

Dear Members,

## **Aircrew Association Golfing Society Newsletter for 2023**

May I start by wishing you all a healthy and happy 2023.

### **Hangover Issues From 2022**

#### **Finances**

Simply put, we don't have as much money in the Bank as first thought, and I need to ensure we don't have a cashflow problem around Burford time. This has led to a re-think on all matters 'money', and I'm proposing that in future:

all events are fully costed, including prizes, and charged to members at the time

we eliminate cash and cheques and pay match fees etc by bank transfer - this will save me considerable time and effort, and also facilitate a volunteer member to conduct the registration process at each meeting without the worry of accounting for money. If you cannot comply, however, we will not turn you away

We have to restore our bank balance to a level that allows us to pay for expenditure before payments are received from members.

#### **Cost of Events**

The trend we experienced in 2022 of Golf Clubs increasing green fees and food and beverage charges shows no sign of abating. This year there has been an even greater general increase in costs across all our venues with the exception of Elton Furze. Below are the costs per person for each event in 2023:

Burford	£80.00
Thetford	£72.50
Badgemore Park	£67.00
Elton Furze	£55.00
Wychwood	£63.00

Burford has historically been very popular. However, the cost increase will stun some. I was initially tempted to look for an alternative, but considered that as Burford was the most popular venue, and because cost increases were general rather than limited, the membership would vote with their feet if they didn't like the price; so, we shall continue with our current venues for the coming year and then re-evaluate.

#### **Survey of Members Views - Handicaps**

I surveyed about 160 members for their views on handicapping, prizes and electronic banking and received 28 responses (about 19%) which is considered a good result. As you can imagine the responses covered a variety of views, but certain trends did emerge which I found helpful.

Dealing with the issues in reverse order, there was unanimous support, from those replying, for an electronic payment system by bank transfer. Though we intend to introduce a 'no cash/cheque' policy, we shall not prevent anyone attending by doing so.

Prizes produced varied views, but no standout idea emerged. I need to ensure we keep costs affordable and am giving thought to some different ideas. Handicaps produced the most interest.

Of the responders, only 2 did not hold a World Handicap System Handicap Index (WHS HI) and they were content to continue as now with an honesty based system. Overall, there was general support for trying to maintain a level playing field, but the views ranged from excluding non-WHS members from prizes, to separate competitions for those with a HI and those without. There was also support for the Captain to have the authority of sole arbiter over handicap disputes. If there was a general theme, it was that we should embrace the WHS and adapt it to our needs.

Our society aims are primarily social, but with competition for prizes as our stimulus. I will not exclude anyone from the opportunity to win a prize; we must therefore continue to rely on the honesty and integrity of our members. That said, and having stressed the need for simplicity in the past, I'm now proposing that we embrace the WHS down to Course Handicap level for those with an HI. For those without an HI, you can carry forward the handicap allocated for 2022 but capped with a maximum playing handicap of 28 for men and 36 for women. Those with a valid HI will start 2023 with their actual HI adjusted to derive the course handicap. There will remain the usual sanctions for those who win or are runners up: that is a 2 stroke reduction for a win, and a 1 stroke reduction for a runner-up.

### **Schedule of Events for 2023**

Spring Meeting: Wednesday, 3 May at Burford GC. Individual Stableford  
Eastern Meeting: Wednesday, 7 June at Thetford GC. Team Stableford  
Summer Meeting: Wednesday, 5 July at Badgemore Park GC. Individual Stableford  
Central Meeting: Wednesday, 23 August at Elton Furze GC. Team Stableford  
Western Meeting: Wednesday, 20 September at Wychwood GC. Team Stableford

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Stephen Green, Nav on Vulcans, F4s and F3s, and Ollie Whyatt who flew Wessex and Chinook before returning to fixed wing and becoming a QFI who will be joining us in 2023.

For those who are new, the role of the Society is to provide players with a social golfing day at excellent venues. The day consists of coffee and bacon baps on arrival, golf played in 3 balls starting at 11.00am followed by a general get together and sit down meal culminating in the award of glittering prizes. All the clubs that we attend require a jacket and tie when dining. We have our own Society tie with plenty in stock at the bargain price of £7. I should stress that wives are more than welcome to participate and guests will be welcome.

The Spring and Summer meetings are individual stableford events, whereas the Eastern, Central and Western Regional events are team competitions in which the best 2 out of 3 scores count. If you find getting a team together is difficult, don't worry; book in as an individual with your "type/role background" and we will place you in an appropriate team for the day. Ladies 'teams' compete with the men from their respective tees, but otherwise on an equal footing, but there is a separate, individual stableford competition for the ladies on Ladies Day at Badgemore Park.

Note: The annual match against the ex-Halton apprentices will take place in September at Thorpe Wood, near Peterborough, under the watchful eye of Past Captain Steve Jennings. We lost the match and the Trophy in 2022 so Steve will be looking for a winning team of 12 in 2023.

## Event Booking Checklist

### The booking, payment and registration process is changing.

1. Please email the Captain with your choice of Meeting(s), your current handicap index (HI) and the name and HI of any guest you may wish to bring along. The booking doesn't have to be for the whole season, it can be for individual Meetings as they occur.
2. Please indicate who you would like to be partnered with (or not, as the case may be).
3. Please indicate your tee time preference: early, middle or late.
4. Please make payment by bank transfer to the **Aircrew Assoc Golfing Society** at NatWest Bank (it's a business account), **Sort Code: 60-08-17, account 13687719**, and make sure the payee reference includes your name and the venue. Be assured that should you pay and subsequently be unable to attend, I shall return the payment by bank transfer to your account without delay.

We ask that each player subscribe **£5** at his or her first game of each year. Please include the £5 with the initial payment and state in your email the amount you have paid by bank transfer.

5. Please indicate any special dietary requirements.
6. Should you require the use of a buggy, I would encourage you to contact the venue Pro Shop early and make your own arrangements.
7. The Society's web site is a sub-set of the Aircrew Association's web presence and can be found at <http://www.aircrew.org.uk/golf.html>. The site will be updated over the next few weeks to include this Newsletter and the fixtures for 2023 amongst other updates. You will then have an alternative method of contacting me and making bookings through the site should you wish. In the meantime, please contact your Captain by any of 3 email addresses:

[golf@aircrew.org.uk](mailto:golf@aircrew.org.uk),  
[roywdt@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:roywdt@yahoo.co.uk), or  
[roytrotter47@icloud.com](mailto:roytrotter47@icloud.com)

8. Registration on the day will be a matter of confirming your HI and verifying your course handicap (CH) for the venue on your scorecard. For those without a HI, the registration process will simply be a matter of confirming and applying your last approved handicap.
9. I am in negotiation with Phil Wilcock, who has kindly volunteered to help me administer the Society in 2023. His first role will be to conduct the registration process. For a variety of reasons, this can only be successful if no money has to change hands, hence the main reason for the introduction of 'no cash or cheques'.

## Venue Details

### **Burford - Spring Meeting.**

Burford Golf Club, Swindon Road, Oxon, OX18 4JG (01993 822583) is situated 1/2 mile south of the town off the A361. 18 holes individual Stableford, starting at 11.00am and playing in threes.

There are 6 buggies available; should you need one, book early via the Pro Shop.

Will those in possession of trophies please bring them suitably engraved or return them to me well before end of April.

### **Thetford - Eastern Region Meeting**

Thetford Golf Club, Brandon Road B1107, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 3NE; (01842 752169) From the West, approach Thetford on A11 looking for B1107, Brandon Road. Course will be on the left. From the North East take A11 looking for right onto B1107. From the South, take the A134 thru Thetford and pick up the B1107. 18 holes of golf played in teams of 3 (best 2 of 3 scores to count on each hole) starting at 11.00am.

A limited number of buggies are available, should you need one, book early via the Pro Shop.

### **Badgemore Park - Summer Meeting**

Badgemore Park Golf Club, RG9 4NR (01491 637300) is situated 1 mile West of Henley (from Henley route up Gravel Hill, well posted with brown signs). 18 holes individual Stableford, starting at 11.08 and playing in threes. Ladies are especially welcome at our Summer Meeting where they play for their own trophy.

Will those in possession of trophies please bring them or return them to me well before the end of June.

### **Elton Furze - Central Region Meeting**

Elton Furze Golf Club, Bullock Road, Haddon PE7 3TT, (01832 280189) is situated off the A605, west of the A1/A605 junction, some 4 miles west of Peterborough. 18 holes of golf in teams of 3 (best 2 of 3 scores on each hole to count) starting at 11.00am.

A limited number of buggies are available, should you need one, book early via the Pro Shop.

### **Wychwood - Western Region Meeting**

Wychwood Golf Club, OX7 6QQ, (01993 831841) is situated midway between Chipping Norton and Burford. From Chipping Norton take the A361 for 5 1/4 miles and turn right towards the village of Lyneham. 18 holes of golf in teams of 3 (best 2 of 3 scores on each hole to count) starting at 11.00am.

\* \* If you find getting a team together is difficult, don't worry; Book in as an individual with your "type/role background" and we will place you in an appropriate team on the day.

**Roy Trotter**  
**Captain**  
**ACA GS**

**8 January 2023**