

President's Report – ABGU AGM Sat 28 November 2009

I'd like to start off by thanking all the Clubs who very kindly provided the courtesy of their courses for our fixtures this year. We appreciate this greatly and fully realise that in doing so these clubs very often lose considerable revenue. For this reason alone it is important that we strive to maintain and strengthen our links with all throughout our Area. Thanks go to the members of the Executive who negotiate and agree dates with their committees throughout the year.

All our competitions were completed successfully and overall the numbers taking part were very good. On some occasions it was necessary for a few of our Executive to make phone calls to remind or tell club members that an event was taking place and without this effort the numbers competing would have been greatly reduced. I think we need to have a fresh look at how we advertise and promote our fixtures. Our prizemoney is excellent and perhaps we can produce more "eye catching" posters which highlight these amounts and hopefully generate greater participation. It is important to make ends meet or better still make a profit from our fixtures and the more golfers we can attract the better. We are totally dependant on each club displaying the notices which we distribute and it is my feeling that at clubs where we are aware of the name of the match secretaries then these should be sent directly to these people and not through their respective Club secretaries. At our last meeting Graham Bolton presented a "Competition Conditions of Entry" notice which will come into play for all the County events next year. This will eliminate any problems which may arise on the day and I would like to thank him for putting this together. I would also like to thank all the members of the Executive who willingly or otherwise gave up their Saturdays and Sundays to run this year's events.

Regrettably this is the last year in which the Area Team Championship will be played in its' present format. We are all disappointed in the decision which has been taken. From next year the Championship will be played over a weekend at two adjacent courses located within the central belt at venues which as yet have to be finalised. For many years the event was played over three weekends at varying venues with only two areas competing at any one time. This resulted in a weekend where relationships were initiated and improved with the highlight being the competitive nature in which the ties were played. With all the areas competing it is my feeling that the new format will not generate this type of rapport. This change impacts greater on Argyll & Bute than any other area. From now on our only competitive outing each year will be over one weekend and any other fixtures we desire will have to be arranged as friendlies and this is where the costs come in. Whilst I realise all the areas will be in a similar situation it is much easier for the majority to arrange friendlies as they are within easy reach of one another. I am glad to say however that one or two of the areas have hinted that they would be happy to have us along at some time during next season. My thanks to our Team Captain Calum McKirdy, Graham Bolton and Les Pirie for organising the matches this year. Calum will give us an update on this topic very shortly.

Coaching for eight boys with financial assistance to a further two has commenced again this year. I've got to say I feel we've got it right as far as the ages of the participants are concerned and the progress shown by the majority is testament to this decision being made a few years ago to concentrate on golfers within the younger age group. Our Coaching Convener Les Pirie puts a lot of time and effort into managing the group and I would like to thank him for all his hard work. I'm sure he finds the task extremely rewarding.

In conclusion I would like to thank Richard Biggart for his Secretarial duties. Richard has indicated that he wishes to stand down from this position and on your behalf I would like to thank him for the work he has carried out throughout the last few years. We are extremely fortunate to have Graham Bolton as our Treasurer. Apart from his accounting skills he has so much experience when it comes to golf matters and we certainly take full advantage of his knowledge. So thanks to Graham for his continued work. A special thanks to John Weir our SGU Rep who is our "voice" at the Scottish Golf Union meetings who spends many hours away from home on our behalf. As an Executive I consider we have "gelled" well and I appreciate greatly the co-operation which has been provided by all throughout the year. Our Constitution states that it is our role to foster and maintain a high standard of amateur golf throughout Argyll & Bute and we must be forever striving to achieve this aim. I look forward to being part of the team for a further term.