

WAGS AGM meeting 29th September 2022

Committee: Richard Trinick (RT), Bob Hill (RH), John Stembridge (JS), Richard Latham (RL), Tom Fawcett (TF), Pete Middleton (PM)

Apologies: Chris Bunning (CB), Gerry McGuffie (GM), Mike Wells (MW)

Attendees: Mike Gardner, Pete Mitchener, Brian Batchelor, Pete Berring, Fred Berring (Captain), Mark Adams, John Quilter, Richard Poole, Mike Luscombe, Dave Middleton, Nicholas Bailey, Steve Shaw, Nigel Field, Will Fairburn

(highlighted sentences in these minutes used to highlight areas of agreement or follow up)

The meeting commenced at 17.40 in the main dining room at Malden Golf Club.

Our illustrious Chairman Chris Bunning was otherwise engaged on a golf course in Portugal thus our one and only Richard Trinick stood in as acting Chairman for the 2022 AGM.

He read the following statement from the Chairman (CB):

“Another fabulous year for WAGS, our 30th season celebrated in some style with the fabulous trip to Tavira. A great time was had by those who can remember and sincere thanks go to Richard, Andy, Wellsey and Bob for organizing it so well.

Since I took over as Chairman last September, and since COVID has been and gone, we have fulfilled every fixture that Richard arranged, with very good turnouts for each event. Many thanks to Richard.

Finances are being sensibly dealt with by Bob and Membership has remained around the 50 mark, welcoming new members Lee Davies and James Scott, both of whom enjoyed themselves immensely on Tour.

Congratulations to Bob for winning the Victor Ludorum by 2 points.

Also, to Mike Gardner for winning the Beament Big Swing.

The choice of Chairman's Prize is always difficult, with all of the committee working so hard to run your society so efficiently.

However, after a lot of thought, I have decided it should go to Richard Latham for his tireless work on arranging fixtures, particularly herding the WAGS cats around Oxford and Portugal.

I look forward to an enjoyable end to the season with fixtures at Farnham and Pine Ridge to come, as well as an excellent 2023 to follow next year.”

Thank you Mr Chairman for a cracking first year in the job!

1. Website. (JS)

JS announced to an attentive audience that the WAGsite has not changed and is well supported and fully appreciated by Wags members because it is so well organised. We had the great fortune of seeing Steve Stoner who flew in from Melbourne recently for our 2022 Portugal tour and he mentioned to JS that he could further enhance the website to make it easier and quicker to use across multiple devices. JS will liaise with Steve on this issue.

It was mentioned that JS and Gerry McGuffie should discuss the possibility of only having to input scores once so that GM doesn't need to replicate the figures manually on his own handicap system thus saving having to input scores twice.

2. Handicaps & Communications. (GM – Pete Middleton stood in)

We have had different winners for the last 17 Wags rounds. This indicates that the new handicap system is working in the main. However it does also seem to have created greater difficulty for those with lower handicaps to win. Pete Mitchener asked if there is evidence that higher handicaps are favoured. One possible solution might be to use an additional calculation of 4 in the last 10 VL qualifying rounds to go with the best 8 in the last 20 for the 2023 season. **This needs to be put to the Handicap sub committee first before any agreement can be reached.**

3. Finance. (RH)

The Society is in good financial health with some £8,640 on deposit. The Hole in One fund is still in rude health with 4K across three funds. As the years pass and it appears no Wag has the capability to help themselves to some of this money! It was mentioned perhaps the Hole in One fund can be won in any event (even including the Christmas Cracker at Burhill). **This will be put to the committee to decide.**

4. Membership. (MW)

Whilst sunning himself in Madeira to further the already confirmed lifelong perma-tan, our membership secretary provided the following missive:

"Membership of the Society is at an all time high with 55 members, including members who might legitimately be known as overseas members (Steve Stoner (Australia), Gerry Robinson (Norway) and now Eric Warburton (Switzerland)).

We have one new member this year, James Scott, who has thrown himself in at the deep end having played a total of 13 events as a guest and new member and even toured to Tavira. Well done James.

There continues to be demand for membership from guests who have played with us a number of times. However, due to insurance issues, we shouldn't really exceed 50 members. In this connection, there are a number of members who have failed to fulfil the membership criteria of playing a minimum of 3 games each year. This is preventing new members joining and those who haven't played at least 3 times should seriously consider if they wish to continue their membership.

Not much else to report so I look forward to seeing you all at Pine Ridge in November."

We agreed that we need to clarify the definition of Members and Associate Members. RT to liaise with MW on this.

We also agreed that we should inform our insurers that we are a Society of 45 – 60 members to avoid non-compliance with insurer requirements.

5. Fixtures. (RL)

We have had 14 events in 2022 attended by 341 players which is down on 2021. Since 2021 was after most of the covid restrictions it is unsurprising that 2022 shows a lower attendance. However, attendance is up on 2020 when covid restrictions were at their most severe.

The largest events in 2021 were the Trinket, Shotglass, Sandwedge, Jug, Seaford Head, Westerham and Richmond.

Due to some monetary issues the Robinson Ryder will move from Woldingham to Woodcote Park which is a great golf course and slightly more testing than Woldingham.

The Shotglass will move to 18th May.

Betchworth has been an early start at 9am and we agreed it should be 10am at the earliest.

Steve Shaw mentioned that as many Wags are retired or winding down their work commitments, we could consider moving the Sussex Tour to midweek

as there is more room availability in B&Bs, pubs and hotels plus Seaford Head has its own rooms.

For the 2023 June Tour we could consider returning to Cornwall at St Mellion and Launceston.

For the 2023 Autumn Tour we could consider one of Iceland, Turkey, North Portugal and Belgium. Pete Mitchener mentioned Belgium at the AGM which was met with a positive reaction since it is easily reached by car and has some good courses.

Pete Berring mentioned we could also consider our tours over a Saturday to Monday as opposed to Friday to Sunday as courses and hotels cheaper.

A big thanks to Andy Burn, Mike Wells and Richard Latham for their fabulous organisation of the 2022 30th anniversary tour to Tavira in Portugal.

6. Merchandise. (RT)

RT presented John Quilter with his Wags cap for playing 100 games and Fred Berring for 250 games. Well done chaps.

If anyone has any merchandise ideas please send suggestions to Richard Trinick.

7. Committee Elections.

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

Fixtures (RL) – re-elected

Merchandise (RT) – re-elected

Communications and Handicaps (GM) – re-elected

Captain (FB) – re-elected

8. AOB

RT proposed that prize money for the organisers to be increased to £100 per event thus allowing organisers to buy decent quality wines. This was agreed.

RT proposed that we have three prizes per competition:

Nearest the pin

Longest Drive

Nearest the pin in two

This is because as we all get older there is little chance for most Wags to win the longest drive hence the need to have a nearest the pin in two. This was agreed.

Mark Adams mentioned it always seems to be the same golfers playing with same players rather than mixing it up. Steve Shaw mentioned that he arranges his West Sussex tour by taking 1 high handicap, 1 low handicap and two medium handicappers.

As a Society we ought to be playing with as many different Wags as possible over the season so organisers should try and mix up the groups as much as possible rather than simply arranging player tee off groups in order of the booking. Some Wags are quicker than others at making bookings and it is often the same Wags at the top and bottom of the entry list so organisers (in an ideal world) should draw players out of a hat or at least make sure that players are mixed up with others they may not have played with for a while. We appreciate this is not an exact science but if we could pay special attention to this it would benefit all of us as a group. And any new members would better get to know everyone too.

The meeting closed at 1900 and the members were ready for some excellent Malden cuisine.

Tom Fawcett

Secretary

29th September 2021