

Royal Tara Golf Club



Annual Report & Accounts 2020

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Notice of the

Annual General Meeting of the Joint Club

Notice is hereby given that the 20th Annual General Meeting of the Joint Club will be held using Zoom Video Conferencing

at

7.30 pm on Wednesday 2nd December 2020 for the following purposes:

1. To approve the minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 4th December 2019.
2. To consider the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2020.
3. To elect the Auditors
4. To elect the Officers
5. To elect the Members of the Board of Management
6. To transact Any Other Business as is incidental to an Annual General Meeting by permission of the Chairman.

By order of the Board of Management

**Ray Keogh
Honorary Secretary**

Board of Management 2020

Chairman	Mr. Tom Byrne
Captain	Mr. Seán Brennan
Lady Captain	Mrs. Barbara O'Rourke
Hon. Secretary	Mr. Ray Keogh
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs. Theresa Brennan
Hon. Course Secretary	Mr. Mark O'Rourke
Vice Captains	Mr. Bob Turley & Ms. Regina Lynch

Committee

Mr. Michael Killeen
Mr. Frank Gleeson
Mr. Tom Heneghan

Trustees

Mr. Paul Brady, Mr. John McGrath, Mr. Denis Smyth

Ladies Committee 2020

Lady President	Mrs. Sheila Murrey
Lady Captain	Mrs. Barbara O'Rourke
Lady Vice Captain	Ms. Regina Lynch
Hon. Secretary	Ms. Anne Randles
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs. Siobhan Carey
Hon. Competition Secretary	Mrs. Marie Tooher
Hon. Handicap Secretary	Mrs. Mary Breen

Committee

Mrs. Margaret Keane (ex officio)
Mrs. Bridget Davis
Mrs. Kathleen Dillon
Mrs. Marie Foley
Mrs. Lil Hennelly
Mrs. Mary Alice Kelly
Ms. Siobhan Kelly
Mrs. Lavinia Lynch

Mens Committee 2020

President	Mr. Liam Lynch
Captain	Mr. Seán Brennan
Vice-Captain	Mr. Bob Turley
Hon. Secretary	Mr. John Connolly
Hon. Treasurer	Mr. Luke Bowden
Hon. Handicap & Competition Secretary	Mr. John Lyons

Committee

Mr. Larry O'Rourke (ex officio)
Mr. Jim Donnelly
Mr. Ian Gavin
Mr. Noel McLoughlin
Mr. Kahal Monerawela
Mr. Brendan Mulvey
Mr. David O'Brien
Mr. Jerry O'Donoghue
Mr. Bill Slattery

**Minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting of the
Joint Club of Royal Tara Golf Club
Held in the Clubhouse on 4th December 2019.**

Chairman Mr. Larry O'Rourke welcomed all and listed apologies for non-attendance from a number of Members.

The Chairman recalled those Members who had passed away during the year:

Martin Cafferty, Rose Crookes, Pat Davis, Patrick Ennis, Colin Foley, Jimmy Foley, John Foley George Foster, Seamus Gohery, Robert Harris, Peter Kearney, Joe Hickey, Ann Ludden, P.J.Masterson, James Moriarty, Alice Mulvany.

1. To approve the Minutes of the 18th AGM held on the Wednesday 5th December 2018

The minutes of the 18th Annual general Meeting of the Joint Club were taken as read and approved on the proposal of Mr. Michael Neylon and seconded by Mr. Luke Bowden.

2. To consider the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2019.

Mr Larry O'Rourke asked the Hon Treasurer, Mrs. Theresa Brennan, to present her report.

Mrs. Brennan gave a brief presentation of the income streams and main expenditures and reported that the Profit and Loss Account showed an excess of income over expenditure of €46,505 for the year ending 31st August 2019 which was in line with budget.

Notable changes in income included an increase of €15k in membership subscriptions, an increase of approx. €10k in Green Fee income and a contribution of €10.5k from the Club 200 draw while Bar sales fell by €19k.

Total expenditure for the year amounted to €432, an increase of €31k. Major increases included a rise of €13k in machinery repairs, an increase of €7k in utilities and an increase of approx. €16k in general repairs due to the clubhouse boiler chimney repair and restaurant and furniture refurbishment. The net cash inflow for the year was €27,515 which delivered a closing balance of €138,563 at 31st August 2019.

The amounts remaining on the Clubhouse and Machinery Loans are €630k and €128k respectively.

Mrs. Brennan summarised the presentation by reminding the meeting that the main financial challenges facing the Club were to retain financial stability, purchase replacement course machinery, secure a connection to the public sewerage system, provide for the replacement of kitchen equipment and increase our cash reserves to meet inevitable increases in overheads.

The Hon. Treasurer's report was adopted on the proposal of Ms. Regina Lynch and seconded by Ms. Anne Randles.

3. Election of Auditors

On the proposal of Mrs. Theresa Brennan and seconded by Mr. Ray Keogh, Messrs S P Muldoon & Co. were retained as auditors for the coming year.

4. Election of Officers:

On the proposal of Mrs. Barbara O'Rourke and seconded by Mr. Seán Brennan, Mr. Tom Byrne was re-elected Chairman of the Board of Management.

On the proposal of Mr. Bob Turley and seconded by Mr. Tom Byrne Mr. Ray Keogh was elected Honorary Secretary.

On the proposal of Mr. Frank Gleeson and seconded by Mr. Michael Killeen, Mrs. Theresa Brennan was re-elected Honorary Treasurer.

On the proposal of Mrs. Theresa Brennan and seconded by Mr. Tom Byrne, Mr. Mark O'Rourke was re-elected Honorary Course Secretary.

5. Election of Members of the Board of Management

The following were elected to the Board of Management:

House Convenor - Mr. Tom Heneghan

Business Development Convenor - Mr. Michael Killeen.

Business Development Convenor - Mr. Frank Gleeson.

6. To consider and if thought fit to pass the following motions:

Motion No. 1:

"That the Board of Management shall be authorised to borrow money not exceeding €225,000.00 from financial institutions and/or members to fund capital investment projects, to include a connection to the public sewerage scheme".

This motion was proposed by Mrs. Theresa Brennan and seconded by Mr. Michael Killeen. The chairman put the motion to the floor and the motion was passed unanimously.

Motion 2

"That the annual subscription rates for Full Members (exclusive of GUI and ILGU affiliation fees) shall be:

Ordinary member: €1,048
Husband and wife: €998 each".

This motion was proposed by Mrs. Theresa Brennan and seconded by Mr. Bob Turley and was carried unanimously.

Motion 3

“That a Restaurant Prepayment of €50.00 be payable by all Full Members to be redeemable through purchases in the restaurant, and that the existing Bar Prepayment of €75.00 payable by all Full Members be reduced to €50.00 to be redeemable through purchases in the bar”.

Motion 3 was proposed by Mrs. Margaret Keane and seconded by Mr. Sean Brennan and was carried unanimously.

Motion 4

That the following new clause 13.7.3 be inserted in the constitution:

“13.7.3: A new member on being elected to membership of the Club shall be entitled to a reduction in their Annual Club Subscription for their first year of membership only. This rule shall not apply to any new member who was a Full Member of the club in the previous five years. This rule shall apply to Full Members only. The amount of such reduction shall initially be fixed by the Board of Management under Sub-Clause 4.3.3 and ratified or altered at the next Annual or Special General Meeting of the Joint Club.”

The motion was proposed by Mr. Bob Turley and seconded by Mrs. Barbara O'Rourke. The Chairman opened the motion to the floor and following a number of clarifications the motion was carried by a majority in excess of two thirds of those present.

Motion 5

“That the constitution be amended by insertion of the following new clause 11.2.3:

11.2.3: Corporate Member shall comprise a company or person who, having paid the appropriate Entrance Fee, Annual Subscription and Levy (if any) applicable to this category, shall be entitled to attend and vote at all Annual General and all Special General Meetings of either the Men's or the Ladies' Clubs and at all Annual General and all Special General Meetings of the Joint Club. A Corporate Member shall be entitled to nominate each year one person to be its corporate nominee for the relevant membership year and which nominee, subject to approval by the Board, shall become a Full Member for that year”.

That Clause 11.1.1 of the constitution be amended by the deletion of the line “Full members: 900” and the insertion of the line: “Full Members and Corporate Members 900”.

This motion was proposed by Mr. Frank Gleeson and seconded by Mr. Michael Killeen. The motion was carried by a majority in excess of two thirds of those present.

7. To transact Any Other Business as is incidental to an Annual General Meeting by permission of the Chairman.

On opening the meeting for any other business, Mr. Francis Collier suggested that the existing Direct Debit payment system which requires monthly payments of a member's subscription to commence six months ahead of the respective calendar year may be an impediment to attracting new members. He recommended that the club should develop an alternative subscription instalment payment system which permitted all instalments to be made within the playing year.

There being no further questions, Mr. Larry O'Rourke closed the meeting by wishing the incoming Captains and Presidents success in 2020.

Chairperson

Ray Keogh
Honorary Secretary

Hon. Secretary's Report 2020

Introduction:

Sitting down for the first time as Hon. Secretary to pen a few words summarising the events and the progress of the past year, I recall the advice of my predecessor Vice-Capt. Bob Turley as he handed me two A4 pages listing the monthly tasks and smiled "everything falls into place, just follow the routine". So, as I start to put some words to paper, I look to previous Annual Reports for guidance. Unfortunately, having researched from 2014 – 2019, I suddenly realised that 2020 does not fit in any way into what has been accepted as the routine.

Back in January, who would have predicted what was ahead? Royal Tara Golf Club starting from a reasonably strong financial position looked forward to making further progress in 2020 in completing the many planned projects and to further consolidate our financial position.

February saw the introduction of ClubNet Mobile App. including Tee-time Booking Software. The problems we experienced with the Booking Module and Purse reconciliation compelled us to revert to BRS within the ClubNet App. for Booking/ Purse interface and using ClubNet for communications i.e. news, notifications and results. This has proved very satisfactory. Was this an omen of what lay ahead?

At the beginning of March, the Covid 19 Pandemic began to gather momentum in Ireland. March 15th heralded the start of the impact on Royal Tara Golf Club of the Covid 19 Pandemic, with our Bar, Restaurant and Clubhouse forced to close. Our course remained open for casual golf only under Government/HSE protocols. Tuesday 24th brought a full closure on Government/HSE recommendations. After an initial one-day layoff on Tuesday 31st the course maintenance staff recommenced work on Wednesday 1st April following Golf Ireland (GI) representations when this work was reclassified as essential.

Monday May 18th saw the re-opening of Royal Tara under Phase 1 for casual golf for members only- no competition- subject to strict GI, Government and HSE protocols. Phase 2 of the re-opening plan announced for 8th June allowed the lifting of some of the restrictions including a return of competitions. However, on 5th June it was announced that competitive golf could not resume until Phase 3 on 29th June

Phase 3 did commence on 29th June and we re-opened our restaurant with bar service allowed with food only. We resumed competition golf on 1st July after a three and a half month lay-off.

On 20th July, our bar opened with restrictions on numbers and time constraints under Phase 4. August 7th saw the Bar Service closed under new Phasing Restrictions.

Then on the 22nd October came the big blow to Golf in Ireland with the announcement that all Golf Clubs must close for the next six weeks.

“In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity”

Albert Einstein

Before I set out how Royal Tara Golf Club performed during this most disruptive and challenging year, I would like to thank the Chairman, Officers, Trustees and members of the Board of Management for their support and patience during my first term. A special word of thanks to the Ladies and Mens Clubs and sub-committees, who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that Golf remained enjoyable and accessible in the strangest and most difficult of times. A sincere thank you to the ‘Gate People’, and to the many willing and skill-full volunteer members who gave of their time unselfishly to ensure that our club maintained its high standards. (As I write, four willing and dedicated members, Bob Turley, John Kirwan, Tom Heneghan and Declan O’Brien are in the process of painting our Clubhouse Foyer and Front Office.) I would like to thank most sincerely Declan and Anna for their support, encouragement, flexibility and willingness to overcome the many twists and turns throughout the year. Their ‘Front of House’ approach of attentiveness, patience and kindness shown to existing members and potential new members is a testimony to their loyalty to Royal Tara Golf Club. I would also like to thank our Professional Mr. John Byrne and his assistants Pat and Stephen for the support, co-operation and the flexibility given in helping to overcome the many obstacles we faced preparing for re-opening, running competitions and in welcoming the new members. To Jim McElroy and his staff, I would like to express on behalf of the Management and Members of Royal Tara Golf Club their thanks and appreciation for the magnificent presentation of our course during the year, particularly the flexibility shown in adjusting their work schedules to accommodate the restrictions imposed by Covid 19.

For Capt. Seán, Lady Capt. Barbara, President Liam and Lady President Sheila, 2020 has been a very difficult and strange year. They were never in position to put their stamp on our Club, as is traditional. However, with the few opportunities available to them, they performed with a smile and were a breath of fresh air around the club. I wish them well in the coming year and I am sure that they will leave a positive and lasting mark on our Club.

Finally, I would like to thank the members for their support, encouragement and courtesy afforded to me throughout the year.

Finance:

Back in March and throughout the year who would have predicted that the financial results would show a surplus of €8k in Income over Expenditure. Though well short of budget target, it is a positive position, considering the stop start nature and restrictions experienced during the year. The main contributory factors being the demand for golf membership, Government Wage Subsidy Payments and various support grants. These offset the loss of

income from green-fees, societies, competitions, bar revenue and the normal annual decline in membership subscriptions due to retirements, resignations etc. Some small savings were made on utility costs.

On the positive side we have been able to continue with many of the planned developments for the year.

Course:

Thanks to the Meath County Development Grant Scheme and Sport Ireland Capital Grant Scheme our practice area has been improved with the introduction of target greens along with the replacement of some of our older machinery (2 mowers and a new tractor). We are currently extending the Tee Area to accommodate the increased demand. Our course programme of Sanding and Overseeding has continued as per our maintenance programme. A new Tee-box on the 5th Hole (Bellinter Course) will come into play in the spring, turning this hole into a Par 5.

You will also notice the cutting back of many of the trees, allowing air to circulate around the greens and help with disease prevention.

The removal of course furniture has posed a problem particularly the waste bins. We appeal to members to refrain from leaving waste material around the course as not only does it impact on the appearance of the course, but it is also a health hazard.

House:

Our Kitchen has been given an overhaul and upgrade with the installation of a new floor and wall cladding in line with Health & Hygiene Inspection requirements. We have also replaced some of the old and troublesome equipment and reorganised the kitchen layout. The day to day upkeep has been maintained to a high standard thanks to our Contract Cleaners (North East Cleaners) and in particular the efforts of both Tom Heneghan and Bill Slattery who have worked tirelessly on the daily wear and tear issues.

Membership:

On a positive note, the arrival of Covid 19 and the restrictions imposed on team sports etc. to curtail its spread have brought about a high demand for golf membership. particularly among the people who played more active sports and, perhaps, had only previously played casual golf.

This has been a welcome turnaround for Golf Clubs who have experienced a decline in membership numbers over the past few years.

We have been fortunate in seeing an increase of 158 New Full Members along with 56 Student and 53 Juveniles. Even the normal attrition of 47 Full members, 10 Students, 38 Juveniles and 10 Sundry others has still left us on target to meet the growth objectives set out in the Strategic Plan of 2018. We have also begun to arrest the age demographic problem.

The challenge now facing us is to ensure that we keep these new members. In that respect I ask you, the established members, to welcome, embrace and involve with these new members to ensure the future of Royal Tara.

Business Development:

Thanks to the tireless work of our BDT and their Committee in attracting sponsorship for corporate tee-box signage, they have established an annual income stream that will support course development into the future.

They have also developed, a comprehensive Sponsorship Package aimed at the corporate sector and the individual. This will be launched when we reopen for golf.

The Club 200 Draw under the direction of the BDT continues to make a positive contribution towards the many development projects. These initiatives form part of our Strategic Plan.

Juniors:

The one great enjoyment I experienced during the year was the return of the Junior Members after the lifting of some of the restrictions. The life and enthusiasm they bring to the fairways and practice areas must be witnessed to be appreciated.

We must congratulate the tireless efforts of Lucia Farrell, Declan Bedford and their team, ably assisted by John Byrne, Pat and Stephen. I would also like to mention the number of non-member parents who have helped along the way. Are we witnessing the nucleus of structured Family Golf Membership in Royal Tara?

Congratulations to the 4 under 17 Girls on their selection to the Under 17 Development Panel. It is a fitting testimony to talent and work of the girls and a justification of the development programme in place in Royal Tara.

Social:

The many restrictions imposed by the arrival of Covid 19 on 15th March impacted greatly on the Social side of Royal Tara. We did get a taste of what could have been, with the seasonal Mulligatawny in December and the Captains Drive-in on 1st March. Both were extremely successful and well attended. However, the best was yet to come with the holding by the hardworking Ladies Club of a FASHION NIGHT. Not only was it a financial success, but it brought me back to 'The Good Old Days', when events lasted into the early morning. As I departed at 1am, the Clubhouse was still swinging. Well done ladies for all the hard work and your timing was wonderful.

Bar and Restaurant:

At the beginning of 2020 we looked forward to the first full year of management of our Restaurant by Mr. Enda Blaney. His team at Royal Tara, under the front of house management of Sinead and her friendly, courteous and welcoming staff, capably assisted by Head Chef Ian and his staff had proved a tremendous success in 2019.

With a successful end to 2019 and a promising start to 2020 we had great expectations for the year with excellent food and superb service.

However, allowing for the Covid19 related restrictions and constraints, Sinead and her staff in applying a fantastic level of flexibility, have managed to provide our members with the same excellent quality of food and service in a safe and compliant environment.

As you are aware the restrictions imposed on our bar service have had a very adverse impact, even with the flexibility in service routines etc. by Fergus and his staff, it has proven difficult to provide an adequate level of service. Hopefully, as we progress into 2021, we will see some lifting of restrictions and a return to somewhat normal levels of service.

Conclusion.

2020 has proved a difficult year for Royal Tara Golf Club and for the country.

We have however, come through with some positives on membership, financial survival and an excellent Golf Course and Facilities that continue to improve.

I would like to conclude with the words of Marcel Proust

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes,
but in having new eyes”

At Royal Tara Golf Club, we have a fantastic canvas on which to develop. How we approach this development is the real challenge.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Members and their families, a very Happy and Safe Christmas and great golf in 2021.

Ray Keogh
Hon. Secretary
Royal Tara Golf Club

Annual Report 2020 – Ladies Club

As it draws to an end, we can safely say that 2020 was a year like no other. Storms Ciara and Dennis at the start of the year generated much headlines but were mere storms in the proverbial teacup. Looking back though, perhaps they were a portent of what was to come. The hardy winter golfers battled the early-year storms with thankfully a break in the clouds to enable the Captains' Drive-in on 1st March to go ahead. There was a great turnout on the day to support Captain Sean and Lady Captain Barbara and to see in the start of the golfing year.

Little did we know how the year would pan out. Just 12 days later, the first set of Ireland's Covid 19 restrictions were imposed. Royal Tara's restaurant and bar closed another 5 days later on 16th March and immediately measures were introduced around the Club House and on the course to protect all the members. Gone were scorecards, course benches, rakes, divot bags and bins - to be replaced by face covers, social distancing, elbow bumping, upside down cups on the Greens and permanent flags.

Despite all the efforts, in a strong spirit of social solidarity, the hard decision was taken to close the course on 24th March, to the horror of many but the acceptance of all. They say that absence makes the heart grow fonder and no better example of that was when the course reopened in fabulous condition and to great fanfare and a lifting of spirits (albeit just for the lucky few within the 5km radius) on 18th May. Over the previous 8 weeks, in a true display of meitheal, concerted efforts were made to reach out to members and staff, with particular attention paid to our "cocooners". Sadly though, we also had to come together to pay our respects to our faithful retired Professional Adam Whiston, who passed away on 9th May.

The weather gods had thankfully been good to us during the shutdown and it made coming back to Royal Tara particularly sweet. Restrictions on formal Club competitions for several weeks proved no impediment to the more competitive golfers and in that spirit of camaraderie, a fantastic number of members went out of their way to ensure our Junior members were paired up so that they got out to play – forming cross-generational friendships which will last forever.

While the golfing year finally got going at the end of June, travel restrictions, social distancing requirements and limits on group congregations led to the cancelling of Open competitions, the ILGU inter-club matches and almost all social events. Highlight of the social calendar and our most successful fundraiser therefore was the brilliant Fashion Show in early March – the last big occasion to pack out the clubhouse and have people revelling till closing time. Many congratulations to Lady Captain Barbara and the wonderful team of organisers and models who pulled off a fantastic event and many thanks to the generous sponsors whose contributions proved pivotal to the event's success. Unfortunately, December's Christmas events and the February Valentine's dinner were the only other social events in the 2019/2020 calendar year. Gone were the popular Lady Captain's away day and the Lady President and Lady Captain's dinners, as well as all the other usual Major golfing events.

2020, however, was not without its successes. The Ladies Club recorded a positive financial outturn at year-end, despite the cancellation of so many events. While there was no Lady Captain's Prize, Lady President Sheila bided her time well and was rewarded with a beautiful day in October for her Lady President Prize's won by Frances Dunne with 38pts.

The ever-ingenious Hon Competition Officer, Marie Tooher worked tirelessly throughout the year on an ever-changing fixtures list to ensure as many people as possible could play, in the safest manner possible. Reflective of the year that was, the Spring League Final was finally played in August and

the Autumn League was suspended in week 6 in October but there's equal determination again to complete it and hold the final at some stage in the future.

With none of the usual major competitions, bar the Lady President Sheila's prize, the Hampers took on the mantle of Major competitions. Once again, we must thank all our wonderful sponsors for both the hard fought Monthly Medals and the 4 Hampers, the winners of which were Mary Finegan 40 Pts, Ruth Kerrigan 40 Pts, Lil Hennelly 39 Pts and Alice Stanton 41 Pts

The June Medal winner was Mary Finegan 66 Nett and the September winner Deirdre Carragher 60 Nett.

The results of the well contested Matchplay competitions were:

- Category A. Winner: Gail Park Runner Up: Christina Barry
- Category B. Winner: Lily Reilly Runner Up: Sheila Murray
- Category C. Winner: Ailish Madden Runner Up: Mary McConnell

Congratulations also must go to Chloe Maples Gaffney for her Hole in One on the Cluide 5th Hole in a Club competition on 22nd July (9 Iron).

Unfortunately with the curtailed season it was not possible to hold any charity events or classics with the notable exception of the Play in Pink Day in aid of Breast Cancer research in October, very generously sponsored by Therese Nolan, with Lady President Sheila Murray and Ramona Mulligan sponsoring the First and Second raffle prizes respectively.

Junior Golf

Despite the delay in the commencement of the Junior golf programme until July, 2020 was another very successful year for Royal Tara's Junior Golf - bearing in mind that we had many more protocols to adhere to, with the safeguarding of volunteers and children very much to the fore. The programme ran very smoothly with up to 200 children playing.

Many of our Senior girls greatly reduced their handicaps this year and this contributed in no small way to their selection onto the Golf Ireland Under 17 Performance Development Panel. Four of the 36 girls selected from around the country for this Panel are from Royal Tara - Niamh Carrell, Chloe Maples Gaffney, Hannah Guerin and Sophie Sharp. Our girls' selection is a great honour for the Club but more importantly a tribute to the enormous work the girls themselves have put into their golf and into their membership of Royal Tara. Acknowledgement for this fantastic achievement must also go to the girls' parents for their unstinting support and to Royal Tara's irrepressible Junior Convenor, Lucia Farrell.

This year, we also ran a very successful Club Golf Sixes competition, as the Nationwide competition was put on hold due to the pandemic. This is a fantastic team competition to start children in golf and a great way for them (and their parents!) to make golfing friends.

None of these achievements occur by accident so a sincere thank you to the Junior Committee, especially Dr Declan Bedford, Ruth Kerrigan, Deirdre Carroll, Marie Foley, Kathryn O'Sullivan, Lynda Sharpe and Gail Park, without whom Junior Golf would not have run as well as it did this year.

Our Junior Convenor is looking forward to 2021 when we will hopefully have many juniors representing the Club on teams and indeed maybe for Leinster or even underage Ireland. She no longer just dreams, as she knows the reality is close and our Junior girls have the capability and the interest to go far.

Looking to the future

Another positive feature of 2020 was the welcome addition of a number of new full members to the Ladies Club. The Ladies Club of Royal Tara is going from strength to strength and we warmly

welcome the establishment of Golf Ireland in January 2021, with its commitment to equality and inclusivity. Thank you to the hard-working Club Liaison Committee for agreeing a common Club position for the new Golf Ireland structures. Golf in Ireland is coming of age and we sincerely believe that Royal Tara's proactive commitment to Golf Ireland's *Women in Golf Charter* will develop an even more inclusive culture across all aspects of golf within the Club, and in turn encourage even more women to play and stay within the sport.

An appreciation

The success and spirit of Royal Tara is down to a matrix of people, both members and staff, who work tirelessly on the Club's behalf. A special word of thanks to the Board of Management, the Ladies and Men's Committees, to Declan and Anna in the Office, to Fergus, Sinead and the bar and restaurant teams, to Jim and his Greenkeepers team and to John, Pat and Stephen in the Proshop. A sincere thank you also to Mary and Jim Bannon for the fabulous floral arrangements around the Clubhouse ensuring a beautiful array of colour and positivity for members and visitors alike.

While Coronavirus has been extremely disruptive to our golf and way of life, the Ladies Club, led by Lady President Sheila and Lady Captain Barbara, is very conscious of the serious upheaval the Covid-19 restrictions are having on the work and personal lives of our employees' and contractors. We thank them for their commitment to Royal Tara at this difficult time.

2020 has been a challenging year, however we now have the template so even if we have to endure the pandemic for longer than we would like in 2021, we will manage it and will endeavour to ensure that the year ahead is a positive golfing year for everyone. Finally, I would like to wish our out-going Lady President Sheila Murray well and to thank her for her wise counsel during the year. Best wishes in turn to her successor Maree McGrath as in-coming Lady President for 2021, as well as to Lady Captain Barbara, Vice-Captain Regina and the Ladies Committee.

Anne Randles

Hon. Secretary – Ladies Club

Hon. Secretary, Men's Club Report 2020

Hon Secretary Report

Taking the introduction to the 2019 Hon Secretary's Report that....

"After some difficult years we are finally seeing stability in the Men's Club with competitive and casual golf showing modest increases. This is reflected in our finances and helped by reasonable weather over the past year"

Unfortunately, I cannot report the same for 2020. Our golfing activities have been severely interrupted and curtailed by Covid19.

I want to acknowledge the support from all the members who helped in our re-opening of the Club by "Manning the Gate" during the early weeks after re-opening.

I also want to acknowledge the co-operation of all our members in ensuring that we operated within the guidelines.

One benefit was that the lockdown period allowed our course staff to really "work wonders" with our course, On behalf of the Mens Club I would like to thank Jim McElroy and his team for the magnificent presentation of our course and practice facility throughout the year.

We have, once again, been forced to close our Club to play our part in beating the virus. Unfortunately, all of this has played havoc with Captain Sean's year and consequently it was agreed by the Men's Committee that Captain Sean and Vice Captain Bob will continue in these positions for this coming year as will President Liam.

While we recognise Captain Sean's leadership and President Liam's drive and enthusiasm during this year, we wish them better success in 2021.

Competitions & Handicap Report

Because of Covid 19 restrictions and the impact upon our golfing activities it was decided that we would not hold any of our "major competitions" in 2020. Consequently, there was no Captains or Presidents Prize this year.

However, the Men's and Ladies Captains hosted a Captains Weekend over Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th of September.

The winning team was Declan Arnold, Eddie Govern, Brian Conroy, Graham McGovern.

Competition Overview

The course was closed for 61 days during lockdown earlier this year, resulting in the loss of approx. 42 Gents competitions from March to May.

On the 18th of May, the return to golf protocol commenced, with guidelines set for each phase, the initial phases only permitted casual golf. After the initial phases of the return to golf protocol, competition golf resumed on Wednesday 1st of July.

With a significant reduction in qualifying competitions from March to July, a decision was made to have singles competitions over both weekend days (for as long as we could). In

order to fulfil the enjoyment for all members we had the Saturday competitions off the green tee markers and Sunday competition off the white tee markers.

2 man team competitions were held every Wednesday & Singles Stableford every Thursday until the second lockdown (21st October).

Competition Report

64 Competitions held from 1st of July until 21st of October

- 2 Man Team: 17 competitions - average 124 members played each week
- Singles: 37 competitions – average 124 members played per comp.
- Team: 10 competitions – average 127 members played per comp. (includes Captains weekend and new member day)

Notable competitions

New Members Welcome Day

The Captains Weekend

Hampers (1-3) * * Vouchers currently on order for all winners * *

3 Monthly Medals (1 held over both days)

Competition Prize Allocation

The aim is to have consistent prizes allocated for each competition. In some circumstances the purse revenue to the club was less than the prizes allocated and in others the club took in more revenue from the purse.

Many thanks to all our sponsors through-out the year, your continued support is very much appreciated from all of us at the Club.

Handicap Report

153 new member handicaps allocated since 18th of May – based on the old Congu System.

The most significant changes to golf in Ireland, the World Handicap System came into effect on November 2nd, replacing the current Unified Handicapping System (CONGU).

The key objective is that golfers of all abilities will be able to compete on a fair and equal basis.

One of the reasons why we held a lot of singles competitions was due to the fact that the new system needed to calculate the best 8 singles scores from a member's last 20 scores.

There is still work to be done with some member's indexes, as there was some discrepancies when the system was transferred over from Golfnet to the WHS.

More information will follow, but we ask for a little patience initially with the new system.

We will look to run some workshops on the new WHS for our members in the new year when "normality" returns.

I would like to thank Captain Sean Brennan, Vice-Captain Bob Turley, Richard Callaghan & Jerry O'Donoghue for their assistance with the allocation of new handicaps over the last few months.

Inter Club Report

We entered fourteen (14) Inter Club competitions in 2020. Managers were appointed to all fourteen Teams.

When COVID-19 arrived, the GUI and the Leinster Branch cancelled all but four competitions - Senior Cup, Junior Cup, Jimmy Bruen Shield & Pierce Purcell Shield.

Because of the various lockdowns and different "Phases" of opening, competitions did not start until August, each round only having two weeks to be played.

The formats of all competitions changed – instead of playing in Qualifying events, every match was played on a Home & Away basis.

To meet social distancing measures all foursomes were changed to fourballs.

While we did have some initial success and one or two incredible wins, all our teams eventually suffered narrow defeats and were eliminated by the third round of competition.

The Live Scoring feature on the ClubNet App was used for most of the matches and this proved to be a popular and exciting tool for Club Members to follow the matches live.

We would like to thank all the Players and Managers - Alan Duffy, Declan Donnellan & Cormac Holland, Francis Collier & Phil Cuffe and David O'Brien for the time and effort they put into getting their teams ready to represent RTGC in these challenging times.

We would hope that all Managers would put their names forward to manage again in 2021.

Inter Club in 2021

Golf Ireland has changed a number of areas that will affect Inter Club Competitions in 2021. The country has been divided into eight Regions and the winner of each Region will advance to the All-Ireland Finals series. Leinster is being divided into three Regions (North, South & Central), Royal Tara GC is in Leinster North.

To qualify to play on an Inter Club Team a player must have a valid Handicap Index on 1st January 2021 – there is no requirement to have four counting cards in the previous year.

The Handicap Bands for the different Competitions will be published at the end of the year.

There will be no Qualifying Competitions in 2021, all matches will be played on a Home and Away basis.

Juvenile Golf

The Juvenile Boys section has grown to approximately 120 during 2020 with a noticeable increase in younger boys (8-12). The 2020 Juvenile boys Captain was Ruairi O'Sullivan.

The boys participated in two interclub competitions. Internal juvenile competitions were organised on a weekly basis during the summer months with a prize giving day taking place at the end of August.

A series of weekly 'Sixes' competitions were organised during September and October. We would like to thank all our club Professionals and in particular thank our volunteers and parents who stepped up to the mark big time to help with the extra supervision and organisation required as a result of Covid 19.

Fundraising & Sponsorship

This Men's Committee wish to sincerely thank all those sponsors who continued to support the Club during this difficult year.

Two raffles were organised when golf resumed in May for an electric golf trolley and driver. The 200 Club Draw continued through 2020 albeit with some interruption during the initial lockdown period.

Finance

Competitions were cancelled for a number of months due to Covid19 restrictions.

As a result of these cancellations competition income is significantly lower than the previous year.

Covid19 restrictions also reduced our fundraising capability.

The Classic to raise funds for Junior Golf took place at the beginning of September 2019.

There was no equivalent event in 2020.

Inter club competitions were restricted so costs associated with same were reduced compared with prior year.

Office and Other Expenses includes computer costs associated with the introduction of the Clubnet app.

John Connolly

Hon. Secretary Men's Club

18th November 2020