



The Vale

Newsletter of Aylesbury Vale Golf Club
www.avgc.co.uk

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Edition 86, February 2022

Comment

Happy New Year!

New Year wishes may be a little belated, but this is our first opportunity to express them. We do hope that all readers, their families and friends have stayed safe and healthy over the Christmas and New Year period (despite the lack of much of a chance of golfing).

Despite there being little golf during the past two months, we trust that this issue will have something of interest for you. - especially the new changes being introduced by the Club management and the joint update from the Men's and Ladies' Handicap Secretaries.

As you read on, you will notice that, as a trial, *The Vale* now has a slightly different look; we hope that you approve.

Don't forget that this is *your* newsletter! All feedback, comments, letters and suggestions - and especially articles - will be more than welcomed by the Editor for we do wish it to be interesting, informative and helpful. Articles for possible publication can be handwritten, typed or sent by email. Please don't worry about spelling, layout, use of English etc, for the Editor will sort that out.

The Editor can be contacted at: lanceredler@yahoo.co.uk

Les Etheridge

We have learned of the death of Les Etheridge - a senior past member of the Club who may have been known by some present Seniors.
His funeral took place in late January.

News and Updates from the Club Management

Welcome back to The Vale and we pass on many best wishes from members to Lance, the Editor, for a speedy recovery following his accident.

This month we deal with easing Covid restrictions and line up some measures to try and enable more members to get tee times in peak demand time.

Coronavirus

Masks are no longer compulsory inside the shop or Clubhouse. However, obviously members may continue to wear one if they would personally feel more comfortable. These members will be fully supported by Clubhouse staff so please don't feel any pressure to remove your mask just because the majority of those around you may have done so. We will still be continuing with the protective perspex screens around bars and in the shop and we will continue to operate table service. The coffee machine in the restaurant can be used once again by members paying with coins – it does give change.

There is no longer a 'one way' system in and out of the Club so members may exit once again on the main footpath. The showers are open again but, as the highest risk environment, we would recommend that only one person uses the showers at a time - but responsibility for this decision now transfers to the individual.

With regard to the course everything is back in use: rakes, benches, ball washers and bins. In higher risk pandemic times we had said that single players had the right to self-isolate and play on their own and this will change now in peak demand periods. (see later).

Tee Bookings

We know that booking tees can be a frustrating experience and we are currently looking at measures to make this easier and ensure that the most popular tee times can be fully utilised by qualifying members. The key period of most demand is 7am through to 11am at weekends and Bank Holidays, so we are going to suggest some changes below that we could bring in in one month's time, 1 March 22. The logic is that it is more important to enable more 7-day members to play in

peak time than it is to give members who have got a tee time the ability to stop others from joining them. We are well aware that you can't please everybody all the time, so any changes will have those for and those against, which is why any change is delayed for a month. This will give members the opportunity to put their heads in the shop and gauge the numbers in support or against the ideas.

Change 1: Members must update their tee booking at least five days in advance of the day of play to accurately reflect who is actually going to play in that tee time (a frequent complaint has been tee times filled with 'Reserved' or 'Guest' when there is no player actually coming).

Change 2: In riskier Covid times a member could click on 'Reserved' to prevent anyone else from joining them. We then made the rule that a member had to contact the person who booked the tee if they wanted to join them at that tee time. It is now deemed more important, now that Covid measures are being relaxed, that more members should be able to play at peak time. After the shop staff have removed the 'Reserved' tee spaces, five days in advance of play, other members will be at liberty to add their names without contacting the tee booker.

(This only applies at weekends and Bank Holidays between 7am and 11am. The logic is that those looking to book before and after should have more access to tee times because more members have moved into the 7am to 11am time bracket).

Change 3: The tee sheets currently open at 8am. BRS have many UK courses that use the system and have told us that response times to your bookings at home would be speeded up if we booked at 7.45am instead, as their mainframe is bombarded 'on the hour' as this is when most Clubs open their tee sheets. Again, feedback required as individuals will have different times that they wake, commute, arrive at work etc.

Change 4: The Club will raise the price of 'with member' green fee rates in this prime time from £25 to £30, when the guest is named and paid for in advance. You can ask your guest to call us on 01525 240196 to pay in advance and

we will type their name in the tee sheet. However, if the generic word 'Guest' is left on the tee sheet, in this prime time, until the actual day, then the price will be £35.

(Too many members are leaving the word 'Guest' on the tee booking when there is, in fact, no guest, thus preventing other members from playing. We will start by requesting the names of all guests, monitor the situation, and only apply punitive measures if the system is being deliberately ignored.)

Change 5: The cost of a non-member green fee, between 11am and 1pm at weekends and Bank Holidays, will rise from £35 to £40 per person.

Change 6: Men's inter-Club matches. Ladies inter-Club matches, Scratch A matches, Scratch B matches and mid-handicap League matches could all have had 'prime time' start times prior to the pandemic, but these have all been moved outside of 7-11am weekend / Bank Holiday. We are not going to enter the Breakfast Chiltern League that would have had a morning tee off time. These changes will collectively free up slots.

Change 7: Once the hour goes back in October, we won't take any weekend or Bank Holiday societies until March 2023. Further, we won't take any societies between Christmas Day and the first working day in January.

Change 8: We are working with Neil Meldrum to have no more than one competition day at weekends, so that at least one day is left clear for casual golf.

Change 9: We will not be introducing any extra Men's or Ladies' competitions at weekends unless a new format replaces an existing competition.

Change 10: We have always offered PGA Professionals and BIGGA greenkeepers courtesy of the course. This will still be the case but not between 7 and 11am on weekends and Bank Holidays.

Change 11: A 5-day member currently pays £15 for a game at the weekend. This will go up to £20 between 7am

and 11am at weekends and Bank Holidays.

Change 12: The price of green fees will generally be going up from 1 March and will be shown in the handbook.

The Course

We thank all members for their patience during the recent winter wet spell. Luke has Facebook contact with other head greenkeepers and has plenty of pictures of muddy fairways on courses that did not close or restrict trolleys during that period.

The ball washers have been sand blasted and re-sprayed and leaks have been fixed. New towels have been attached to the ball washers.

The new recycling bins are now in operation with the left hand bins for 'general waste' and the right hand bins for 'recycling'. Signs will be screwed to the bins shortly.

The greens are good for the time of year but will shortly be receiving feeds of iron.

Soft spikes do gather ice/snow until golf shoes can resemble football boots. Please do tap the ice from your shoes before walking onto the greens.

This month we have bought a new fairway mower and our existing mower will now become the machine that will perform the 'first cut' of rough immediately around the fairways. We have also bought a new trailer.

Catering

The kitchens will have to close on Tuesday 1 February as we are laying a new floor.

On Saturday 5 February and Sunday 6 February (Men's Medal) the kitchens will be open from 7.30am until 5pm. Breakfasts are available and on both days we offer a bacon bap (or sausage) and a bucket of balls for £6 (white cards may be used). We have put on trials before to see if there is any demand, but it is worth trying again now that the morning period is so popular. Indeed, an increased membership means that we may be able to extend the catering hours in summer

Rules of Golf

When You May, or Must, Stop Play (Rule 5.7)

During a round, you must not stop play except in these cases:

- the Committee suspends play;
- you believe there is a danger from lightning, in which case you must report to the Committee;
- in match play, you and your opponent may

agree to stop play for any reason, except if doing so delays the competition.

If you stop play for any reason not allowed under this Rule, or fail to report to the Committee when required, you are **disqualified**.

Captain Valentine Baker MC AFC

In the October 2021 issue (No 83) of The Vale, readers will have seen the story of test pilot Valentine Baker and his untimely death - on land that is now part of AVGC - whilst testing the Martin-Baker prototype fighter aircraft (the MB3) from RAF Wing.

Thanks to the efforts of Valentine Baker's grandson and the two sons of Sir James Martin (designer of the MB3), the latter currently the joint Managing Directors of the Martin-Baker Aircraft Company, four busts of Captain Valentine Baker have recently been created. One of these has generously been donated by this famous ejection seat company to our Club and will shortly be on display adjacent to the upstairs 'Captain Valentine Baker Suite' - more about this next month!



The prototype MB3 fighter



From the Handicap Secretaries

The following note has been jointly created by Alan Connell and Jean Barnett (respectively, Men's and Ladies' Section Handicap Secretaries).

With the onset of winter we are now encountering the usual problems of some of the bunkers being filled with water. Under the new World Handicap System rules, qualifying scores can be submitted throughout the winter, subject to certain restrictions. In regard to bunkers it is possible to declare them as Ground Under Repair (GUR), and a round to be a qualifying round, provided a local rule has been enforced. England Golf have advised that we cannot simply declare all bunkers as GUR for an extended period. We must have regular assessments and declarations of which bunkers are GUR. To address this, AVGC have created a local rule that will be displayed on the notice boards and clarified on the chalk board.

Proposal:

Three categories have been created, as follows:

Category 1- All bunkers are in play;

Category 2- The bunkers listed on the list included as Appendix A are GUR;

Category 3- All bunkers are classed as GUR.

The Club Management will assess course conditions as frequently as is applicable, publishing the category to be applicable on any given day on the notice board.

Hole	Location	Category 2 GUR
1	Fairway	x
2	left of green	
3	Fairway	
4	Fairway Before Green	x
4	left of green	
5	Fairway	x
5	left of green	x
5	centre before green	x
5	right of green	
7	fairway	x
8	fairway	x
9	fairway nearest the tee	x
9	furthest left on fairway	x
9	furthest right on fairway	x
9	Fairway before green	
9	behind green	
10	behind green	x
11	Fairway Before Green	
11	right of green	
12	fairway	x
12	before green	x
14	before green	x
15	right of green	
16	fairway	
16	behind green	
18	before green	
18	right of green	
18	Left of Green	
18	back of green	

The following bunkers are classed as GUR when Category 2 applies.

In **Category 1**, Rule 16.1c applies in the event that the ball or stance in the bunker is affected by water. In summary, free relief can be taken if the ball is dropped within the bunker, but if it requires to be dropped outside the bunker, the penalty is one shot.

In **Category 2**, bunkers not contained within the list of GUR bunkers are dealt with exactly as Category 1. The bunkers included within the list in Appendix A are treated exactly as Category 3.

In **Category 3** the following Local Rule applies:

'The flooded bunkers listed in Appendix A in Category 2 conditions, and all bunkers in Category 3 conditions, are ground under repair in the General Area. They are not treated as a bunker during the round. If the player's ball lies in or touches this ground under repair or the ground under repair interferes with the player's stance or area of intended swing, the player may take free relief under rule 16.1b. All other bunkers on the course, whether they contain temporary water or not, are still bunkers for all purposes under the Rules.'

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:
(alanconnellAVGC@outlook.com)

Hole-in-One

Seniors' Captain Keith Loxton was very seasonally attired when achieving his hole-in-one, at the 8th, on 22 December. Well done, Keith!



Men

A Word from the Men's Captain...

Hi All

Firstly, although a little late, Happy New Year. I hope you all had a great time during the festive period and managed to catch up with family and friends. The early part of December saw some really cold weather and the 'No Turkey Trot' saw some members chipping and putting whilst still wearing their golf mittens in order to fight off the cold. The weather also took its toll over the festive period, with the course closed due to heavy and persistent rainfall. Whilst the better weather has returned it is still winter and another bout of bad weather can be just around the corner.

It was great to see the return of the 'Beer & String' competition run by Binzy, with Lee Stopher a worthy winner on -4. The day went really well with the atmosphere starting to feel more like the AVGC of old. We can only hope this feeling continues to grow over the coming weeks and months.

You should have noticed that you can no longer register for a General Play round, using the HowDidiDo (HDID) mobile app, from home nor can you register and then enter a score within a few minutes. There have been numerous communications on this on the Men's Section website, via HDID email and on social media. It is disappointing that we are still routinely deleting General Play rounds that have not been registered prior to teeing off and this will continue to be done. It is a requirement of England Golf (it always has been) to pre-register your intent to submit a General Play round prior to teeing off. If the Men's Committee fail to manage this activity it is possible that England Golf could

suspend our ability to submit this activity. Members who continue to routinely submit non-compliant rounds could be subject to sanctions deemed appropriate by the committee.

On a lighter note, Justin McDonald has won the right to use the Captains' Charity parking space at the front of the car park. Thanks to all those who took part and raised £164 for the charity and thanks to Peter Codrai for organising the draw. I encourage Justin to name and shame anyone who he finds (Keith McGoverne) in his parking space over the coming months. Over the coming months we will be running some sweepstakes and silent auctions for 4-ball vouchers to raise money for the charity, so please get involved and grab yourself a bargain. My thanks, as always, go to Nick Bowden who continues to run the virtual roll up and is running another round of 'Last Man Standing'.

It is great to see Dave Lea returning to the Club. Mark Mansfield continues to provide valuable support whilst Dave slowly comes back. Let's make sure we all do everything we can to make the competitions as easy and painless as we can for these gentlemen, including turning up in plenty of time, making sure we pay the entry fee quickly, making sure we know what the rules of the day are, fully completing scorecards (including Stableford points), submitting scores shortly after completing your round, making sure you are able to validate somebody else's score and, finally, if you need to cancel please do so in good time.

Keep swinging.

Neil Meldrum

Competitions

Medal
5 December

Div 1
1st: Will Bond nett 70
2nd: Alister Thorne nett 71
3rd: Nicky Bowden nett 73
Div 2
1st: Edward Jordan nett 72
2nd: Graham Hale nett 72
3rd: David Stonhill nett 74
Div 3
1st: James Hutchins nett 76
2nd: Terry Lock nett 77
3rd: Keith Wallace nett 78

Stableford
15 January

Div 1
1st: Stephen Osborne 37 Pts
2nd: Matthew Moran 36 Pts
3rd: Nick Russell 36 Pts
Div 2
1st: Adrian Fallon 34 Pts
2nd: Andrew Pye 34 Pts
3rd: Greg Young 34 Pts
Div 3
1st: Tim O'Sullivan 35 Pts
2nd: Phil Smith 33 Pts
3rd: Colin Welch 32 Pts

Seniors

A Word from the Seniors' Captain...

Hi All,

Welcome to Golf 2022! After the experiences of the last two winters when we have been locked down and locked out of golf, I never thought I would relish Winter Golf quite so much. Mind you, the wet weather at the end of December meant that the course had to close, at least not for as long. Since our return, though, the course has been in its usual great shape.

Unfortunately, some of our members haven't fared too well in recent weeks, either through ill health or injury, to themselves or a loved one. We wish them well and hope to see them all back to AVGC soon.

We have been running our usual winter programme and since the last edition of The Vale the successful winners were:

6th December - Christmas Stableford Steve Malone 40 pts; 13 December - Winter 8 (5) Adrian Wood 41 pts; 17th January - Winter 8 (6) Steve Malone 36 pts. Our new social 'filler', a five-round league, was won by Adrian King with 20 cumulative points. Well done to them all.

The Seniors' Section has made some administrative changes to the running of its 'primary' competitions which are subject to an entry fee. From 1 January all entry fees must be prepaid by bank transfer. If you plan to enter any Senior's competition, please ensure you have established your competition account. Details are available from the Seniors' Treasurer, Mike Boden.

Our Calendar for 2022/23 has now been finalised. For those using a digital calendar, this is now available for download from the Seniors' Website to use on your favourite device. The usual Club handbook will be available in due course.

I fear we haven't seen the back of the winter yet, but let's hope it's not too extreme and we manage to get our regular golf in.

See you on the course.

Cheers...

Keith Loxton

Competitions

Christmas Stableford 6 December	1 st : Steve Malone 40 Pts 2 nd : Martin Hollands 35 Pts 3 rd : Terry Curtis 34 Pts
Winter Eight (5) 13 December	1 st : Adrian Wood 41 Pts 2 nd : Adrian King 35 Pts 3 rd : Adrian Redford 34 Pts
Casual League 1 (3) 20 December	1 st : Steve Malone 39 Pts 2 nd : Adrian King 39 Pts 3 rd : Adrian Redford 37 Pts
Winter Eight (6) 17 January	1 st : Steve Malone 36 Pts 2 nd : Nigel Welling 35 Pts 3 rd : Adrian King 34 Pts
Casual League 1 (5) 24 January	1 st : Micky Parslow 37 Pts 2 nd : Terry Neve 37 Pts 3 rd : Philip Salt 35 Pts

Ladies

A Word from the Ladies' Section...

Midweek competitions will begin again in March when we hope to see participation rise again to our usual good turnout. Similarly, weekend competitions will appear on HowDidiDo so please ladies, put your name down and support the Section as this has been particularly poorly supported.

Our AGM has been fixed for Saturday 5 March at 3pm so please mark the date in your diary and expect the usual pre-meeting paperwork to appear in your inbox very soon.

Lesley Wright

Competitions

Medal	1 st : Jean Barnett nett 80
5 December	2 nd : Lorraine Fox nett 95
	3 rd : Clare Garrett nett 100

Stableford	1 st : Jean Barnett 31 Pts
17 December	2 nd : Charlotte Simpson 29 Pts
	3 rd : Julie Hoar 23 Pts

Juniors

There is no Junior report this month.

and in Conclusion...

...the last word is... stay safe!

...and a touch of humour... your New Year resolution should have been to be the person your dog thinks you are.

Lance Redler

Editor

cc: Club Professionals, charities

What's On This Month
(All-Section and Club events are in **bold**)

Men

Sunday 6 February – Medal 0730-1200

Monday 14-Friday 18 February – midweek Stableford

Seniors

Wednesday 2 February – competition 0800-1000

Monday 7 February – Casual League 2 (2) 0800-1000

Wednesday 9 February – competition 0800-1000

Monday 14 February – Winter Eight 8 (7) 0800-1000

Monday 14-Friday 18 February – midweek Stableford

Tuesday 15 February – Winter League away match vs Little Hay

Wednesday 16 February – competition 0800-1000

Monday 21 February – Casual League 2 (3) – 0745-1000

Wednesday 23 February – competition 0800-1000

Monday 28 February – Casual League 2 (4) 0815-1000

Monday 28 February – Winter League away match vs Chartridge Park

Ladies

Wednesday 2 February – competition 1000-1030

Sunday 6 February – Medal 0730-1200

Monday 7 February – competition 1000-1030

Wednesday 9 February – Medal 1000-1030

Monday 14 February – competition 1000-1100

Wednesday 16 February – competition 1000-1030

Sunday 20 February – Stableford 0930-1000

Monday 21 February – competition 1000-1100

Wednesday 23 February – competition 1000-1100

Monday 28 February – competition 1000-1100

Key Contacts

Club Management

e-mail: info@avgc.co.uk

www.avgc.co.uk

Tel: 01525 240196

Memberships/Shop/Tee bookings: Chris Wright, Garry Hutchinson, Jason Thornalley, Dan Lazar

Restaurant/Functions: Jason Thornalley, Chris Wright

Head Chef: Heinz Simon

Head Greenkeeper: Luke Foley

Teaching Professionals: Russell Phillips 07843 692948 or r.phillips@avgc.co.uk

Terry Bunyan 07588 272322 or

terrygolf1965@gmail.com

Men

Captain: Neil Meldrum

Vice-Captain: Howard Matthews

Treasurer: Keith Loxton

Competition Secretary: Dave Lea

Admin Secretary: John Barker

Handicap Secretary: Alan Connell

5-Day Representative: Peter Codrai

Members' Reps: Darren Horne, Brian Smith

Seniors

Captain: Keith Loxton

Vice-Captain: post vacant

Treasurer: Mike Boden

Competition Secretary: Dave Lea

Admin Secretary: Mike Pelizzoni

Social Secretary: Peter Codrai

Members' Reps: Jim Gales, Terry Neve

Ladies

Captain: post vacant

Vice-Captain: Charlotte Simpson

Admin Secretary: Lesley Wright

Treasurer: Charlotte Simpson

Weekend Comp Secretary: Sheila Perkins

Midweek Comp Secretary: Jackie Boden

Handicap Secretary: Jean Barnett

Members' Reps: Lorraine Fox, Jean Hill, Jane Roche

Juniors

Captain: Charlie Gould

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