

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY GOLF LIMITED

Company Number: 13065967

General Meeting – Bromsgrove Golf Club at 7.00 pm on Friday 15 November 2024

Present:

John Whitehead	President
Ian Rone	Chairman
Jonathan Cray	Finance Director
Clive Werrett	Governance Director
Ian Griffiths	County Secretary

Representatives of Member Clubs

Kings Norton Golf Club	Gordon Clark	
Little Lakes Golf Club	Andy Simmonds	
Gaudet Luce Golf Club	Richard Moran	
Droitwich Golf Club	Iain Milroy	
Bromsgrove Golf Club	John Brothwood	Lee Machin
Wharton Park Golf Club	Andrew Oxenham	Russell Heath
Churchill & Blakedown Golf Club	Bob Julier	
Hollywood Golf Club Ltd	Malcolm Smith	
Hagley Golf Club	David Calcutt	Neil Johnstone
Bransford Golf Club	Rob Turner	David Hunt
Worcester Golf & Country Club	Les Jenkins	
Kidderminster Golf Club	Matt Houghton	
Redditch Golf Club	John Cranton	Gary Roberson

In Attendance

Chris Gupwell	Honorary Vice President WCG Ltd
Will Painter	Past President WUGC
Graham Yardley	Honorary Vice President WCG Ltd
Mark Evans	U16 Team Manager
Luke Perry	U14 Team Manager
Kevin Fee	U18 Team Manager
Jo Gupwell	Minutes Secretary

Apologies

Mark Romasiuk	EG Regional Manager
Norman Bolton	Past President WUGC
Anthony Hill	Golf Director/Seniors Captain
Denis Hayes	Honorary Life Member WCG Ltd & Past President WUGC
Colin Day	Former WUGC Executive
Simon Green	2nd Team Captain
David McGillivray	Past President WUGC
Nick Jones	CCSO
Tony Edwards	Honorary Vice President WUGC
Alex Bishop	Former WUGC Executive

Adam Norman
Evesham Golf Club
Moseley Golf Club
Halesowen Golf Club
Ravenmeadow & Perdiswell Golf Club
Stourbridge Golf Club
Sapey Golf Club

County Captain

Absent Member Clubs

Ombersley Golf Club
Redditch Kingfisher Golf Club
Fulford Heath Golf Club
Rose Hill Golf Club
The Abbey Golf Club
The Worcestershire Golf Club
The Vale Golf & Country Club
Warley Woods Golf Club
Bewdley Pines Golf Club
Blackwell Golf Club
Cleobury Mortimer Golf Club
Cocks Moors Woods Golf Club
Dudley Golf Club

1. **Apologies:**
2. **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 2 May 2024:** These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were to be taken as read but will be confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman at the next Annual General Meeting. The Chairman asked if there were any matters arising from these Minutes to be dealt with. There were none.
3. **Captain's Report:** In the absence of the Captain his report was displayed on screen. The Captain began by saying that the main aim of the season was winning the Midland League and challenging the Midland 6's, but ultimately making sure that representing Worcestershire was still an honour and that players should enjoy playing for the County. There followed brief reports on the League matches played during the season with the team winning three, losing one and drawing one. This resulted in the team finishing 3rd in the League, a result that the Captain considered showed an excellent effort. The Captain commented on the number of players coming into the team through the County Junior programme which he felt looked bright for the future. He advised that the President's Shield had been won by Kieron Austin who had won 7 and halved one of his matches. In conclusion, the Captain congratulated the Second Team on winning their League and thanked all the players, officials and golf clubs for supporting him during his captaincy.
4. **Second Team Captain's Report:** In the absence of the Second Team Captain, the Chairman read out his report. The Second Team Captain touched briefly on the matches during the year which had culminated in the team winning their League. He went on to mention various players who had been worthy of note during the season, including Harry Evans who is only 15 years old. Finally, the Second Team Captain reported that his highlight for the year was the 11-4 victory

over Warwickshire at Boughton Park which had been a great day with fine weather and a really strong team spirit.

5. **Senior Team Captain's Report:** In the Senior Team Captain's absence his report was displayed on screen. The Senior Team Captain began by advising that the team had won all three of their friendly matches. He went on to report on the League matches which had resulted in the team narrowly losing their match against Shropshire & Herefordshire who had gone on to win the League. There were two awards for the team during the season, the first being the Bolton Shield for the most points won for the team, the winner being Dave Marshall from Rose Hill Golf Club and secondly the Rookie of the Year Trophy which was won by Mark Dunkley from Moseley Golf Club. Finally, the Senior Team Captain thanked all the Seniors who had represented the County during the year and, from his position as Golf Director, all the clubs who had hosted matches for all the County teams during the season and looked after them so well on the day of the matches.
6. **Junior Golf Report:** Mr Kevin Fee reported on the Juniors' matches for the year, starting with the Under 14s who had won three of the four matches played. The Under 16s won two and halved two of the League matches played. Harry Evans from Worcester Golf & Country Club had won the Bill Thompson Trophy. Mr Fee advised that the Under 18s had not had a great season in the League, drawing one and losing three of their matches. They had performed well in the County Cup and had played really well in the Severnside Tournament, finishing 2nd. Lewis Tolley of Worcester Golf & Country Club won the Cunningham Trophy. Mr Fee noted that a number of boys had performed exceptionally well in National events, with the notable achievement of Mark Hewlett Jnr who won the MGU Boys Order of Merit, the first time that this has been won by a Worcestershire Junior. Mr Fee said that all the boys had been exceptional during the year and a credit to the County. He thanked all the volunteers for their time and effort, particularly Luke Perry, the Under 14s Manager, Mark Evans the Under 16s Manager and Alex Band who had assisted him with the Under 18s during the season. Thanks also went to the First and Second Team Captains for selecting some of the boys and Simon Gabbittas for his help and support. Finally, Mr Fee thanked all the clubs who had allowed the boys the use of their courses and concluded by pointing out that winter coaching had begun. Mr Fee was looking forward to a successful 2025.
7. **Notice of Team Captain Appointments:** The Chairman confirmed the following appointments:
 - 7.1. **The County Captain:** Yet to be confirmed
 - 7.2. **The Second Team Captain:** Mr Simon Green is confirmed as the Second Team Captain until October 2025.
 - 7.3. **The Senior Team Captain:** Mr Anthony Hill is confirmed as the Senior Team Captain until October 2025.
8. **Secretary's Report:**
 - 8.1. **World Handicap System update:** The Secretary advised that the Winter Rules document had been replaced and was now the Winter Rules – Extreme/Adverse Weather Conditions

document. He went through the changes, pointing out that some care needed to be taken with the new Rules.

8.2. Course Rating: The President advised that Worcestershire were well into the current cycle for re-rating every 10 years and that five clubs had been re-rated in 2024, although not all ratings had been issued by England Golf due to there being a processing backlog. In addition, there was the demand from clubs for additional ratings to be dealt with. The President advised that the plan was to carry out four full course re-ratings in 2025 and that the schedule for these was on the website. He went on to give some trivia details such as the fact that the five re-ratings carried out in 2024 had produced about 40 ratings, three to twelve ratings for each club. Seven people are involved in course rating and this is a joint effort with the Ladies. Up to six people are involved on each occasion. The President thanked all those involved in course rating. The County Secretary advised that England Golf still have to deal with 12,000 ratings for the current year.

8.3. England Golf Report: The County Secretary advised that Mr Nick Jones was unable to be present at the meeting, but that he had sent in a report which was put on the screen for those present to read. The County Secretary went through the notes provided by Mr Jones, the first of which covered Communication and Relationship Building. Mr Jones considered that it was a great benefit to him to be able to visit the clubs. Turning to the following notes on Support, Guidance and Signposting, the County Secretary advised that clubs should come to him first with any problems and then refer to England Golf. Referring to the note on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the County Secretary pointed out the 31 December 2024 deadline for clubs to be fully signed off and that there could be penalties if this was not done. On the notes on WHS Support, the County Secretary said that England Golf were planning more sessions which he thought the clubs would find very useful. Turning to the final notes on 2025 Focus – What are our Priorities, the County Secretary said that this was not something that the County would be involved in, but that Mr Jones would advise and help as necessary. He pointed out that he could also help with SafeGolf.

There followed a short discussion on the World Handicap System and whether or not it was too volatile and not liked by players. The County Secretary advised that it was possible that players needed help with how to use the system, but he said that he could not see there being a move away from it. He said that the system might change slightly in future. He also pointed out that there was a great reliance on the clubs to check the system and make sure that there was no abuse of it taking place.

8.4. Midland Golf Union: The County Secretary advised that there was little to say on this. He pointed out that three Worcestershire clubs would be hosting MGU events in 2025 - Droitwich, Gaudet Luce and Hagley. The MGU AGM will be held on 4 December 2024. The subscription payable will be lower for the year.

8.5. Woodhall Spa Land Holdings: The County Secretary advised the Articles of Association had been changed so that England Golf had common ownership of Woodhall Spa and the National Golf Centre. The new build of the National Golf Centre will begin in 2025. The County Secretary showed a short video indicating what the new facility would look like.

9. Affiliation Fees for Worcestershire County Golf Limited

The Finance Director advised that for 2025 the affiliation fees would remain unchanged. He proposed that the affiliation fees for 2025 should be:

Men aged 18 and over on 1 January 2025 - £11.25

Boys aged under 18 on 1 January 2025 - £5.75

This proposal was unanimously agreed by those present.

- 10. Affiliation Fees for England Golf:** The Finance Director advised that he would continue to collect all England Golf affiliation fees for both men and women members of affiliated clubs as follows:

For the year 2025 the affiliation fee payable to England Golf for members (over and under 18 years of age) will be £11.25, an increase of 75p. The County Secretary pointed out that part of the need for this increase was the cost of insurance for members included in their affiliation fee.

- 11. Notification of Change of Rules:** The Governance Director gave details of a change in the Rules concerning courtesies as follows:

When requested by the County Secretary, member clubs should provide courtesy of the course to host County competitions, County matches and similar events in accordance with section 5 of the "Terms and Conditions of Affiliation to England Golf and the Applicable County Body" and the County Rules. A facility fee may be paid, at the discretion of the Board, for the courtesy of the course.

County Competitions: All clubs are required to provide a minimum of one courtesy 4-ball tee time (or equivalent) to members of the club hosting a relevant County competition (as listed on the County website) on the day of the competition. In exceptional circumstances a courtesy tee time(s) on an alternate day (the day before or day after the competition) may be acceptable by agreement with the host club and County Secretary.

The Governance Director advised that a courtesy tee time was a mandatory requirement of entry when one or more teams from a club are entered in a team competition or one or more players from a club are entered in an individual competition. He advised that clubs failing to provide a mandatory tee time may have their team(s) or player(s) excluded from that competition.

There followed a discussion on the problems encountered with the provision of courtesies. It was pointed out that some proprietary clubs struggled with the concept of courtesies, but the Governance Director said that he would be prepared to contact the owners to discuss this. It was clear that some clubs simply did not offer courtesies and the County Secretary explained how they reacted. He said that he hoped that the new process would help clubs to make the matter clear. It was felt that the early finalising of lists of competitions would help, although the need to hold matches at prime times at weekends would always cause problems.

- 12. Any Other Business:**

- 12.1.** The Governance Director updated those present on conversations he had had with England Golf when he had been advised that they would be running a Club Rules Ambassador programme to equip a committee or staff member at a club to educate their members on the Rules of Golf, resolve Rules issues, referee club competitions, run competitions properly under the Rules of Golf and take new pace of play management strategies back to their club.

The Governance Director also advised that England Golf were keen that every club should have one or more mental health first aiders.

- 13. Date of Next Meeting:** The time, date and venue of the AGM will be notified to all clubs in due course.

There being no further business to be discussed, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.55 pm.

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OPEN FORUM – 15 November 2024

Following the Company Six Monthly General Meeting, the Chairman opened an open forum and invited questions.

A question was raised on the current state of affairs concerning the amalgamation of the Ladies and the Men's companies. The Governance Director advised that this matter was back on the Agenda for discussion. A proposal was being put together to decide whether it was possible to go forward. It was possible that a grant would be available to help take this matter forward. It was planned that clubs would be consulted to see whether to take matters forward.

There being no further questions, the Chairman closed the Open Forum.