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Minutes of the GGU Council Meeting held at Greenmeadow Golf Club **Tuesday 9th April 2019**

1) **APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from:

Mr. Mike Buckley, Mr. Tony Groves, Mr. John Holland, Mr. Ray Bradley, Mr. Nathan Price, Mr. Chris Boulton.

There were 9 Gwent Clubs represented at the meeting:

Blackwood, Bryn Meadows, Greenmeadow, Monmouthshire, Newport, Peterstone Lakes, Pontypool, St. Pierre, Wernddu.

2) **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

The minutes of the Council Meeting held at Greenmeadow Golf Club on Tuesday 11th September 2018 were approved as a true record.

Proposed: Mike Nightingale

Seconded: Alistair Pannell

3) **MATTERS ARISING:**

There were no matters arising out of those minutes.

4) **REPORTS:**

a) **Hon. Treasurer**

In the absence of the Honorary Treasurer the Hon. Secretary reported on the Counties finances. The Business Notice Account balance stood at £20,822.88 and the Current Account balance was £17,464.75.

b) **League Secretary**

In the absence of the League Secretary the Hon Secretary stated that the League Secretary had reported at the Executive Meeting prior to this Council Meeting that everything was in place for the coming season and there were no problems with the leagues. The Rule amendment that he had proposed whereby clubs could nominate six players instead of five had been rejected by team and match captains so the rules would remain as last year.

c) **Match Secretary**

The Match Secretary Mr. Roger Floyd reported that no matches have been played yet this season and there was nothing to report.

The Chairman announced that there had been a change in the Captaincy of the County 1st Team. Julian Sansom is standing down and the new captain is Robert Smith of the Celtic Manor.

d) Championship Secretary

The Championship Secretary Mr. Ray Hughes reported that the dates and venues for the 2019 Championships are all arranged. The first is the Cock 'o' North which is being held at the Parc Golf Club on Sunday 5th May and is fully subscribed with all clubs submitting two teams.

Following on is the Strokeplay Championship which is being played at the Rolls of Monmouth on Sunday 16th June. The date has reverted to the 3rd Sunday in June away from the 2nd Sunday last year where it clashed with the Aberconwy Trophy which is a Welsh Order of Merit event and was the only date the Celtic Manor had available for us in 2018.

The Chairman has however received a number of complaints from players about the date this year conflicting with Fathers Day, and they would be unable to play. This Championship in previous years has always been held on Fathers Day and when the Chairman checked the entries for the previous year it was discovered that the players making the complaints did not enter the tournament last year when there was no clash with Fathers Day. Last year the tournament was promoted via social media sites as well as the county website but this did not improve the entries where only 30 people entered.

e) Boys Secretary

A Gwent Junior League meeting was held on Wed 27th March which was attended by Junior Organisers from eight clubs. All eight clubs expressed an interest in running a Junior League in 2019. Prior to carrying out a league draw an Email was sent to all other Junior Organisers to establish if there were any other clubs who may be interested in joining the Junior League. No response was received from any other clubs so the draw was carried out at the Gwent Executive meeting on Wednesday 3rd April 2019.

The eight Gwent Clubs competing in the Gwent Junior Leagues in 2019 are: Bryn Meadows, Greenmeadow, Llanwern, Newport, Parc, Pontnewydd, St. Pierre, and Tredegar Park.

f) Wales Golf Representative

The Wales Golf representative Mr. Rob Martin presented a number of items which were contained in the Wales Golf Forum Report for March 2019.

One of the main initiatives would be that all Gwent Clubs would be visited by one of the Wales Golf Council members for Gwent. The representatives are Robert Martin, John Holland, and Eric Brown.

Mr. Martin had distributed two copies of the Wales Golf Affiliation Packs which outlines what help and support clubs can get from Wales Golf.

Mr. Martin asked the Council members present if they were aware if their club had been visited by Golf Development Wales in the past two years. There was no response from Council members. He informed the meeting that there were six Gwent clubs who had not received a visit. They were: Celtic Manor, Greenmeadow, Peterstone Lakes, Rolls of Monmouth, St. Mellons, and Woodlake Park.

The Wales Golf delegates will commence their club visits in the April, May, June period 2019. Initial contact will be through the club Secretary or club Manager. Some clubs have already had support with recruitment and member retention.

One of the main areas being addressed will be Golf Course Sustainability where soil erosion, pesticides, water, and other resources were a major topic for discussion.

The new handicapping system being introduced in 2020 will be a major change and will be a subject covered by road shows.

Wales Golf had held two level 2 Rules Schools in January and both were oversubscribed.

Conwy Golf Club will be hosting the Curtis Cup in 2020.

g) Honorary Secretary

Membership

The Honorary reported that he had received affiliation fees from 8 clubs to date. Some clubs were moving their membership year date back away from the normal January or April months so their fees would be received later. The loss of Raglan Parc GC could reduce the numbers for 2019 as their previous members could still be transient in joining other clubs.

5) CORRESPONDENCE

There has been no formal correspondence received since the last meeting.

6) ELECTION of EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Honorary Secretary had received a nomination from Newport Golf Club for Mr. Chris Boulton to become an Executive Council member of the Gwent Golf Union.

The Chairman stated that the Union were still looking for Executive members to assist in the running of the county and would welcome any members wishing to come forward and help out.

7) CHAIRMANS REMARKS

The Chairman Mr. Ray Hughes said there has been a great deal of effort made in trying to recruit players to play county team golf. An exercise was undertaken to identify players with low handicaps playing in Gwent clubs. This exercise has been reasonably successful in identifying players for the county men's second team.

The GGU Seniors team has a new captain, Robert Ware who took over towards the end of last season and has shown some good team results to date and hopes to improve on those results this season.

The Chairman reported the sudden death of Mr. Dave Holt, a past captain of St. Pierre GC and the person who supplied our championship trophies and engraved the cups. Dave's son James has expressed a wish to continue to serve the counties needs and is dealing with the outstanding requirements for this year.

8) COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORTS

Blackwood

Mr. Chris Waite gave his captains apologies and reported that the club had survived the extreme conditions that had been experienced last year. Their two greenkeepers were looking after the course very well.

Bryn Meadows

Mr Roger Giles reported that their head professional David Pocock had returned home to Aberdeen and Bryn Meadows now had the services of two lady professionals Katy and Natasha. The membership year now runs from the 1st June to the 31st May the following year. The lady professionals are continuing with the beginners coaching scheme which has attracted some 80 boys and girls and 30 ladies. The club has received 21 new playing members but retention of existing members will not be known until after June 1st.

Mr. Giles introduced Bryn Meadows captain Jason Coleman who reported that a lot of positive things were going on at Bryn Meadows, and membership is showing signs of increasing.

Greenmeadow

Mr. Steve Browning, captain of Greenmeadow introduced himself to the meeting. He stated that it was a great honour to be captain of Greenmeadow Golf Club and was looking forward to what is Greenmeadows 40th anniversary. The anniversary date is the 7th September and the club will be hosting a number of anniversary cup competitions for the Seniors, Hallett, and Wayfarers sections. The club were also hosting a Charity Day in July which the captain hoped visitors would support. The course was now in fine condition for the coming season.

Monmouthshire

Mr. Mark Lewis introduced himself as the captain for Monmouthshire Golf Club. He reported that the club is in a very good position with an increasing membership owing to the demise of Raglan Parc. The clubs taster sessions are proving very popular and are currently oversubscribed. The course is coming along well ready for the new season.

Newport

Mr. Rob Martin introduced Newport club captain Mrs. Judith Wenman who reported that Newport had built a new Academy Centre which will be opened in late April by the Mayor of Newport and Phillip Price giving a presentation of golf shots. The academy centre has a Trackman installed which has proved very useful over the winter months. Newport are running New to Golf sessions for juniors and ladies. Newport has changed the process of choosing a new club captain whereby the captains from the previous six years decide who they would nominate as captain for the coming year. Mrs. Wenman stated that she was thoroughly enjoying her year of captaincy so far, along with her fellow Gwent club captains.

Peterstone Lakes

Mr. Mark Cummings the Peterstone captain for 2018 introduced himself and said that he was picking up the reins from the previous Peterstone county representative Mike Williams who seems to have moved on. Mr. Cummings said that the course was in great condition and that they've been very luck during the winter months. Membership has increased by some 97-100 members mainly due to the closure of Raglan Parc. Mr. Cummings introduced 2019 club captain Mr. James Mulcahy who reported that the assistant professional was trying to establish a junior section at the club and the Ladies captain was trying to recruit new lady members.

Pontypool

Mr. Graham Burch the captain of Pontypool Golf Club introduced himself to the meeting. Mr. Burch reported that after the problems Pontypool had experienced with their greens over the last few years they have now turned the corner. With the advice from an agronomist and the purchase of an over-seeder the greens are much improved and the course is looking in good condition.

St. Pierre

Mr. Alistair Pannell introduced the St. Pierre captain Mr. Jo Morgan who endorsed Newport captain Judith Wenman's statement that they had an excellent group of captains this year and he was looking forward to his year of captaincy. The St. Pierre head professional Craig Dunn had left the club in January and has been replaced by Jack Roberts who took over in February, and who is busy getting to know the members and running New to Golf events for ladies and juniors. St. Pierre have also appointed a new Junior Organiser Nick Ferns who is taking over from Jim Campbell. St. Pierre membership is very strong with some 800 members overall. St. Pierre will be hosting the Welsh Team Championship this year and Mr. Morgan stated that he would be working with the Director of Golf Mr. Paul Collins to ensure everything runs smoothly.

Wernddu

Mr. Mark McAlpine introduced himself as the captain of Wernddu Golf Club for 2019. Mr. McAlpine explained that he should have been captain in 2018 but had to move away and was unable to take up the position until his return this year. The course is in pretty good condition with the greens getting better. They are struggling with junior membership but the mens league teams are very encouraging with Wernddu now entering a 3rd team in the Gwent leagues. Membership is also improving with a recent increase of 14-20 members making total membership about 300 strong.

9) DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING :

Council Meeting: Tuesday 10th September 2019 – Greenmeadow GC 7:30 p.m.