



# Gaudet Luce Golf Club

## MINUTES OF THE 27<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 31st JANUARY 2025

The meeting commenced at 7.02pm

The Chairman, Bill Clifford opened the meeting and requested a minute's silence for members who had passed away during the previous year: John Masters, David Bubb, Nigel Wild, Jim Forbes, Lesley Brooks and Steve Pearson.

23 members of the Club were present along with the members of the Executive Committee

- 1 **APOLOGIES:** Gareth McIndoe, Jackie & Ted Jackson, Mike Wilde, Darren Williams, Sam Waters, Mike Thompson, Jenny & Terry Hartley, John & Wendy Penlington and Sandra Pomeroy.
- 2 **MINUTES** of the previous AGM held 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024 had previously been made available to all members. Acceptance of the Minutes was proposed Sarah Woodhams and seconded by Dave Brierley and adopted.
- 3 **CLUB COMMITTEE REPORT (Bill Clifford Executive Committee Chair):**

Welcome to the 27th AGM of Gaudet Luce Golf Club.

This is the first meeting since we changed the club protocol, now having an exec committee without having separate captains of gents, seniors, ladies and juniors. These procedures were explained to members by Alec and members of the exec committee

Current membership is 775 made up of 637 male 138 female and 83 juniors.

A total of 36,000 rounds were played made up of 24,000 members and guests and approx 10,000 visitors and societies

During the last couple of months we have had annual meetings of Seniors, Gents, Juniors and Ladies' sections.

Some of the points to note from these meetings are as follows:-

### **Gents**

Thanks to Darron Henn for his captaincy of the scratch team (he is now leaving the club but will remain a utopian member)

Some changes will have to be made to league teams with possibility of resigning from some leagues due to the ability to compete. Further discussion to be had in the near future. Ben Upfield has agreed to support and take control of the scratch team. I am pleased to say that John Skelton and Steve Lewis will continue in their current roles.

A complete report on competitions was given by Darren Williams with a decision to be made on the club championship format.

### **Seniors**

Thanks to John Doidge for Competition Representative's report made at the prize giving

There will be some changes to be made in the 2s ball sweep which will now stop, to be reviewed next year.

Further discussion to be had regarding the seniors fiddle

Robin Jones ran a very successful seniors open and Robin is continuing to run this again this year.

John Doidge will be competition rep and match captain

Roger Burrows Handicap rep

Adrian Gill Finance rep

There is no Communications rep although Ray Dunn has said he may be interested so following the next exec meeting further information will be given to Ray.

### **Ladies**

The ladies had a good year in terms of playing rounds and entering competitions with a special thanks to Angie Partridge and Sam Waters for looking after handicaps.

Encouragement for more ladies to play in Thursday competitions, the traditional ladies day, will be considered throughout the year.

Following a successful 3 Ball Alliance organised by Joan Woodhams, Ladies pairs open organised by Barbara Hedges and the Breast cancer charity day organised by Sherri James a total of £4501 for charity and £600 for Ladies section

A successful away day was held at Ravenmeadow Golf club in September.

### **Juniors**

Once again the junior section has had a great year.

A big thanks to all the parents and especially to Russell for all the hard work with the juniors throughout the year.

An enjoyable time was had by all at the captains away day at Ravenmeadow

Representation of the junior section was made at various events and courses throughout the year, including Woodhall Spa and culminating in Niamh Bush and Maisie Whittall qualifying to play in European Junior Championships in Spain where they finished 5th and 7th gross. Once again we must congratulate all the winners in the past year.

Thanks to Andy and his team for producing a course which is the envy of many.

Thanks to Alec and his team for assisting us in having an enjoyable time in the sport we all love.

I am going to present the Consolidated accounts for the period 1st November 2023 to 31st October 2024.

Firstly, I would like to thank the section Treasurers for their work during the year completing the section accounts, Jonathan Evans for the Gents, Adrian Gill for the Senior's and Sue Grant for the Ladies.

My thanks on behalf of all the sections also go to the staff in the pro shop and office for handling collection & banking of competition entry fees and voucher requests.

Lastly my thanks go to David Hosford, a retired Company MD and Financial Director and who reviewed the accounts to ensure that the receipts and payments reflect the sections activities and have the appropriate supporting documentation. He also reviewed the bank account to ensure that it is fully reconciled.

Now to the accounts, displayed on the screen.

This is the first year of the new structure and I want to assure all members that even through all funds are held in one central bank account, each sections funds are treated as separate, and a section can only use its own funds.

I am not going to go into detail on the individual section account as these have all been presented at the section annual meetings, the headline numbers are:

Gents – Surplus for the year of £829 and have carried forward reserves of £4052

Ladies - Surplus for the year of £293 and have carried forward reserves of £3371

Seniors - Surplus for the year of £581 and have carried forward reserves of £2951

Juniors – Deficit for the year of £546 and have carried forward reserves of £873

The Junior deficit is due to the continuing success of the section with Juniors qualifying to play in England Golf competitions at Woodall Spa. The Junior section also relies on donations during the year to cover some of the expenses and these were down for this year.

As you can see the sections are in a good financial position and have more than adequate if not too much in reserves and may release some of the moving forward for section activities.

The General Committee fund showed a surplus £1838 and have a carried forward reserve of £4580.

The General Committee income is generated by the Capitation which is charged to members as part of their annual subscriptions currently charged at £8.33 + Vat

The bank account as of the 31st of October 2024 stood at £29416.43 but there are known commitments relating to the year creating a creditor of £13587.77. The creditors figure relates to such items as vouchers, trophies, engraving, yearend prizes, and the presentation evenings, plus the balance as at the end of October relating to the Captains Charity funds.

In summary, the accounts show a surplus of £2995.42 for the year which gives a carried forward reserve of £15828.66

The accounts will be available on the members part of the website shortly so if anyone has any questions about these or any other financial issues please contact me, my contact details are available on the website or on the notice board.

Proposed: Norman Hedges, seconded by Richard Moran and report adopted.

## 5 CLUB PRESIDENT:

David Worsfold, the President, thanked Chairman Bill and the Chairs of sub committees for their reports today and for their work during the year

He said we would hear a lot about changes, some not so good but many that were very good, for example Gaudet Luce was started in 1995 (which means we will be celebrating our 30 year anniversary during 2025),

In the beginning holes 1,2,3 were as now, then the fourth was on 10th tee approx and ran in that direction to complete the first nine holes with the ninth on finishing what is now the 18th green. then the back nine started with the 10<sup>th</sup> on the fourth hole, 11th on the fifth and so on in that direction for the back nine holes ending with the 17th & 18th,

But then after a few years it was decided to change to what we have today. Why, you may ask? To give us the room for our driving range and to create the nine hole Hadzor Course

What a great and worthwhile change that became.

Over the last three decades since 1995 - the UK Golf scene has undergone many remarkable changes and transformations. Golf was once cloaked in exclusivity and tradition, it has gradually evolved into a more inclusive and dynamic sport. Socially this shift was profound.

Financially, the industry has faced its fair share of challenges and triumphs. With economic recessions in the early 2000's and especially the recession in 2008 which undoubtedly tightened wallets, leading to decline in some clubs' memberships and reduced spending generally on leisure activities. Golf courses felt the pinch, with some struggling to maintain operations.

However financial strain can spark innovation. Golf Clubs, and Gaudet included, began offering flexible membership models, pay as you play options and bundled packages to entice golfers back.

Unfortunately the latest budget in October may be another unwelcome shock to hit clubs, individuals and small businesses. Here at Gaudet the membership has stayed remarkably stable over these years, as Bill has already mentioned

When discussing changes over 30 years, the impact of technology can't be overstated. Advances in equipment have made the game more enjoyable and accessible. High tech clubs and balls have improved performance, appealing to novices and seasoned players seeking an edge. Then of course there are indoor golf simulators and virtual reality experiences all creating new avenues for participation. Mind you, they haven't improved my golf much.

Culturally over the years, there's been a shift towards a more casual and social approach to golf. Dress codes have relaxed- and clubs are fostering community environments with events such as dining and family friendly activities. So lots of changes in the world of golf and golf clubs

I have deliberately missed out the seemingly never ending changing world of handicaps that have occurred during this period and I will leave that to our Handicap Group expert Sam, and all those who pretend to know.

To cope with all the changes our management structure had many changes over the 30 years , the latest of which was announced at last year's AGM this Committee Structure was first considered around 2015/2017 and then we had many years of discussion and planning, I remember these dates well because in 2015 we announced another change - we appointed a lady as Club Captain which was not only a first for this Club, but the first in Worcestershire and I believe the first in the Midlands maybe even England. That was another great change -Jenny Hartley went on to be County Captain for 2 years and I remember November 2017 it was when I received a presentation at that AGM for my 21 years as President.

Then following a major survey of the whole membership these plans for a revised management structure were developed and presented later at the 2024 AGM. So NOW the changes to our management structure have been in operation for 12 months and speaking to many members recently like me they consider these changes have improved the overall management structure and not affected their enjoyment of the club or the playing of their golf.

I would to say to all members, thank you for making this happen. I do know that it has improved what was called the Club Committee to a new streamlined and effective Executive Committee. I believe that Gaudet Luce Golf Club is ready to enter the next year able to handle any further changes that we will undoubtedly have, with our new Golf Club Committee structure

Together with the excellent Gaudet Luce Limited management team which brings experience, knowledge and expertise which is gained from outside the club Alec Fernihough in his position as President of England and Wales Blind Golf Association, and with Andrew Laing being the Director of (BIGGA) which is the British and International Golf Green-keepers Association. No surprise then that Gaudet Luce Golf Club generally receives positive reviews!

According to Co Pilot this last week - Gaudet Luce has an average rating of 4.4 out of 5 based on reviews on Golfshake, Which goes on to state 'most golfers appreciate the beautiful parkland course, the well-maintained facilities, and the friendly staff, the Pheonix Course is particularly praised for its design and challenge, while the Par 3 Hadzor course is great for practicing short games. It seems like a great spot for both experienced golfers and beginners looking to improve their skills'.

So as you begin golfing for another year in 2025 and as I enter my 29<sup>th</sup> year as president, I would like to say thank you all for your support and wish you happy and carefree golfing

## **6 CLUB CAPTAIN'S REPORT:**

Good Evening Mr President, Chairman, past and future Captains and members of Gaudet Luce Golf Club

My journey started around 2 ½ years ago with Bill asking me to be Vice Captain to Chris Hobbs my first reaction was Bill it's about 2 years too early then a voice in the background a past Captain said sorry Rich this isn't the answer we were looking for so they changed my mind and I'm glad they did - thanks Dave Brierley and Bill Clifford.

Wow! What can I say I can't believe that it is 12 months since I sat here excepting my Captains Blazer, and what a year it has been. Firstly winning 5 trophies in my Captaincy normally it's one in every 3-4 years if I'm lucky, The Winter League with my playing partner Brian Symonds and The Austin Trophy with Sarah Woodhams.

Being invited by Bill Clifford and Winning the guest Trophy here with the Catenians, WHL trophy winners. Finally the Seniors Fernihough trophy.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as club captain being an ambassador for the club when playing at home and away at other clubs

The highlights of my year include:

Being the starter for The Ladies 3 ball alliance raising over £2001, thank you Joan Woodhams.

Thanks to Barbara Hedges for organising the cake sale and thank you to all the ladies that helped raising £261.

My Captains away day at Cotswold edge golf club probably the hottest day of the year thank you to everyone that played we raised over £850.

Then my captain's day a shotgun start with over 70 members participating, a great day was had by all which included music from Kevin Browns band Black Mercian plus table magic from Dave Jones, which raised over £3340, thank you to all.

As Club Captain I have been asked to represent the club in many ways including, being starter for the Ladies County 3 ball alliance, the Ladies Breast Cancer awareness day and being a chaperone for our juniors presenting all the trophies at the Ladies, Juniors, Seniors and Gents section of the club. Lezley would like to thank the Ladies and Junior sections for her invite to their presentation evenings.

Now the thank yous:

To the Exec committee for having faith and trust in me as your club captain

The green staff who work extremely hard each day producing a great playing surface for us members, guests and societies.

As club captain it has been easy for me to introduce myself to guests and societies and ask if they have enjoyed their day and without any hesitation they have all come back to me with wow what a great thinking man's golf course it is with bunkers and ditches being in the right place and the greens are just mint.

Russell Adams for his professional manor whether coaching juniors or adults and trying to teach us all how to play golf properly.

The bar staff that have had to put up with me most days for a pint and not just after golf. My apologies to anyone I have not mentioned or thanked for their hard work over my Captains year. Thank you for the honour and privilege of me being your Club Captain 2024 I've had a great year.

And last but not least to all the members that have made my year an enjoyable and great one, helping me raise £7664.74 for my chosen charity The British Heart Foundation, now over to Clive Humphrey who is the BHF's Community Champion in Worcestershire/Warwickshire to accept the targeted donation on behalf of The British Heart Foundation.

The Club Captain introduced Clive Humphrey and rather than passing over a cheque, between the Exec and the representative of the BHF cards representing the £7,664.74.

Clive is a Community Champion for the BHF and reports to Connor Hill the fundraising Manager for Warwickshire and Worcester who apologised for his absence following an accident. They both sent their thanks for choosing BHF as your charity. The BHF is the largest independent funder of heart and circulatory research with no government funding.

Clive mentioned that he was aware that Richard particularly chose the BHF as his charity as he had lost his best friend and golf partner Neil Price. He also mentioned that his daughter had received some 40 hours of life saving heart surgery and that he himself had been brought back to life with CPR and a defib machine. He particularly wanted members of this club to endeavour to gain some training in CPR and in the use of a defib machine one of which we have located at the Club.

He thanked everyone for listening, the fantastic amount raised by the Club members and ended by wishing all members to have straight and long drives!

**7 INTRODUCTION NEW CLUB CAPTAIN:**

Richard introduced Trevor Bassett as Club Captain for 2025 and presented Trevor with his Club Blazer, wishing him well for his year.

**8 INCOMING CLUB CAPTAIN 2025/26:**

Mr President, Mr Chairman, Executive Committee, past Captains and all members, I am honoured and privileged to be selected as the Gaudet Luce Golf Club Captain for the year 2025. I am looking forward to being the ambassador for the club at official events home or away.

I moved to Droitwich 10 years ago and with that in mind I thought it was prudent to ask members what charity and away day location to use. After doing my homework I have decided to choose The Primrose Hospice in Bromsgrove as the club charity and for the Captain's away day Fulford Heath Golf Club on Monday 9th of June. I hope these meet with your approval.

My first challenge will be to organise a Par 3 Pairs competition during the month of April, on the Hadzor course. Details of which are on posters throughout the club.

I would like to thank Richard for his excellent captaincy. Ever present come rain or shine. Certainly, it's a hard act to follow. Thank you, Richard. Finally, I shall endeavour to do my best for the club and all club members. Thank you.

**9 CLOSING ADDRESS:**

Thank you all for attending this meeting and we all hope you enjoy the golf in 2025  
Can we all go outside for the traditional putt out of the retiring captains and drive in for the incoming captain.

Enjoy your golf in 2025

The meeting closed at 19.50pm

Minutes adopted: Proposer ..... Seconder .....

Signed ..... Club Chairman

Date .....January 2026

The traditional Putt Out and Drive in were held following the meeting

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