



***Men's Annual General  
Meeting***

Will be held in the Clubhouse

Saturday, 7th December 2024

at 4.30pm

**Agenda**

1. Minutes of last Men's Annual General Meeting 2023
2. Men's Honorary Secretary's Report
3. Handicap Report
4. Junior Convenor Report
5. Notice of Motion
6. Any other business
7. Election of Officers & Committee

Declan O'Toole,

Men's Honorary Secretary

**COPIES OF MINUTES OF THE MEN'S  
2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE CIRCULATED ON WEBSITE  
&  
ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE BY ARRANGEMENT**

## **Men's Hon. Sec. Report for 2024 A.G.M.**

As the golf season draws to a close, I am pleased to report the successful completion of a full calendar of events throughout 2024. On behalf of the Men's Committee, I hope this has been another enjoyable and rewarding year for all our members.

The club has made solid progress this year, and much credit is due to our Captain, Gerry McGrath, his Vice-Captain, Cathal O'Donohoe, and our President, Pat Donnellan, who have tirelessly worked to represent Courtown Golf Club and its members, both within the club and on a broader stage.

A special thanks goes to our Professional team, Paul and Martin, who have been instrumental in facilitating all competitions, green fees, and golf classics throughout the year. Their support has been invaluable, and we greatly appreciate their continued dedication. Our office staff, greenkeeping team, and bar and restaurant personnel also deserve recognition for the outstanding service they provide to our members.

The Men's Committee of 2024 has put in tremendous effort throughout the year. From organising competitions and managing handicaps to entering and selecting interclub teams, promoting the men's section, welcoming new members, and supporting junior golf, their commitment has been unwavering. It's important to recognise that these tasks require significant coordination, from arranging meetings to gathering relevant information. I want to acknowledge the substantial time and energy that the committee and their sub-committees have invested to ensure that men's golf runs smoothly.

Significant work has also been done on both the course and the clubhouse over the year. We have received excellent feedback on the condition and presentation of the course, and this success is largely due to our course improvement programme. A key part of this is the sanding of greens and fairways, which, though not always popular with members, is crucial for maintaining course standards. We do our best to schedule this with minimal disruption. A big thank you to everyone involved in these projects.

One of the highlights of the year was the completion of our new practice facility, an important addition to our club's infrastructure. This facility will play a vital role in the development of the club and contribute greatly to our members' experience in the years to come.

We were delighted to welcome many new members to the club in 2024. To each of you, we extend a warm Courtown welcome. We hope that your time here will be both enjoyable and fulfilling, and we look forward to your active participation in the club for many years ahead.

## **Teams 2024**

Competitions entered:

Barton Shield, Senior Cup, Junior Cup, Barton Cup, Jimmy Bruen Shield, Pierce Purcell Shield, Leinster Men's Trophy.

Our Barton Shield & Senior Cup teams performed very well with our Barton Shield team missing out on qualifications by one shot. Our Senior Cup got beaten in the Regional Semi Finals by the eventual winners.

These are our two flagships teams who continue to perform admirably in these competitions.

The Junior Cup, Barton Cup, Jimmy Bruen Shield, and Pierce Purcell teams all exited in the first round. The Leinster Men's Trophy lost narrowly in the second round. Our Leinster Men's Fourball Team performed exceptionally well, winning 4 rounds and only losing in the Leinster Semi Final. This team was especially notable for the number of new players that got to represent the club for the first time.

Overall, it was a somewhat disappointing year on the men's team front.

## **Competitions Report**

After a slow start to the season due to unprecedented rain, the playing season got into full swing from the middle of April. We had a much-varied programme of competitions throughout the season.

Our three main competitions were:

### **Captain Gerry's Qualifying and final day**

In total, 300 players took part which was excellent considering the Saturday qualifying was beset by dreadful conditions, but thankfully there was a vast improvement for the second and final days. There was some excellent play on the final day where Paul Kavanagh emerged as the winner. It was noticeable the amount of low handicap players that featured on the leaderboard.

### **President Pat's Qualifying and Final Day**

We had glorious weather for this 2 day event. In total, 244 took part. After an exciting final 9 holes, Colin Breen emerged as a worthy winner.

## **Glen Fuels Summer Series**

This competition continues to grow and gain popularity. Over the 12 week period of qualifying there were over 2,500 rounds of golf played. Patrick Hughes emerged as the winner on the final day. This is a valuable source of income for the club. I want to thank Glen Fuels for coming on board as the new sponsor of the event. Many thanks to Colin for organising the sponsorship and to Larry O'Brien for doing the presentation of prizes.

Despite the successful season, there are some areas that continue to show concern, namely slow play which is a consistent and continuous problem. Slow play ruins the enjoyment for many, no one wants to spend over 5 hours on a golf course. The number of pairings in fourball competitions continue to decline. This problem is not unique to Courtown.

I would like to thank all members of the Competitions Committee (Karl, Colin, Paul, Seamus, Cathal, and John ((X2))) for their help in organising and checking cards. Almost all competitions are finalised and published on the day of play. I would especially like to thank Kieran Murphy for all his advice and help throughout the year. I would also like to thank our Front Office staff for all their hard work throughout the year.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Men's Committee for their hard work and dedication throughout 2024. The committee members, who volunteered their time to make this year a success, are:

- **Gerry McGrath**
- **Cathal O'Donohoe**
- **Paul Doran**
- **John Sheridan**
- **John Langan Murphy**
- **Conor Flynn**
- **Adrian Copeland**
- **Declan O'Toole**

Finally, I would like to congratulate our outgoing Captain, Gerry McGrath, for a fantastic year of golf and extend best wishes to our incoming Captain, Cathal O'Donohoe, for a successful 2025 season.

Yours in Golf,

**Declan O'Toole**  
Men's Honorary Secretary

## Courtown Golf Club Men's AGM Handicap Report 2024

### **A number of changes were introduced to the WHS on 1<sup>st</sup> April this year:**

- The Course Handicap calculation was changed to take account of the Course Rating minus the Par of the course. This new calculation has resulted in Course Handicap adjustments with increases of +1.6 and +0.8 for White and Green respectively, and a decrease of -2.6 for Red Tees.
- New calculations were introduced for best scores in 18-hole four-ball competitions. The criteria for a score to count towards a player's handicap are:
  1. Team scores at least 6 points better than par (42pts)
  2. A player scores on at least 9 holes
  3. A player's individual 18-hole score is  $\geq 36$  pts, calculated by adding up their own score, +1.5 for every hole that their partner scores on, or +1 if their partner only scores 1pt
- A change was made to the way that scores for holes not played are calculated. An expected Score Differential for the hole or holes not played is calculated, based on a given Handicap Index and a course of standard difficulty. This results in a different score to the net double bogey that is applied to holes that are started, but not finished. That's why it's important to select correctly when inputting scores on the computer.
- A small change was made to the way that a playing handicap is calculated on computer. Rounding off the decimal place only occurs after the playing handicap is calculated, resulting in a small difference between the computer-generated handicap and the ones displayed on the course charts. The computer-generated handicap, or the one generated on the Clubnet app, should always be used where possible. As most competitions use calculated handicaps printed on a sticker, this mainly affects Matchplay competitions where there is no printed sticker.
- Competitions that are played using a shorter course (10 to 17 holes) can now be acceptable for handicap purposes. A limitation is that the course must include a full Front 9 or Back 9.

### **Acceptable Scores for Handicap Counting in Winter**

We lost seven months of counting scores last winter because of the wet ground conditions. This is a large amount of data to lose and the committee consider that it is worth trying to make some improvements to maximise the number of counting months of the year. While handicaps are

reviewed during the winter, it's impossible to match the daily increases or decreases that WHS calculates. The following arrangements can allow for a much longer counting period:

- There is no longer a prescribed inactive season within Ireland and scores can be returned for handicapping purposes at any time as long as the requirements of Rule 2.1 (Acceptability of Scores) in the Rules of Handicapping are met. This means that where explicitly required due to course conditions, under the Rules of Golf, clubs now have the discretion to use Model Local Rules such as E-3 (Preferred Lies) and/or E-2 (Cleaning Ball) throughout the year, on occasions when one, or both, of these Local Rules are necessary to run competitions during unfavourable course conditions.
- Model Local Rule E-3 (Preferred Lies) - Allows the lie to be preferred on areas cut to fairway height or less in the General Area within 6" of the original lie, and no closer to the hole. (Not allowed in Rough)
- Model Local Rule E-2 (Cleaning Ball) -Allows for marking, lifting, cleaning and replacing on the exact same spot and may be used anywhere within the General Area (i.e. Fairway and Rough).
- Embedded Balls - An embedded ball is one which is lying below the level of the ground in its own pitch mark, and can be anywhere in the General Area. Free relief is allowed throughout the year by dropping within one club-length no nearer the hole.
- Bunkers - Rake and Place in the bunkers is never allowed for handicap counting competitions. The solution here is to maintain some bunkers and designate others as GUR as they become unplayable. The usual relief for GUR then applies.
- Shortened Courses - The WHS change, which allows for acceptable scores for handicap purposes to be calculated from any combination of holes from 9 to 18, facilitates counting scores from reduced courses during the winter months. The requirement for a course to include a full front or back 9 should be considered when selecting the shortened course on days where counting scores is a possibility.

### **Handicap Committee activity during the year**

1. Two handicap reviews were completed in the non-counting period, one in January, and one in May, resulting in a number of handicap adjustments. Both singles and fourball scores were considered.
2. Adjustments were made following Winter League and Club Matchplay competitions.

3. The committee liaised with various team managers to provide handicap resources for the selection of teams.
4. A temporary course rating for Men's Red Tees was given by Golf Ireland.
5. Fifty-three new handicaps (including junior boys) were issued during the year. The committee encourages any member without a handicap to return attested scorecards with 54 holes in 9-hole or 18-hole format.
6. The annual Handicap Review was recently completed in mid-November and all adjustments have been communicated to Golf Ireland. Many aspects of play were considered, using a number of reports available on the Golf Ireland Clubhouse platform.

I would once again like to thank the members of the Handicap Committee, and the Captain and Vice-Captain, for their contributions and guidance during the year. I would also like to thank the members for their courtesy and cooperation. This finishes my four years as handicap secretary and I am happy to pass on the baton to the next willing soldier.

***Paul Doran***

(Handicap Secretary)

## **Junior Convenor's Report for 2024 A.G.M.**

### **More kids playing golf.**

This year saw a huge increase in the amount of junior members across all age categories. With probably the biggest increase coming in the 13-15 year old age category. In total there was 220 paid up junior members generating €27,564 in membership revenue for the club. These juniors pay a fee ranging between €57 and €202 depending on their age and how many years they have been a member. We continue to accept a high volume of juniors at a relatively low entry cost. Naturally there will be drop off but I believe this approach is working well to introducing a large number of kids to golf in Courtown Golf Club. I believe we should continue with this approach and we will continue to reap the rewards in years to come as well as the significant revenue they generate currently. Having a lot of beginners starting at the one time can cause a few problems and it was necessary to stop taking new junior boy members as we were at capacity.

### **New junior policy**

We want our juniors to progress, get their handicap down and go on and represent the club in future teams. To do this, we encourage our juniors to play as often as they can. During the year however, there were occasions when juniors were putting their names down at inappropriate times. There was also times when juniors were playing the course without the appropriate level of skill or supervision. Playing with their friends is key to their enjoyment of the game and we want to maintain this but put some guidelines around it. A new junior playing policy was introduced and circulated to all juniors and, more particularly, their parents- this is copied below. It outlines who and when the course can be accessed.

### **Qualified Junior Member (QJM) and Junior Member (JM)**

We introduced this status on Clubnet as a way for members to recognise if they are putting their name down with juniors, particularly in competitions. A QJM is a junior who has achieved the necessary handicap of 24 for boys and 40 for girls to be eligible to play in all adult competitions. They have also passed a test on the rules of golf. QJM status is not age dependant. A JM may still play golf on competition days at off peak times only and are not eligible to play in the competition.

### **Practice Facility**

The opening of the practice facility has been a fantastic addition to the junior section. Having this facility is part of the reason we have had such an increase in junior members this year. It is well used and we have seen a lot of handicaps come tumbling down from those who use it. I expect us to see a lot more juniors playing off single figures soon. It has been much easier to host practice sessions and we have had 3-4 lessons available per week over the summer period for our juniors to attend and the quality of those practice sessions has improved. As time progresses, we will improve the way we deliver practice sessions to get the most out of the sessions and it will be a great addition for many years. It may be a good idea to include a ticket to the range for all junior members as part of their membership fee to encourage them to use it outside of supervised practice sessions.



## **Competitions**

As we have done over the last number of years, we have held bi weekly junior competitions. These have been well supported and usually between 20-30 play each day. We took a team of 6 boys to Kilkenny to the U15 interclub. There was some great golf on the day but we lost out on the 21<sup>th</sup> hole in the last match against a team of very low handicap players. Our Cadets took part in the golf sixes inter-club league with Wexford and Rosslare.

## **Girls golf.**

While boys golf in Courtown is very strong from a playing numbers point of view; unfortunately the same cannot be said for girls golf and we have a lot more work to do in attracting and keeping junior girls. This will be the focus for next season. Golf Ireland have run some good initiatives aimed at junior girls. 10 girls from Courtown attended a girl's festival of golf day in Greystones that was focused on fun games, social activities as well as playing some holes. We have run a girl's introduction to golf block of lessons for 10 complete beginners through September and October and have had great feedback from this and we will continue to run similar programs. We have held girls only lessons during the summer. However more needs to be done. A key factor in attracting girls is the club environment. They need to be made feel welcome and they need to play with their peers. They are often self-conscious about playing a difficult game like golf in front of others. A stepped approach to build confidence in a fun environment is key. This is difficult as there simply isn't enough girls to have a competition with just girls. It is also difficult to build a golf community with so few girls a critical mass is needed. We will aim to address this with further introduction to golf lessons, linking with the schools and running girls golf initiatives. If you have an interest in helping out with this, I would love to hear from you.

If you were in the club on any day or evening during the summer you would have seen lots of kids out playing golf with their friends-enjoying themselves and their golf. That to me is the measure of a very successful year in Junior golf.

*Adrian Copeland*  
(Junior Convenor)