

WAGS AGM Zoom meeting – Friday 30th October 2020

Attendees: Anthony Shutes (AS), Chris Bunning (CB), Gerry McGuffie (GM), Bob Hill (RH), John Stembridge (JS), Richard Latham (RL), Richard Trinick (RT), Tom Fawcett (TF)

The meeting commenced at 20:00 via Zoom. Due to Covid each committee member was responsible for their own choice of alcohol which a number of members proudly displayed and helped grease the wheels after a full day's golf at Wimbledon Common Golf Club. Sadly, we were not allowed to use the Club's facilities so we all had to go home and Zoom in. This had the benefit of allowing honourable members and Wags members from far and wide to join us from as far afield as Australia and South Africa. It's an exciting end of the season if only we are allowed to finish it! At the time of writing these minutes, we are about to go into a national lockdown due to Covid-19 so GM will be in contact with all members regarding details for the final game at Pine Ridge shortly.

A few members joined the Zoom meeting. Our Honourable Chairman (AS) opened the meeting to summarise 2020 as a testing and challenging year due to the uncertainties created by Covid-19. There were only two events cancelled: The Robinson Ryder and the Norfolk Tour. The Shutes Shot-Glass, Bunning Birdie and Stembridge Sandwedge were rescheduled. At least 40 members have attended an event which shows how popular the Society is. We have a full schedule lined up for next year including two tours. 2021 promises to be an exciting year as we count down to our 30th Anniversary in 2022.

Since Pine Ridge may be in doubt AS decided to present a virtual Chairman's Trophy (aka "The Unsung Hero"). This was given to Vip for his continuous flow of ideas and words. Some of them flow when opponents are at the top of their back swing and others are well presented by email. It is believed that GM has the trophy so he will pass this to Vip when next possible.

AS made an important announcement regarding penalty strokes. All WAGS should note that the rules are shown on the Wags website at Wags.org. If you take a shot and have not played a provisional (and cannot find your ball) you **MUST take TWO** penalty strokes. To remind you of the rule:

WAGS has adopted the following local rule: If a ball is lost or OB you are required to take a 2 shot penalty, if you have not played a provisional ball. The ball can be dropped 2 club lengths from the edge of the course, adjacent to where the ball was lost or OB.

1. Website. (JS)

There are no changes to the website. JS announced that he will be working with GM on the new handicap system WAGS will be adopting from 1st January 2021.

2. Handicaps. (GM)

It's been a busy year for handicaps. The system has worked well with 14 different events and 12 different winners thus far. The World Handicap System is coming and GM has downloaded a beta version of Handicap Master which will run the system and make the calculations. It is based on the best 8 rounds out of the last 20 rounds. However, if you have only played, for example, 16 rounds, then it will take the last 6 rounds etc. If you haven't played many rounds please don't worry. Every course has a Slope Index so every time you turn up for an event your handicap can change depending on its level of difficulty. The organiser will be responsible for this. For example, at West Surrey the Slope Rating is 124. A World Standard Golf Rating is 113 so to calculate your handicap you divide 124 by 113 which = 1.097. If your existing handicap is say 14.3 you will move to 15.7 and thus play off 16 for that venue.

Our handicaps are to be based only on our own WAGS record, **not** including your own club records.

Once the data base is established then it may be possible to include the detail on the website using a spreadsheet.

3. Finance. (RH)

The Society is in good financial health. There will be no change to the annual fee of £85 and Wags will not charge for deposits as we have enough in the bank. A few late payers are being chased up. CB noted that the second Hole In One fund is now standing at £1,650 and wondered if this should be capped at £1,500 and that we start a third Hole In One fund. The last time it was won was when three WAGS won it in the same year! It would be great if a WAG or three could get on and win it again so that it could be shared out!

4. Membership. (CB)

No new members in 2020 but there are three members from 2019 (Mark Brown, Nigel Field and Lee Davies) none of whom can qualify for the 2020 VL but can win individual events. We still have around 50 members but we have lost Magnus Robinson who has moved further afield. Tony Batt has left and we cannot get hold of Mike Lee. There is scope for one or two new members.

5. Fixtures. (RL)

The Burhill Christmas Cracker may not happen due to Covid-19. RL presented the fixtures showing the most popular golf courses by number of participants which are Pine Ridge, Wimbledon and West Byfleet. Woldingham and Woodcote were taken on as new venues replacing Betchworth and New Malden respectively. Farnham GC replaced Worplesdon. Thanks was given to Andy Burn for organising another higher successful Somerset tour.

We had 281 golfers playing thus far this year with an average of 22 per event which is an increase over the number who played in 2019. Not bad considering we had lockdown early in the season!

The fixtures list for 2021 was presented. Gerry Robinson wanted to get the Robinson Ryder moved to Surbiton but Surbiton are hard to get into so we might have to move it back to Gatton Manor. There are a couple of other courses that may be appropriate too. More news on this in due course but we will try for Surbiton.

For the Minotaur to Sussex it was decided to play Seaford Head for the People's Trophy and Seaford Golf Club

For the tour to Wales in September 2021 it is likely to be mid/late September and we will probably move the Berring Bowl back slightly as a result.

RL answered a query from Mark Adams (who couldn't attend the meeting) relayed by Vip. It concerned the timing of fixtures in school term time (Mark had to miss 4) and if we could move the Sussex tour. Having discussed the pros and cons we decided to leave things as they are to avoid back to back tours (we also have Norfolk in June). Naturally, during the year many Wags go on holidays at various times. It is not possible to tailor the events for individual circumstances as we need to keep events at regular intervals and there will always be Wags who are disappointed at different times throughout the year.

The Norfolk Tour will be going ahead in June 2021.

RL mentioned Porto, Canaries and even Southern Turkey could be considered for the 2022 30th anniversary tour. RL would welcome members thoughts on this.

It was suggested that we change WCGC to Woodcote Park. WCGC was in terrible condition at the event today and many Wags agreed to choose a different venue ie Woodcote Park.

TOUR VOTE

A poll was conducted for the 2021 September tour.

4 early voters pre AGM had voted for France and 4 for Wales. At the AGM there was a unanimous vote for Wales so Wales wins it.

Wales will be organised by Rhod James for an anticipated date of 17th/18th Sept 2021.

6. Merchandise. (RT)

The next major event will be our 30th anniversary in 2022. RT has budgets well under control for producing some exotic and exciting apparel for this forthcoming major part of WAGS history.

7. Committee Elections.

Three committee posts are up for the 2-year fixed term renewal. The incumbents of three of the positions were offering themselves for re-election:

Merchandise (Richard Trinick) – re-elected

Fixtures (Richard Latham) – re-elected

Handicaps (Gerry McGuffie – re-elected

8. AOB

Vip raised the query to ask whether a non VL event should result in changes to our Wags handicaps. GM said that if it is played as a stableford event with scorecards then it normally gets processed and handicaps are affected. It was agreed that we should not count non VL events for our handicaps in future. We conducted a poll and 89% voted that non VL events should not count.

Chris Poil raised a query about getting better quality wine bought in bulk by Steve Shaw at wholesale prices. It is believed this wouldn't work in practice for logistical reasons and it was decided that the organiser should be responsible for which prizes are given. However if anyone wants to come back with a well worked example of how this might work in practice, the Wags committee will consider it.

The meeting closed at 21:25 so we could get on with more wine and beer drinking!

Tom Fawcett - Secretary
30th October 2020