

# Around the Club

A newsletter for Wodonga Golf Club members



December 2020

Phone: (02) 6059 1552

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## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

It has been a year like no other, a year we will never forget.

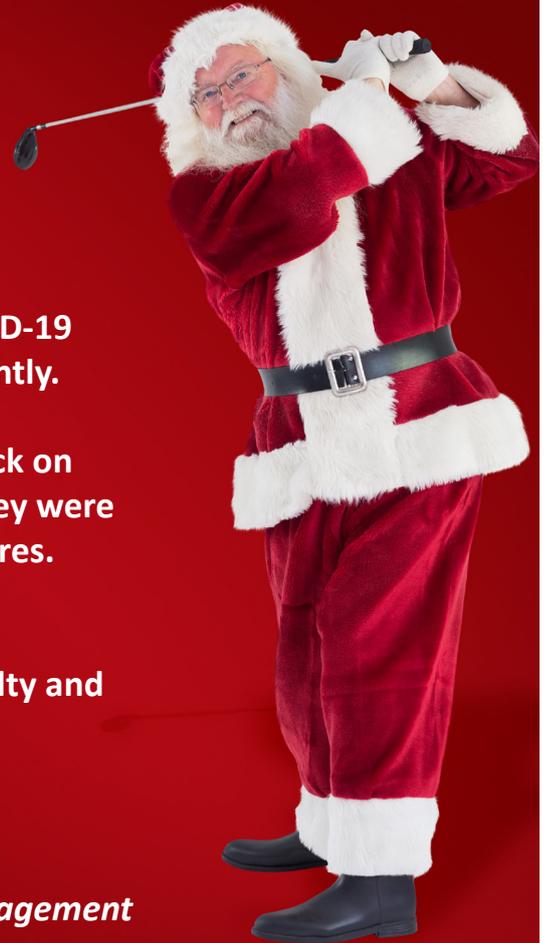
We have all faced some tough challenges as the COVID-19 pandemic meant we were required to live life differently.

There were few feelings as good as being allowed back on the golf course and reopening the clubhouse after they were forced to be closed as part of COVID-19 safety measures.

Thank you to all our club members, volunteers and everyone for their support during this year. Your loyalty and dedication to your club is truly appreciated.

We take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

- Club management



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# Course withstands unusual weather conditions

It has been a strange start to the growing season this year with higher than normal rainfall predicted and consistent winds have been common which is unusual.

We haven't quite seen the rainfall yet but definitely felt the effects of the wind drying things out faster than usual even though temperatures have been quite low.

This has meant that irrigation has well and truly kicked off including repairs to many of the mainlines that have cracked over the winter period.

I have been pleased with the greens since the start of the season, during winter and spring I made a concerted effort to minimise the poa annua throughout the surfaces and have seen some pretty good results so far.

I will back the herbicide treatments off during summer so as not to stress out the desired bent grass too much.

I plan to verti cut and dust with sand regularly through summer to minimise the thatch layer and promote smoother faster surfaces.

We have started rolling greens on Saturdays as opposed to mowing in the past I think we have overall seen faster green speeds as a result of this.

Since COVID-19 we have seen a high volume of golfers out on the course, with local sport etc being cancelled.

This has meant extra traffic on the turf surfaces and has in turn increased the maintenance and water requirements.

Although it is great to see so many people out enjoying the course it does have an effect on the quality of turf in some areas.

We decided to forgo our traditional greens renovation this year so as not to have anymore impact on golfing numbers.

Instead of the usual coring we used our new air2g2 machine which injects extremely high-pressure air into the greens at a depth of about 300mm with minimal disturbance to the surface.

This injection of air fractures the subsoil resulting in benefits to root development, drainage and moisture penetration.

I also did a heavy vert cut and heavy dust in order to minimise as much thatch as possible while still leaving a smooth undisturbed putting surface.

In other works we have received a generous donation from Dean Jacobs From Jacob group of concrete for path works on the 13th.

The volunteers with the expert guidance from Ian Buttler boxed up and prepped the first stage of the works on the ladies tee and concrete has been laid.

There will be three more stages of concreting in order to complete the whole area and I think the results speak for themselves.

Thank you again to Dean, Ian and all the Volunteer group.

I just wanted to take the time to thank the volunteer's group that come in every Thursday and help with maintenance and improvements to the course. They work tirelessly and are a great help to me, no job is too big or too small and their efforts should be congratulated by every member.

Next on the agenda after Christmas will be preparation for the Geoff Ogilvy foundation Pro Am which sounds like will be a great event for the club and we are looking forward to presenting the course in the best way possible.

*- John Anderson  
Course Superintendent*



**John Anderson with Geoff Ogilvy during his recent visit to take a look at the Wodonga course.**

# Men's news

The year is almost done and we can only hope that 2021 brings with it some form of normality so we can get back to all the things we enjoy about playing golf; which for me is much more than just golf.

The December medal was well won by Alex Sweetman with an excellent score on the day of nett 67 (16) which will qualify him to contest the Medal of Medals in 2021.

This year the Medal of Medals was played in conjunction with the December Medal rather than on a separate weekend.

The winner was Paul Gleeson with a neat 72 (12) which was good enough to secure the prestigious event.

Congratulations to both Paul and Alex.

The November Monthly Mug was won by James Ryan with an excellent score of +5 (18) on countback from Adam Besic and Fred Coad.

Best score of the month, with a score that at the moment would take me 36 holes to compile, goes to Joe Owen with an enormous score of 47 point ... yep, all by himself!

While not specifically men's golf, the Mixed Foursomes were played and the champions for 2020 are Judy Langford and Ross Hillary after they had 79 off the stick on the

day, so congratulations to them.

Finally the Men's AGM was held on December 2 in the Clubhouse.

It was a reasonably quiet affair but at least we had a few more faces than last year.

Committee positions were declared open for nominations, both prior to the meeting and from the floor.

At the end of the meeting your Men's committee for 2021 is as follows: Captain - Mark Evans; Vice-Captain – Mick Last; Treasurer – Brett Howells; Secretary – to be determined.

General committee – Dean West, and Brian Manzie (to be confirmed).

I'd like to personally thank Rob Strang, Lew Bainbridge and Brad Younie for their hard work and support over the last couple of years; all of whom did not seek reappointment.

Merry Christmas to you all and may the relaxation of restrictions allow us all to catch up with family and friends to celebrate the end of a pretty ordinary year.

*- Good golfing,  
Mark Evans*

# Veterans' news

Happy Christmas everyone. Hope you all enjoy the season after such an unusual and different year.

Many things are happening for this month and I have a few reports to make.

## **Blackbull**

We had a great day at Blackbull, Yarrowonga with the course being closed for 40 minutes when we arrived.

A few of us decided to hire carts and amazingly the course soaked up all the water and we had a fantastic day on the 68th best course in Australia as noted by a travel writer last week.

Men's places. 1st Joe Gray 39 points, 2nd Ross Black 37 points, 3rd James Murch.

Ladies places 1st Dawn Smith 32 points 2nd Jan Moore 28 points, 3rd Sue Wood 28 points.

Nearest Pins. Ross Black, Tony Smith, Ron Cullinger, Buster Krause, Wilma Roberts (2), Maureen Barry, Molly Krause

## **Ambrose and Christmas Lunch**

Thanks to all for promptly listing, depositing funds and selecting time spots for the shotgun start.

We have more than 80 playing and 68 for lunch and we are hoping we have reasonable weather.

## **NEDVGA Hosting**

We are expecting big numbers for the last event of the year.

If you are not playing and can help us run the event we will be very grateful. We meet on Sunday to make final plans and to draw for timeslots.

## **Program Book 2021**

Gavin and Jen and our committees have edited the draft program and we have all the dates set for NEDVGA, Border Challenge and our regular Bright stay over.

A list for participants will be posted soon and deposits requested.

Kevin Tracy reports he has booked most of the motel.

The Bright NEDVGA event is Monday February 22 and we stay for Tuesday 23 February.

## **Wodonga Veterans' Groups**

Our Wodonga Veterans' Group is for men over 55 years, and ladies over 50 years.

A Veterans (over 55) and Super Veterans (over 65) championship event is conducted with the annual club championships.

There is no annual fee for the Wodonga group and events are normally played on Mondays.

The Program Booklet for 2021 gives exact details of all veterans events.

Many veterans are also members of the NEDVGA group which organises monthly events at district courses. January- Mansfield, February- Bright (option of an extra day too), Benalla, Jubilee-Wangaratta, Yarrowonga, Howlong, Wodonga and Myrtleford.

To play in NEDVGA events you need to be registered by completing an application form.

There is a \$15 annual fee (name badge optional \$7) and/or a \$17 playing fee.

Please place the amounts in an envelope in the Vets Green Box with your name printed on the outside.

Membership application forms are available from the Pro-shop.

A playing list is displayed on the Pro-Shop notice board 10 days before the event for entries and money.

If you are not a current financial NEDVGA member your entry will not be forwarded.

Other very popular events are the annual Border Challenge events between Thurgoona, Albury and Wodonga Golf Clubs.

These have Shotgun starts and include lunch. Full details are in the Program Book and entry lists are posted on the Pro-Shop noticeboard.

*- Des Malone*

# Ladies' news

Merry Christmas Ladies!! What a great run we have had through November and into December.

Lots of golf, great weather and plenty of fun!

The ladies Annual General Meeting was held on November 26; with a good turnout of 29 ladies and quite a few proxy votes from those who couldn't attend.

It's great to see the interest being taken in your committee.

Glenda Smeaton was the returning officer and she announced the new committee as follows.

Marie Barnes (Captain), Jenn Younie (Vice Captain), Di Bainbridge (Secretary), Jan Moore, Dawn Smith, Wilma Roberts and Viv Beehan.

Welcome aboard ladies! I am sure we will continue to do our best to represent and work for the lady members in the coming year.

November's Par Monthly Glass was won by Deb O'Connell with plus 3. Great work Deb!

Decembers Monthly Medal winner was Helen McPhail with 68. Awesome score Helen, well done!

The Medal of Medalists was won by Jenny Garner with 70. Congratulations Jenny!

We celebrated our 'Closing Day Christmas Break-Up' on December 10.

It was a fantastic end to a very strange golfing year.

No masks were required, and we were all allowed to be in one room together, so that in itself was a wonderful finish to the year.

Marie did presentations for the Eclectic and Gobblers, biggest drop in Handicap, Hole in One Trophies, Eagle Trophies and prizes for the days' events.

We had a couple of novelty events on the course which caused great hilarity.

Jenn Younie highlighted a couple of funny mishaps through the year and handed out novelty medals which was very funny.

Naturally we couldn't have a Christmas party without some Christmas games and even tuning up the vocals for a couple of songs.

I think I can safely say a fabulous time was had by all.

There was a special presentation to Dot Looker who is turning 90 years old on December 17.

Apart from flowers, a set of 'unique' place mats, and her lunch money being refunded, she was presented with a \$500 voucher for the Pro Shop from the owners of the Golf Course; to spend anyway she likes; even to pay for her competition fees in the coming year.

Congratulations Dot! We could see you were absolutely overwhelmed. We all love you!!!

On behalf of Marie and the Committee; whatever you may be doing for the festive season; we wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Stay safe and we will see you all in the New Year. I hope Santa is kind to all of you. "Tis the season to be jolly, fa la la la la, la la la la!!"

Happy birthday if you are celebrating a December and January birthday.

Get well wishes, for any of our ladies who may be unwell.

See you around the greens.

- Di Bainbridge  
Secretary



**GOLFING FUN (from top):**  
Jenny Garner receives the trophy for Medal of Medalists from Marie Barnes.  
Dot Looker receives her voucher from Gavin Vearing.  
Helen McPhail is congratulated on her monthly medal by Marie Barnes.  
Deb O'Connell receives her monthly glass from Gavin Vearing.  
**LEFT:** The annual Christmas lunch.

# Around the course

With Wodonga Golf Club pro Gavin Vearing

Wow, what an adventurous 2020.

If we compare it to a round of golf we have had triple bogeys, quadruple bogeys, with some pars, a few birdies and a couple of eagles.

Thank you to all the members who have been so supportive during 2020.

Without your help and support, this year could have been a disaster.

Thank you to my great staff Jenny Garner and Josh Smith for all their extra work during these challenging times.

Jen does a fantastic job doing the admin and all the hard work.

Jen's concept of the handicap challenge was a brilliant idea that gave members something to play for as well as allowing some income to come into the Pro Shop.

I would be lost without her.

Good luck to Josh who will be starting his "Pathway to PGA Membership" in 2021.

The PGA has rebranded the traditional "trainee program" to reflect the changes to the program.

Hopefully we can return back to normal in 2021 with rakes in bunkers, flags out and nearest the pins back in play.

On Monday November 30, we were fortunate to have the 2006 US Open Champion Geoff Ogilvy visit our golf course.

Geoff and I have been friends since 1991, when we both joined Victoria Golf Club in Melbourne.

Geoff has now retired from playing full time golf and heads up a golf course design business.

While we certainly can't promise anything just yet, Geoff was happy to call in to Wodonga on his way up to Sydney to look at our 7th green.

Geoff has taken photos of the 7th green and has taken them back to his design team and he will give us a quote shortly on options on rebuilding the green.

We are excited to announce a new event that our golf club will



**Geoff Ogilvy and I on his recent visit to Wodonga to check out the course.**

be hosting in conjunction with the Geoff Ogilvy Foundation - 'The Gen Z Pro Am Series'. On January 12 the 2006 US Open Champion will compete in a 9-hole shootout with our own Zach Murray.

Geoff will then be the guest speaker at a dinner on Tuesday night which members are invited to attend.

On Wednesday morning we will have a 7:30am shotgun start for members, followed by a barbecue, and a golf clinic by both Ogilvy and Murray.

At 1pm we will have 10 to 15 of Australia's top professionals and 30 of the state's leading amateurs competing in the inaugural Geoff Ogilvy Foundation challenge.

To have a US Open Champion play our golf course is a real treat and we encourage as many members as possible to come out and watch how the best of the best play. See ad on facing page for more information.

I would like to wish all our members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

- Gav

## Gavin's tips:

One of the fastest ways club golfers can improve their golf game is by improving their putting.

After watching thousands of golfers of all levels play, there are two things that stand out between good putters and poor putters.

Number one is the higher the handicap, the more putts get missed on the low side (amateur side) of the hole.

Better putters when they miss, tend to miss putts on the high side (pro side).

When I am coaching, I draw a one metre circle around the hole and use a scoring system.



If you leave the putt more than one metre short you score minus 3.

If you miss the ball short and on the low side you score minus 2.

It is effectively a double negative.

One you have left it short so it had no chance of going in the hole and two, you have missed it on the low side (amateur side).

If you miss the putt short and on the high side the score is minus 1.

If you miss on the low side and get your ball past the hole and within 1 metre of the hole of the hole, you score 1 point.

If you miss on the high side and within one metre past the hole you score 2 points.

If you get the ball in the hole you score 3 points.

If you go past the hole by more than 1 putter length the score is minus 1 as I would prefer to see golfers hit it past the hole than leave it short.

The next five times you go out to play, keep score and see how you go.

The other very noticeable trait between good putters and bad putters is how much the right knee moves during the putting stroke.

With beginners and high handicappers I see a lot of movement with the right knee.

With excellent putters the right knee stays dead still. Please remember to read the fine print with my coaching. You must thank your coach for your good shots and blame yourself for the bad shots.



*in conjunction with the  
Wodonga Golf Club*

*presents the*

## *Gen Z Pro Am Series 2021*

*Tuesday 12th—Wednesday 13th January 2021*

*Bid for your chance to team up with the  
2006 US Open Champion Geoff Ogilvy*

*or*

*Wodonga's 2019 NZ Open Winner Zach Murray  
as they go head to head in a 9 Hole Shoot Out  
(More details to follow soon)*

### **Program of events:**

#### **Tuesday 12th January 2021:**

- 3.30pm: Watch 2006 US Open Champion Geoff Ogilvy and Wodonga's 2019 NZ Open Champion Zach Murray go head to head in a 9 Hole Shoot Out.  
Bid for your chance to team up with each of these Aussie Elite players.  
(Two places available for each of their teams. More details available soon.)
- 6.30pm: Join Geoff Ogilvy and Zach Murray at dinner where they will be Key Note Speakers giving an insight into their experience of life on the tour. \$55.00 per head. Tickets available at Pro Shop.

#### **Wednesday 13th January 2021:**

- 7.30am Members' 18 Hole Stableford Competition. \$20 per head. BBQ following play
- 12.00–12.30pm Geoff Ogilvy & Zach Murray provide a clinic on the 10th Tee

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