Adam. I know he has been waiting for this moment so that he can get his teeth into the job ahead. In Norm we have an enthusiastic and dedicated Oak Park member who will enjoy the challenges ahead as well as making us all proud. I wish him and his committee all the best for the coming year and hope he has as much fun as I have had. So for my final duty as Club Captain it gives me great pleasure to present Norm with his Captain's blazer.

Good luck and thank you all.