

## **NEWCASTLE GOLF CLUB**

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO MEMBERS**

It is with pleasure that I present to you the annual report for the 12 months ended 30 September, 2009.

#### **CLUB ACTIVITIES:**

Once again in 2009 the Club has battled against the influences of rising costs, pressures on membership and of course the world economic climate.

The financial report shows a small loss for the year but the year could be easily divided into two parts. The first half of the financial year was extremely difficult however the clubs position greatly improved in the second half of the year. This was primarily due to the strong growth in visitor numbers, especially the use of the course on quiet days by corporate golf groups. The increase in visitor numbers is mainly due to the efforts of our Operations Manager, Paul Foulcher and supported by the fact that we now have a fleet of modern electric golf carts to be used on such days. Congratulations must go to Paul and his team for their fantastic effort in this regard.

The Club experienced a drop in membership early in the financial year, however during the year we experienced a constant stream of new members many of which are in their 30's and 40's.

#### **COURSE:**

During last winter significant renovations were undertaken. The green received a heavy core which has been the first for three years and the fairways were heavily scarified and sprayed for foreign weeds. This did not present the course well for a short period however it was necessary for the strength and future viability of our playing course. I think most members will agree that the works were justified as the Course is currently in a fantastic playing condition.

Once again congratulations must go to the team of Monday volunteers who have continually tidied up the course throughout the year.

#### **IRRIGATION SYSTEM:**

For a number of years the Board has highlighted the fact that our ageing main line irrigation system was nearing the end of its useful life and as such previous Boards have been putting aside some cash for its ultimate replacement. During the year it has become evident that the time for its replacement has come. An irrigation consultant was commissioned to prepare a design which has been on display in the Club for a number of months. The project is currently being costed however the cost could be close to \$1,000,000. The Board is reticent to put the Club in financial jeopardy by borrowing large amounts for capital expenditure. As such it was resolved to apply an irrigation levy to the current year subscriptions. This levy, together with the funds already set aside should limit the amount of Club borrowings. It is planned that installation of the new system could take place in winter 2010. Current installation techniques should result in minimal disruption to play on the course. The final design will also reflect the intent of the Course Development Control Plan.

**COURSE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN:**

As you may be aware, our current 18 holes are based on the original Eric Apperly design. While the routing of the course is based on this design, Eric Apperly had no input into the installation and placement of our bunkers. Over the years previous boards have made minor changes to the course which are deviations from the original plan. The Board has resolved, that to ensure the integrity of the original plan, a course development control plan be put in place. The Board engaged the services of Ross Watson, a recognised course Architect, to review the original plan and the current layout. He will document what should be done in the future, to both reflect the initial design, and to address several existing safety issues on the course. It is hoped that this plan will be available for comment by members in early 2010. While the Club is not in a financial position to undertake much of the anticipated changes, it will provide a blue print for future Boards if and when funds are available. It is proposed that the plan be put to a vote by members to ensure that the integrity of the original Eric Apperly design remains.

**CLUB HOUSE:**

With the assistance of member Ed Clode a master plan has been prepared and endorsed by the Board for the possible future refurbishment of the existing clubhouse. Once again this is a planning tool only, as the Club is not in a financial position to undertake any major changes to the Club House at present. The plan will provide not only this Board but future Boards the opportunity to make structural and presentation changes to the Club house which follow the theme of a master plan. This plan will also be on exhibition to the members for their comment early in 2010.

It would now appear that the introduction of electronic timesheets and results board is running smoothly with minimal disruption to members.

**STAFF:**

There were no major changes to the Club staffing during the year. However, once again congratulations must go to Paul Foulcher, as Operations Manager, who I think has now demonstrated to all members his abilities to promote the Club at visitor level and to provide a high level of support to the members at large.

Congratulations to all Club staff and to Jason Laws and his staff for the level of service provided to members during the year.

**FINANCE:**

The Club has experienced a mixed year financially with our revenues from course and house activities growing strongly. A sustained promotional effort and a professional approach to conducting corporate days and member events together with an improved presentation of the course has helped to produce this increase. The first full year of the cart fleet has also delivered a greater capacity to host corporate events and has provided a much needed additional income stream, our

analysis of the carts contribution for this financial year shows a profit after all expenses of over \$25,000.

The increase in visitor numbers is especially pleasing with our revenue from visitor green fees growing by \$47,000 and Cart hire increasing by \$60,000.

One revenue stream that decreased unexpectedly was our member's subscriptions. A combination of the Financial climate over the last 12 months and our ongoing need to increase fees to meet our growing costs together with our desire to maintain our course in top condition have, we believe, lead to this large fallout. Membership is down from 956 to 911 at the end of the financial year. Whilst membership is down our full playing membership remains strong. The board are looking at membership offerings to try to keep our members engaged with the club.

Wages on the course increased as a result of a long awaited review of course wages and the changeover in management during the year created some additional cost in administration wages. On a positive note a successful objection to our land revaluation saw the club receive a refund of overcharged rates for the year.

Our commitment to Capital expenditure continued this year with the carts being the major expense creating a significant increase in depreciation for the year. It is hoped that irrigation work will commence in the current financial year and financing options are currently under investigation.

**GOLF:**

We enjoyed another successful golfing year with Captain John Twohill and his match committee providing a comprehensive playing calendar. Special thanks to those members who continue to support our feature and mixed events. At a representative level congratulations must go to our Junior Men's pennant team for their tremendous win. Congratulations must also go to our Men's Super Senior pennant team who unfortunately were beaten in the final.

Congratulations to all members representing our Club throughout the year.

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP .....	Steve Slappendel
Runner Up .....	Jamie Hook
A RESERVE .....	Gary Hor
Runner Up .....	Keith Bryant
PRESIDENT'S CUP .....	Bruce Devir
Runner Up .....	Michael Hill
CAPTAIN'S CUP .....	Terry Brett
Runner Up .....	John Risby
SENIOR CHAMPION (Over 55) .....	Robert Wilkinson
Runner Up .....	Owen Beldham
COLTS CHAMPION (Under 24) .....	Nick Turner
Runner Up .....	Zac McIntosh

JUNIOR CHAMPION (Under 18).....	Jamie Hook
SINGLES KNOCKOUT .....	Matthew Mahony
Runner Up .....	Greg Hopper
FOURBALL KNOCKOUT .....	Daniel Terry and Aaron Jeffries
Runners Up.....	Jim Kelman & Steven Thomas
MIXED FOURBALL KNOCKOUT .....	Bill & Jill Blenkey
Runners Up.....	Michael & Jenelle Coughlan
FOURSOMES CHAMPIONS .....	Michael Haynes and Brian Carmichael
Runners Up.....	Les Oliver & David Gardner
MIXED FOURSOMES CHAMPIONS.....	John Twohill & Jill Blenkey
Runners Up.....	Nick Turner & Deidre Brander
FERN BAY MEDAL .....	Les Oliver
Runner Up .....	Seaton Jones
A.A. RANKIN MEMORIAL .....	Bill Bacon
C.S. HAWKEN TROPHY .....	M Crosbie & J Moriarty
LAURIE CURRAN MEMORIAL TROPHY .....	Les Oliver & David Gardner
SUMMER CUP .....	John Twohill
MEDALLIST OF THE YEAR.....	Laurence Aithchison
AUTUMN RECORD.....	Callum O'Reilly (Toronto)
NEWCASTLE CUP.....	Daniel Terry

**LADIES:**

Pam Squires (President) and Sue Beentjes (Captain) together with the Ladies Committee organised another successful and busy golfing year. Thank you to the Ladies for their continued efforts throughout the year.

Congratulations are extended to all winners and runners up of major events during the year.

CHAMPIONSHIP CUP.....	Deidre Brander
Runner Up .....	Jill Blenkey
DIVISION 2 (Leigh Wood Salver) .....	Juliet Clark
Runner Up .....	Helen DeWith
DIVISION 3 (Claire Brown Salver) .....	Judy Macansh
Runner Up .....	Bev Allen
FOURSOMES CHAMPIONSHIP (Jean Pearce Rose Bowl) .....	Deidre Brander & Julie Swanson
Runners Up.....	Ros McLean & Ros Earp

SINGLES KNOCKOUT (Betty James Salver).....	Division 1 – Jill Blenkey
SINGLES KNOCKOUT (Wallaby Flat Plate).....	Division 2 - Anne Geddes
FOURBALL KNOCKOUT	
(Barbara Henderson Salver) .....	Pam Squire & Margaret Smithson
VERA RANKIN BOWL.....	Ros McLean
Runner Up .....	Narelle Kindler
VETERAN’S POINT SCORE (Dorrie Curran Salver).....	Di Robson
WGNSW Medal (Division 1) .....	Jocelyn Savage
WGNSW Medal (Division 2) .....	Di Faulkner
WGNSW Medal (Division 3) .....	Pam Squires
FERN BAY TROPHY .....	Julie Swanson
FERY BAY CUP.....	Newcastle

Well done Ladies on another successful, memorable and enjoyable year as we look forward to 2010 and continued success.

**GENERAL:**

During the year five members Warwick Smithson, George Keegan, Burt Wood, Michael Maladay and Bill Ritchie passed away. These members were long term supporters of the Club and will be greatly missed. Warwick Smithson was a Past President of the Club and it was good to see so many members turn up for the Warwick Smithson Memorial Trophy contested on 19 December 2009.

The Board have pleasure in endorsing the nomination of Mrs Joan Wansey as a Life Member of the Club. The issue of Life Membership is a difficult one. For a Club of our age we do not have many Life Members which indicates the high level of criteria that needs to be attained to achieve such standing. As such, any decision on Life Membership is very important. Board Member and Chairman of the Membership Committee, Michael Mulvaney, has spent several years developing a weighted selection criteria that can be applied to members nominated. Over the past few years there have been several nominations that in the Board’s opinion have not satisfied the required criteria. When Joan’s nomination was considered by the Board her past contribution to the Club far exceeded the minimum requirement required for Board endorsement. Under our Constitution any nomination for Life Membership endorsed by the Board must be put to a General Meeting of Members for approval. You will note Joan’s nomination is an agenda item at the Club Annual General Meeting in February 2010.

The Board this year continued from the previous year. I would like to thank John Twohill (Captain), Ian Neale (Treasurer), Michael Mulvaney, Greg Hopper, David Rolston, Ross Wilson and Bill Tonkin, all of whom have contributed much to the management of the Club. I thank all of these men for their dedication and service to the Club.

As you can see from above, the Board has not only put in considerable time and

effort this year attending to day to day management, but has devoted significant time to the creation of several forward plans. This forward planning included a Business Plan, an Irrigation Plan, a Club House development plan and a Course Development Plan. I hope that all of these plans are finalised in the ensuing 12 months and will therefore be ready for implementation in future years.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my second year as President.

I wish all members a safe holiday period and a successful 2010.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Lambourne', with a stylized initial 'S'.

**STEPHEN LAMBOURNE  
PRESIDENT**

8<sup>th</sup> January 2010