

SILLOTH ON SOLWAY GOLF CLUB NEWSLETTER

September 2011 - Issue 62

CAPTAIN'S REPORT



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As I come to write this report it comes at the end of a busy spell of involvement on a number of fronts. Computer installation, and green staff running without Mick who had a serious accident with the greens mower – seriously injuring his shoulder, he is expected back mid August after a 2½ months lay off.

Talking of greens, most of you will be aware that we had a visit from the agronomist who was glowing in his report of the whole course.

The recruitment drive for ladies has proved worthwhile with a minimum of 8 new ladies overall. The sceptics have been proved wrong in that we have enrolled similar numbers to other years regardless of the present financial environment.

The marketing committee have a number of incentives in the pot at the moment – as always being aware that opportunities must not be missed.

That brings me to next year's EGU Amateur Championship, which someone else in this issue will no doubt highlight. However, it is so important to us as being the most prestigious event we could expect to host, although that week we do not make a great deal. Long term if we sell ourselves well it will prove to be a good investment.

We successfully hosted the Northern EU Seniors Championship in July. Most of our Club Open Competitions have now taken place, virtually all oversubscribed (all categories). The Heart Foundation – Anniversary Year sadly had to be abandoned at 9.00 a.m. due to the greens being flooded. All of Davina's hard work invane – her writing on the scoreboard is a work of art!! The event has been re-arranged for the 21st September, let us hope the sun shines.

The Captain's Day is now over, it had me concerned more than usual in trying to satisfy the membership and accommodate 18 sponsors who together donated in the region of £3,000. Some of them potential members. All profits will go the Air Ambulance & Life Education. A special thank you goes to Davina, Barbara Hand and Celia. Davina for being on duty from 8.30 in the morning and Barbara & Celia for running half way house. Barbara was there until after the last Juniors had gone through. Jonathan kindly offered to run the Putting Competition which was much appreciated.

Late cancellations sadly created complications for Ray but he bravely soldiered on. It is unfortunate that some members will not come out of their comfort zone for 1 week. The prizegiving was well supported by Juniors, Ladies & Men. The separate competition for sponsors and hosts was presented in the afternoon after they had refreshments etc.

I never fail to be impressed, proud and flattered at the generous praise given to our Club by visitors .

I would go out of my way to be sure they have enjoyed their time with us, without them, our membership would get an awful shock.

It can be quite frustrating when you have been used to making decisions in business and then having to work in our Committe. Change comes from chewing over small decisions after what seems to be 50 times over! In some cases that is good – but not always.

John Hill is due to retire at the end of September, and we all wish him a long and happy retirement. More information will follow in due course.

Thank you all in the meantime. *Mike Chester, Captain*

LADIES SECTION

Late spring and early summer is always a busy time in the Golfing Calendar with interclub matches knockout matches and competitions which have been very well supported by the ladies. The weather wasn't kind to us on many occasions rain rain and more rain accompanied with strong winds the ladies battled on always coming into the Clubhouse with a smile it could have been relief they were in.

LADY CAPTAINS DAY ON JUNE 11TH

Thank you all for your support. Everyone turned up and played despite the rain and wind.

Lynn Little was the winner.

LADIES OPEN SINGLES

54 Ladies took part in the competition - dare I say anything about the weather it wasn't good.

The Cecil Leitch Trophy was won by Hannah Smith with a nett 73 five shots clear from the rest of the field. Hannah also won this same trophy in 2009. Hannah's handicap was 12 at the beginning of the season and she is now down to 7 handicap - congratulations a great achievement.

Our interclub matches are now completed - they are played between April and August and this is the first year we have been in all leagues.

We entered three teams Silver A and B and Cecil Leitch
Silver A Results were 4 Wins and Lost 4

Wins Eden (h) Kirkby Lonsdale (h), Workington (h), and Penrith (h). Lost Eden (a), Kirkby Lonsdale (a), Penrith (h) and Workington (a).

Silver B Results were 3 Wins 3 Halved and Lost 2

Wins Barrow (h), Ulverston (h), Carus Green (h). Lost Ulverston (a), Carus Green (a). Halved Cockermonth (h) and (a) and Barrow (a).

Cecil Leitch Results were 3 Wins, 1 Halved, Lost 2

Wins Carus Green (h), Eden (h), and Maryport (h). Lost Eden (a), Maryport (a). Halved Carus Green (a).

We will get the results shortly and the two winning teams go up a league and two with the least points go down.

Open Greensomes on August 6th with the winners from Whitehaven Golf Club, Megan Smart, and Megan Smith with 63 nett, receiving the Solway Firth Trophy. 54 Couples entered. These competitions don't just happen a lot of work goes on preparing for these events-thank you to all involved.

In July and August we organised four taster sessions to encourage new lady members to join the club as over the past few years our numbers have declined.

Jonathan our professional had lessons on the practice ground and the committee have taken several ladies out on the course. As an added incentive the joining fee was dropped for the month of August and so far we have had 7 ladies join.

Open Team event is early September and 42 teams of four have entered and there is a waiting list.

Its nearly the end of the season and the nights are drawing in but the sun is still shining and we may have an Indian Summer. *Anne Proudlock, Ladies' Captain*

MEN'S HANDICAP & COMPETITIONS REPORT

We're almost at an end to the seasons trophy competitions; not an excellent summer for the weather but it has suited the course, and I've never seen the heather look so nice and I should know because I have seen it close up on several occasions.

There have been some notable winners this year. Speaking of highlights,

Peter Cusack has had an excellent year winning two trophy competitions plus two Tuesday competitions and he was also a winner in the Open Four Man Team competition. His handicap has come crashing down four shots to 9.

Neil Hillier has also won two competitions. The Club Championship 36 hole Qualifying competition, both net and gross, and shortly afterwards he won the Steele Trophy.

Geoff Birch won the Whitelaw Trophy with a remarkable net 61 off 10 handicap resulting with a 2 shot reduction.

The new mid week Tuesday competitions have had a steady amount of players each week and thanks are due to Jonathan for running them. We will review them for

next year but the day is likely to change as Tuesday is a day when the green staff tend to do major work on the course and it is difficult when a competition is in progress.

Again the open competitions have been well supported and as a rule the weather has not been too bad. Silloth winners - John Longcake won the 36 hole Scratch with a gross 150. **K Dowling & J Mitchell** in the Rotary competition and Silloth winners in the 4 man Team event were **Ian Blair, Peter Cusack, Kevin Watson** and **Paul Tillisch**.

The new Touch Screen has been installed for recording competition scores and has made my life easier so far.

I had quite a few weeks last year entering cards when the old system had not been working and on a Sunday night the last thing you want to do is enter up to 140 cards. Some patience may be needed as it will be used by men, ladies and juniors some weeks. The new system will also allow us to do more things; using the touch screen or the internet for weekend tee-times and for opens, something for the committee to think about.

David Hurst, Competitions and Handicap Secretary

SANDPIPERS

Since opening membership at the end of last year, things are settling down to normal, with an increase in membership, but, thankfully, not a significant increase in players attending our Tuesday and Thursday games. We extend a warm welcome to the new recruits, who all appear to be integrating well and enjoying the hospitality and friendship that the Sandpipers have to offer.



Joe Campbell is to be congratulated for his success in organising our inter-club games where we have been enjoying more wins than defeats, and as always they are oversubscribed, emphasising their popularity.

The Sandpipers have suffered the summer weather swings quite well, but a "situation" arose due to diabolical weather whilst we were playing one of our qualifying competitions.

We chose to cancel the competition, but, so as not to show disregard for Club procedures which strictly did not allow this to be done, with help from Andrew Edwards and David Hurst, we attempted to justify our actions.

The outcome was that if there is a lack of adequate facility to quickly and totally communicate with players on the course, the rules of golf can be interpreted to in fact allow a retrospective cancellation or suspension of play to be made. I understand that in view of the findings on the subject, the Club may re-examine their procedures to ensure best advantage is being taken of the flexibility allowed to both cancel and suspend play in extreme weather conditions.

Unfortunately we heard recently of the death of one of our old members Frankie Tough. Frankie was a well respected member of the Club as well as the Sandpipers, and I am sure this news will sadden all who knew him.

All of the 141 entrants in our Seniors Open were delighted to find not only the course in superb condition, but the weather was as perfect as it is possible to be at Silloth.

Surprisingly, this was not reflected in the scoring, which, apart from a handful on or around 40 points, was quite average. The highest scoring Sandpiper, and winner of the George Wright Trophy was Jim Gilfillan, made all the more notable as he had to go to hospital for minor surgery before confirming he was able to play.

The George Wright is proving a popular addition to our trophies, with the winner being given an extra £50 which must be donated to a charity of his choice.

We thank the Captain for his support and presentation of the prizes, and special mention must go to Trevor Wilson, who took on the brunt of the organisational responsibility, for doing a thorough, competent and efficient job. He was ably assisted and encouraged in the task by David Hurst, Bob Hetherington, John Tudor and John Kennedy.

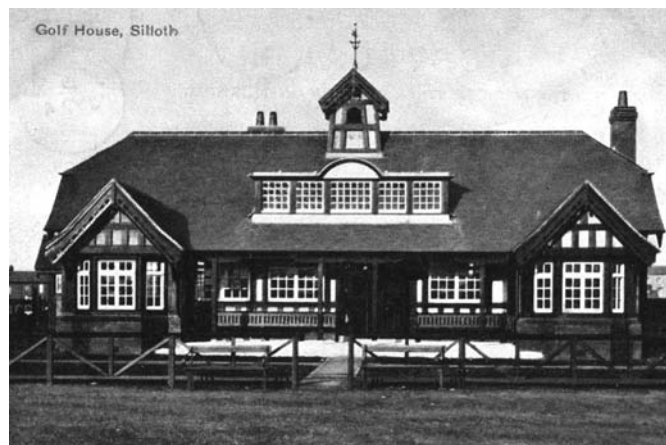
Finally can we pass on our best wishes to John Hill in his retirement, and thank him for his help and consideration, and trust Alan will enjoy an equally successful period as Club Secretary.

Geoff Waite

WHAT PRICE A POSTCARD

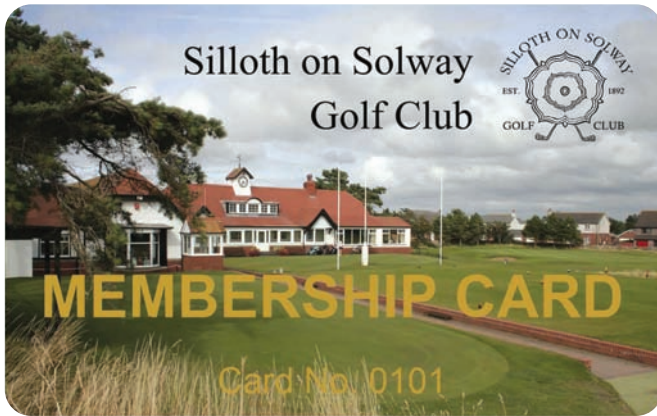
Silloth member David Low is a collector of golf memorabilia, specialising in particular in postcards. David has some thirty vintage cards of the clubhouse and course and was recently excited to find on Ebay a sepia card of two golfers, and their young caddys, driving from the 5th tee with the pier in the background. The card would be pre. WW1 in date. Despite being away on holiday when the card was due to expire David was able to use the " auction stealer " Hammersnipe

instructing them to bid on his behalf seconds before expiry. To ensure that he would win the auction David plucked the figure of £110 from the air and instructed Hammersnipe accordingly. Returning from holiday a week later David checked his emails and found the dreaded words " you have been outbid on Silloth postcard "The card had sold for £112. Normally a £30 card who would pay so much for a piece of Silloth golfing history ? David would love to know.



These are part of David's postcard collection, but not the one referred to.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS



Please take time to read this short article. It starts to explain some changes that will affect most of us, either in the bar or in the booking of tee-times for both competitive and social golf.

In July the Club replaced its old office computers with an up-to-date network of new PCs to improve the capability of its systems and to allow the introduction of some new facilities. These are important to help us keep pace with the methods now adopted by many leading golf clubs and to provide an improved service to both members and visitors.

So what are these new facilities ?

BAR PRICES !

The Club will introduce dual pricing for drinks at the bar in the very near future. Those with membership cards, which will have to be produced at the bar, will be charged at the lower price. So it is important that we all pay close attention to the letter which will accompany the issue of cards in late September! The letter will explain exactly how the card system will operate. The computerised till to manage this system has already been installed. It has a swipe card reader which will identify members to the system and enable prices to be calculated automatically.

Please note that the card is NOT similar to a credit or

debit card and it holds no information other than a number which will enable the computer system to identify you as a member; not even your name will be recorded on the card.

TEE-TIMES

On-line booking of tee-times will be coming shortly. It will soon be possible to book tee-times either from the club's computer in the foyer or from home via the internet. An increasing number of golfers book their trips in this way and it is important that Silloth is also able to offer this facility. Visitors' payments will also be made online.

Many members, particularly those who live a considerable distance from the clubhouse, will also welcome the chance to book their golf online, both for competitions and for social golf.

TOUCH SCREEN TERMINAL

We will also be able to use our membership cards when using the touch-screen terminal in the foyer. We are getting used to scrolling through the membership list to enter our scores, etc at the moment but once we have our membership cards they can be "swiped" at the terminal to speed up the process.

The prospect of vastly reducing, or even eliminating, the paperwork associated with the administration of club and open competitions is to be greatly welcomed, particularly by our hard-working competitions organisers in all sections of the club.

WEBSITE

To access the online facilities which will be available, and to bring it up to date, the necessary changes are currently being made to the Club's website.

The changes outlined above are considerable but successful implementation will mean that the club can offer much improved service to members and to our much valued visitors. As usual, your queries and suggestions are welcome.

Andrew Edwards

JUNIOR REPORT

Our Junior Team put up an excellent showing throughout the season in attempting to defend their County Championship Title. Winning 8 out there 10 league matches we finished runner's up in the North West League just missing out on a place in this year's final's. It has been another encouraging season with all of our current crop of players still available to play next season, and with several new faces coming through and competing for places our Junior Squad has real strength in depth.

All our Junior Squad would like to thank Vice Captain Mike Cowan for kindly sponsoring new t-shirts for this season's campaign, your support is much appreciated.

Mark Smith



Junior Team Members L-R, Oliver Neilly, Luke Graham, Michael Martin, Andy Hill, Hannah Smith and Brandon Hodgson.

Missing from photo – Ryan Murphy, Coner Merone and Owen Dowie.

HISTORY OF SILLOTH GOLF CLUB – SWANS

Cob (Joseph) and Pen (Mary) arrived on the pond (gravy) late December 2009. In the early weeks they built a large nest and in the early days of May 2010 eggs were laid taking 35-38 days to hatch.

6 young cygnets were first seen Friday June 11. Mary, Joseph and the Super Six stayed until Sunday June 27 when they wandered off into the Solway Firth. No one seemed to know which direction they went. Possibly on to the marsh or maybe the other way to Mawbray area? They were never seen again in 2010.

Thursday 10 February 2011 Mary and Joseph arrived back with one other young swan. On Sunday February 13 only the Cob and Pen remained. The young swan was either dismissed or went off to richer pastures to seek a mate. Once again after building a large nest eggs were laid and six chicks were first seen on Friday June 3. On Sunday June 12 Mary and Joseph and the second super six were seen on the sea opposite the funfair drifting towards the West Beach, alas only 5 chicks, hence the Super Six became Five Alive!

At 5pm Sunday June 19 they were seen going into the sea opposite the Convalescent Home, and were spotted drifting past Beckfoot towards Mawbray. No one is sure where they are at present.

Report by Joe Crow 24 June 2011. Thanks to Bob Whitson for photographs

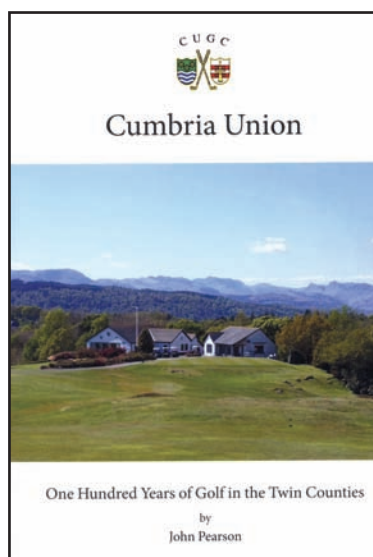
Editors comment. One of the most interesting moments on the course this year, five members were on the practice area when from behind the green Mary and Joseph appeared with their 6 cygnets all in perfect formation, they did a survey of the balls on the green but none were to their liking before wandering gracefully across towards the Convalescent Home. Practice was held up for 20 minutes but we didn't care.



CUMBRIA UNION

2010 marked the centenary of the Cumbria Union of Golf Clubs – first established at a meeting in the George Hotel, Penrith, with nine founder clubs. Carlisle and Silloth GC, as it was then termed, was always an important and influential member of the Union, providing its first Chairman of Council and Treasurer in AH Collingwood and WP Gibbings respectively. Silloth was the venue for the first-ever Counties Championship, won by Charles Pennington of Kendal on 1910. It also hosted the first county match, against Lancashire, at the conclusion of the County Meeting.

Silloth was slow to provide playing strength into the county side and it was not until after the First World War that we had our first

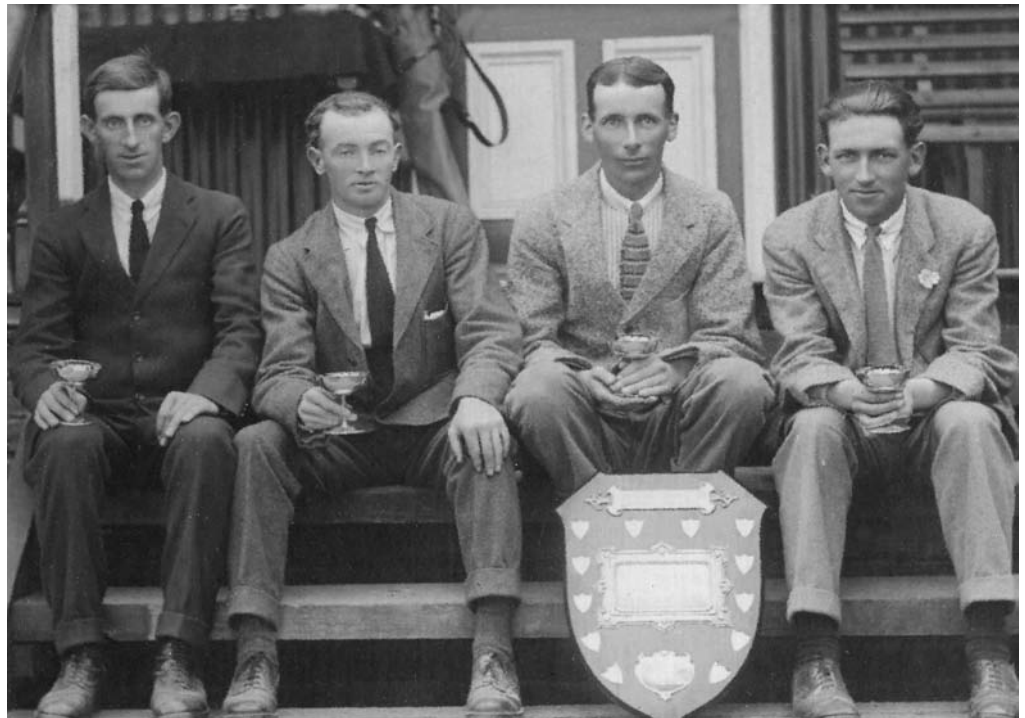


champion – Tommy Cape, a local working man, who won over his home course in 1921. Tom was a tall slim man who was content to play with a modest seven clubs in his smooth-soled day shoes. He had a running dispute with the Club over his insistence on selling balls that he had found on the course to club members, and setting himself up as an unofficial coach, in direct opposition to the Club professional. Ernest Swan was the next winner, at Kendal in 1922. Ernie was a long-serving member of the county side, later became joint Hon Sec of the Club, to be succeeded this year on the retirement of John Hill, by his grandson, Alan Oliver. The third member of the twenties triumvirate from Silloth was

Bob Lomas, who won over his home course in 1929. We are grateful to Bob's family for provision of the historic 1922 photograph below of the Carlisle and Silloth team on the steps of the Kendal GC clubhouse after the first of the Club's many wins in the county team championship. The four team members later caught the train back to Silloth Station, where they were met by a noisy crowd and the town band, who accompanied them the short distance back to the clubhouse for liquid celebrations.

Silloth's big championship contribution continued into the 1930s, initially with Jim Brough, full-back for England at both rugby codes, at a stormy Ulverston in 1934. Then the legendary Alf Greive, who won three on the trot from 1935 to win the Parker Trophy outright. Alf's family generously donated the trophy to the Club soon after his death in 1991, where it is now displayed prominently in the cabinet next to the bar.

The great Silloth champions after World War II were Fred Todd, who won a record five successive titles from 1947, and Bill Longcake, with five wins in the '50s and '60s. Barry Carr had two wins in the 1960s, while John Longcake's six wins spanned three decades from the 1980s. Gary Winter won three successive titles from 1989;



Tommy Cape (1922 Individual champion), C(harles?) Bennett, Ernest Swan (1922 Champion) and Bob Lomas (1929 Champion).

our course manager, Brian Story won in 1994; and John Carr completed the list as Millennium Champion here at Silloth in 2000.

The Cumbria Union of Golf Clubs has just published its centenary history, written by Silloth member, John Pearson. The highly-readable 100 or so pages are filled with records and historic photographs, many supplied from Club archives and the scrapbooks of former Silloth champions. Alan Oliver has a few copies in the office, at a price of £10 for any members who may be interested.

SOCIAL

Four social golfing competitions have so far been held this year with the final one on August Bank Holiday Monday. An average of between 30 and 36 players take part in these events and thanks are extended to these golfers who come along and support the competitions. If you have not yet taken part in one of these socials, please come along next year and give it a go - good time to meet other members and have some fun. Unfortunately, St. Patrick's Evening was cancelled this year but hopefully will take place in 2012.

The Annual Summer BBQ was held on the evening of 9th July with a social golf competition taking place in the afternoon. The BBQ was well attended with approx 100 people and the entertainment was provided by John Christie, a vocalist. Thanks to David and Octavia for the excellent food on offer.

The winter quizzes will start on Sunday 30th October at 8.00 p.m. so look forward to seeing you there.

There will be a Xmas Social Evening on Saturday 3rd December with Charlie, a local DJ providing the entertainment for the evening. All members are invited to come along and enjoy this Social Evening.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, Jodie Leigh will be singing in the clubhouse on New Year's Eve.

Further information regarding any of the above will be shown on the Social noticeboard in the foyer of the clubhouse in due course. Look forward to seeing some new faces this coming winter and hope the weather is not as bad as the last one!

Sandra Bradley, Social Chairperson

COURSE MATTERS

The last month has been very busy for the greenstaff covering holidays and staff sickness. Grass growth has been strong so it has been difficult keeping up with general course mowing and presentation. This is taking its toll on our ageing machinery fleet and there is a fair amount of repair work outstanding on machinery.

It is pleasing to report that Mick Wildman has returned to work following his serious accident in May and it is hoped that he can make a full recovery.

Work is underway planning the winter programme of work and when complete will be posted on the notice board.

An evening was arranged for members to view the greens workshops on the 24th August, unfortunately there was no interest shown. If you can gather a group of 6-15 people who would be interested then give me a call on 016973 32771 or see Alan in the office. The idea

is to give you an overview of the work carried out by the greenstaff and how the machinery fleet is managed.

To continue the progress made in recent years on increasing the bent grass content of the greens they will be over-seeded in early September. This is going to be difficult because it is a busy time for visitors. The greens will be verti-cut to 2mm, mini-tined, seaweed applied, over-seeded and then top-dressed. They will then be sprayed with a preventative fungicide. Every effort will be made to minimise the disturbance to the surfaces and your game but your patience is requested.

Fairways will also be over-seeded during early September. If time allows weaker areas will be top-dressed and fertiliser applied.

Tees will be hollow tined with 13mm tines and top-dressed during late September/early October.

Brian Story, Course Manager

ANNUAL AGRONOMY REPORT STRI 28TH JUNE 2011

Machinery Replacement

Given the improvements that have been generated to the course over the last few years, it is vitally important that Brian Story and his greenkeeping team have the right equipment to maintain the course and improve it further. The range of equipment available is comprehensive but over the last 3 or 4 years the replacement cycle which is well established has fallen behind. All golf clubs are struggling in the current economic climate but it is important that the club does all that it can to ensure that the equipment that is used on the course is up to date and efficient. If items are not replaced they will become aged, more prone to leaks etc and will suffer more down time and greater repair costs. At the same time, the problem of replacement does not go away and at some point purchases will have to be made. It is better to do this on a phased basis rather than facing a significant capital sum at a later date.

Conclusions

For many years Silloth has been regarded as a golfing gem and a fantastic test of links golf. There is no doubt that it is a great golf course. It occupies a spectacular location, offers a superb playing environment and now a set of greens to match. It has been a long journey and has taken a lot of heartache and effort to bring the greens to the current standard, but it has all been very worthwhile and the club now has a set of greens commensurate with the stature of the course. Now is not the time to be complacent and it is absolutely vital that the key inputs continue to be made and that the greenkeeping team and the committee that supports them are given the support to make further improvements. This is an agronomic success story, but it does not end here.

Alaistair Beggs, Northern Area Manager

Agronomist to the R&A Championship Committee, STRI Ltd

ETIQUETTE

R&A RULES OF GOLF PAGE 26

There are over 200 pages in the Rules of Golf and etiquette covers 4 pages, which is mainly commonsense but I would like to highlight the main points .

PACE OF PLAY

Play at a good pace and keep up with the group in front. If the group loses a clear hole and it is delaying the group behind, it should invite the group behind to play through.

CARE OF THE COURSE

Bunkers Before leaving a bunker players should carefully rake all footprints.

Repair of Divots, Ball Marks. Players should carefully

repair any divot holes, and pitch marks on the green even though it may have been made by another player.

(recently I repaired 6 pitch marks on one green).

These items are highlighted because they are what all players should know, and if everybody observed them we would all enjoy our golf even more.

Correct Method

- 1 Discard the loose piece of turf taken out by the ball.
- 2 Insert the pitchmark repairer tool just outside of the back of the pitchmark.
- 3 Lever the turf towards the centre of the pitchmark.
- 4 Repeat this motion from all sides of the pitchmark.
- 5 Gently tap the repaired area with your putter.
This action stretches undamaged turf over the pitchmark, providing instant recovery.



EDITORS COMMENTS

A good year so far with the course in superb condition and the catering of a very high standard has brought in excellent comments from satisfied visitors and members. A few are detailed below and are full of praise. In particular the Agronomist's report shows that in the short and long term the course is moving in the right direction. We should all be very proud of our excellent course.

2012 30th July-4th August Silloth hosts the prestigious English Amateur Championship and the committee are well on the way with the planning and discussion with EGU. Members will be asked for their help, ball spotting etc and sand patching on the course, a great challenge to all of us to ensure the EGU are delighted with the course and the running of the tournament.

A surprising statistic from the Secretary's Office is how few members have given the club their email address. For the club to keep you fully informed and indeed for you to benefit from up to date news it is certainly worthwhile contacting the office with your email address office@sillothgolfclub.co.uk.

I hope you all enjoy reading our first colour newsletter.

Peter Dransfield Editor



**ENGLISH
GOLF UNION**



COMPLIMENTS

I am just writing to thank you and your team for another enjoyable visit to play Silloth Golf Course today.

Particular thanks to the greens staff for presenting the course in great condition yet again. We look forward to our visit next year.

Andy North, Calder Elite Golf Society. 29th July 2011

I used to live and work in Silloth and was a member from about 1973 to 1977.

I have returned to play the course on two occasions plus the last two days in the Northern Counties Seniors Championship.

Silloth has always been one of my favourite golf courses but, may I congratulate you on providing a course which is now in as good a condition as anywhere that I have played in the past two or three years.

Your greens, as usual, are excellent, but the rest of the course has improved enormously and the tees, bunkers and fairways are in superb condition.

The bar and catering staff were very friendly, helpful and polite and the hand pumped beer and the evening meal were also excellent.

As you can gather I really enjoyed my visit to Silloth and I hope to return again in the near future.

Graham A Smith 21st July 2011

I recently organised a weekend in Silloth for myself and 16 fellow members of Wallasey Golf Club .

I would like to express our delight in what proved to be an excellent weekend of golf and good living! The course was in superb condition and the greens were as good as we have seen all summer.

The staff who looked after us are a credit to the club and the members we spoke to were most welcoming and helpful. I can honestly say that we have not experienced such conviviality anywhere else, and we are a well travelled group.

For the past 26 years, we have always visited new clubs each year. 2011 at Silloth proved an exceptional choice and I suspect we would all like to come back in the near future, breaking with our tradition of finding somewhere new each year.

Please pass on my thanks to the staff at the club, particularly the catering manager and the greens' staff who provided an excellent but challenging course of a different kind! Also to the committee who should be exceedingly proud of the Silloth links and the people who make their club such a welcoming place.

Geoff Dunn 26th July 2011