

As we head into March, it's becoming clear that summer has run out, and autumn has arrived. The mornings are a bit cooler and dewy, but we've been lucky to still enjoy some warm, sunny days, which has helped keep our regular weekly events well supported.

Alongside the usual programme, we've had some interesting and enjoyable events over the past month, including the "Kiwis vs Rest of the World" and the "Greenkeepers Challenge", both of which were well supported and enjoyed by good fields.

Last weekend we hosted the Motueka Open Foursomes, a popular and successful tournament. A large field of 102 players took part, getting through two rounds in good conditions and great spirit.

A big thank you to our sponsors — Sue and Pete Cederman, Shelley and Bruce Miller, Kylie and Nathan Binns, and Chris and Matt Hinton — for their ongoing support of this key event. Their sponsorship once again provided a very generous prize pool for the participants.

The arrival of autumn also brings the Coman Construction Twilight Golf season to a close. Once again, it's been a very successful and enjoyable competition over the summer.

A big thank you to Emily Smolenski for the time and effort she puts into organising Twilight Golf. Alongside her role as Club Secretary, Emily puts in a huge amount of extra work over the summer months to keep twilight golf running smoothly, and it's very much appreciated by everyone who takes part.

At the Management Committee meeting earlier this month, we worked through a full agenda. One of the items discussed was the recent members poll on the proposed change to the Mixed Vets day.

The suggestion was to move our hosting day from Wednesday to Monday. Of the 70 members who responded, 42 supported the change, 10 were neutral, and 18 were opposed.

Taking the feedback into account, the Committee has agreed to shift Mixed Vets from Wednesday to Monday. We are now working with the organisers to finalise the details and confirm when the change will come into effect.

You may have seen the email in the weekend about some disruption to the clubhouse and kitchen earlier this week. This was to allow for some minor alterations in the kitchen. The Management Committee has approved an upgrade of some of the kitchen equipment, replacing older items with more modern, fit-for-purpose options. This includes a thermowave oven, an induction hob, a more efficient dishwasher, and a move to gas water heating. Much of the existing equipment has been in place for many years and was well past its best, so this is a necessary and positive step forward.

While on the topic of clubhouse improvements, we also confirmed that the acoustic tiles approved last year will be installed in the club rooms during the week beginning 11 May. There will likely be a bit of disruption while this work is carried out, and we'll keep members updated closer to the time.

The committee members discussed emails sent by two members about how we can best support our junior players — both with developing their golf and in assisting them in fitting into the club environment. The club has funding available through the Goodman Trust specifically for junior coaching. Some of that money will be used to subsidise coaching lessons for junior members. The details are still being finalised, but we expect to confirm the arrangements to the junior members over the next week or two. The intention is that the club will cover around 75% of the coaching costs, with junior members contributing the balance.

We are also working on plans to introduce a Junior Scholarship. The aim is to support a high-achieving junior golfer in reaching their full potential, through funding a significant amount of expert coaching at no cost to the successful applicant. Once finalised, the scholarship will be advertised to our junior members, and applications will be invited.

At the other end of the scale, some concern was raised about the junior players who are new to the game not being aware of what is expected of them on the course. As part of the response, players under 13 will now need to be accompanied by an experienced golfer. There will also be greater emphasis on ensuring that the players do not play in groups larger than four players, and that play is not held up through the sharing of clubs.

On a different note, in the December newsletter I invited members to reflect over the summer on two questions:

- What do I like about our club; what should we keep?
- What do I not like about the club; what should we change, stop, or add?

These questions were an early starting point for a strategic planning process that the Management Committee will be leading over the coming months.

Barry Walker has done a terrific job over many years facilitating and producing a Strategic Plan for the club, and we are very grateful for the contribution he has made.

This year, with a new committee and a new constitution in place, the Management Committee will be taking a more hands-on role in shaping the plan. We are keen to gather a wide range of views and ideas from members. To support this, the process will include a questionnaire for all members to complete, along with a meeting for interested members to come together to discuss the plan and the direction in which we are heading. Once completed, the Strategic Plan will provide for clear direction and consistency in our decision-making and, most importantly, ensure we are heading in the direction our members want us to go.

And finally, this is a friendly reminder that membership subscriptions are due by April 1. If you haven't already paid yours, we'd appreciate you taking a moment to get this sorted as soon as possible. Late payments create a lot of extra work for Rex — something he could definitely do without!

If you wish to discuss any of the above, or have other suggestions that you would like to pass on, please talk to me at the club, or send them through to me, on president@motuekagold.co.nz, or to the secretary, on admin@motuekagolf.co.nz.

Ron Noordijk
Club President

FROM OUR GREENKEEPERS

We have had a busy and productive period recently with 9 stumps removed from around the course and 4 troublesome Redwoods removed from the left of the 16th fairway. With the removal of these trees we are now confident that the damage on 16 green will recover due to less shading during Winter. We will discuss with Management to have the area where the Redwoods were removed planted with low growing natives which will be an extension of the new plantings between the number 10 and 16 greens.

We are planning a small greens renovation in the next three or so weeks, weather dependant of course. There should be minimal impact on playing conditions with this work.

You will have noticed the deterioration of the new grass on number 4 tee block. Most frustrating as it looked top notch when the work was completed. We have discovered the damage was caused because a valve imploded and the watering was only covering the pathway. We have repaired the valve, reseeded and fertilized the tee block, so hopefully will see this area recover in the coming weeks.

Like most of you, we are taking an interest in the events in the Middle East and looking at our current work practices to see if we can ease the impact of any rising prices, especially for fuel and fertilizer. As an initial step, we have ordered more growth regulators so that we don't have to cut as often as we have been. We will continue to reassess as the situation there changes.

FROM THE HOUSE CONVENOR

The catering and bar service is continuing to provide great food and service to members and visitors and our team of Dave, Linda & Mellissa are doing a fantastic job.

With that in mind we are planning a few alterations in the kitchen. This will see the acquisition of some new appliances which include a thermowave oven, an induction cook top, a freezer, and a gas hot water system. These will occur in the next couple of months.

Installation of acoustic tiles will take place in the clubhouse on the week commencing 11th May (date to be confirmed). This project, which will alleviate excessive noise when we have a full house, was approved in the middle of last year. the installation will take between 2 & 3 days and may cause some disruption in the clubhouse for a

couple of days but there will be limited access, and bar & catering services will still be available.

FROM THE GOLF CONVENOR

The Anchorage Wines Tournament was successfully completed but was down on entry numbers compared to last year). What this did mean was that everyone that competed and remained for the prize giving received at least one bottle of wine. A good result all round.

The experiment of allowing early morning starts for the February New World Mug Medal because of the concurrent playing of the Left Handers tournament, saw only a small number (13) take up the offer. The conclusion drawn from this is that our members are very happy with a midday Saturday multi-tee start, so there are no plans currently to do this again.

The Greenkeepers Challenge seemed to strike a chord with players, and the consensus afterward was that we should repeat this in next years programme. Certainly the challenging hole positions and variations to Greens (No11 moved to the No10 with the challenge of hitting across the pond) created some interesting results and much lighthearted banter. The intention next year is to close the course to Green Fee players so our Greenkeepers can be even more twisted in the setting up.

The Open Foursomes was very well supported, as it usually is, and Kylie gave us a very worthwhile prize table.

Club Championships are just around the corner, so get your game fine tuned.

Next month we would usually be running the ANZAC Tournament in support of the RSA Poppy Appeal, but as ANZAC Day this year is on our LGU/Mug Medal day we will be seeking your generosity so that we can make our annual donation.

Our **9 Hole Ladies** report that Interclub competitions are underway and the Motueka team first lost to Nelson then won against Tasman'

Round 1 of 9 Hole club champs will start on Tuesday 21 April and they are hopeful more will give it a go this year.

Our **18 Hole Ladies** report that Sandy Lepine and Suzanne Park will be sharing the role of ladies captain for 2026-until the AGM in November.

Motueka defended and retained the Acheson Cup in early March and have now held this trophy since 2019. At a District Ladies Captains meeting held after this event, it was agreed that Motueka will now pass the cup over to Golden Downs (who were next on list for challenge) and the club holding the cup can keep it for only 4 successful challenges (if they haven't lost) before they have to hand over to the next club on the list.

Course Rating and Stroke Index Allocation

You may, or may not, have noticed that numbers have changed on our scorecards. Led by Kevin Armstrong, our course was recently re-rated (this occurs about every three years, our last being 2023) which has resulted in minor changes to the course Rating and Slope Numbers. Members may see small incremental decreases/increases to your handicap indexes over the next few weeks.

Consequent to the acceptance of the Course Rating changes, the WHS Stroke Index Allocation has been reviewed by Kevin, as required by the Handicapping Rules, and this too has resulted in changes to the stroke allocation on some holes. The formula for this process is somewhat more complicated than that used to split the atom, but is predicated on fairness in Matchplay, rather than Stableford, as was the case previously.

NEW & RETURNED MEMBERS

We welcome the following new and returned members to our club. I know that you will make them all very welcome.

Full Playing: Harry Dorne, Craig Hamilton, Jack Kohler, Jacob Novak, Hayden Smith, Donald Urquart

9 Hole: Toni Belaustegui, Dianne Boyes, Errol Boyes, Debbie Clark, Tendy Cooper, Tim McPadden, Wally Olykan, Valentine Pisarski, Richard Tunncliffe, Nick Visser

Junior: Huntly Heal, Elliott Hinton

Country: Sharon Marsh, Justin Scott