



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2023
at Knaresborough Golf Club on Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 7.30pm

Before the meeting was officially convened, the competition secretary pointed out an oversight on the part of the secretary, this had been brought to the attention of the secretary by the LDRGA honorary secretary, in that the correct notice period had not been observed in publishing the AGM agenda. The competition secretary asked the attendees to vote on the continuation of the meeting as opposed to having a second meeting at a later date. The vote was 67 for, 3 against so the meeting continued accordingly.

Mr Richard Allan, Rabbits Captain Knaresborough GC, welcomed everyone to Knaresborough. As current Knaresborough rabbits Captain, I would like to welcome the YRGA president, members of the committee and presidents of regional organisations to Knaresborough golf club. This is a special pleasure as we have just celebrated the centenary of the founding of the rabbit section here at Knaresborough. I would like to thank all involved in making golf enjoyable and involving for those of us of somewhat modest talents for the game!

The President thanked Mr Allan for his kind words and formally opened the Meeting.

PRESENT:

Executive: R Langhamer (President), G Senior (Vice-President), D Oakes (Secretary), B Ashford (Treasurer), D Howell (Fowler Secretary), I Pearson (Competitions Secretary), R Bishop, R Gillott, M Elam

Clubs: Bedale (M Mongon, C Bartram), Boothferry (G. Ellis), Bradford Moor (J Hollwood, W Brimacombe), Calverley (A Rogers, D Atkins), City of Wakefield (D Lea), Cookridge Hall (T Gurney), Crookhill Park (M Fretwell), Crow Nest Park (A Goodman, J Turner), Driffield (S Watson), East Bierley (H Dye, J Archer), Halifax – Bradley Park (J Callaghan), Halifax – West End (N Booth), Harrogate (M Goody), Headingley (D Pitt, B Watson), Heworth (K Dwyer), Horsforth (R. Milner), Howley Hall (M Wilson), Kirkbymoorside (P McManus), Knaresborough (G Fitchett), Malton & Norton (T Creaser, A Haworth), Masham (J Loveday), Meltham (A Ashworth), Normanton (P Simms), Oakdale (P Ibbetson, P Grant), Pontefract (S Charlesworth), Queensbury (S Cooke), Rawdon (M Elliott, M Burton), Ridding Park (A Robinson), Sand Moor (O Corrado), Sandhill (M Fitzgerald), Scarborough North Cliff (P Cooper, D Trenham), Scarcroft (J Kay), The Manor (D Atwood, K Price), Thirsk & Northallerton (K Lewis, D Reveley, R Bishop), Waterton Park (E Stapleton), Wetherby (D O'Mahony, J Garnet, J Danby), Wike Ridge (A Rhodes, J Sheen), Willow Valley (C Devers, S Simpson), Woodhall Hills (T Shaw, R Farnell), Woodsome Hall (N Harris, T Parker)

APOLOGIES:

Executive: C McMinn (Web Manager), P Leadbetter (Life Vice President), R Barnes (LDRGA Hon Secretary), D Large (LDRGA President)

Clubs: Baildon (P Magee), Bawtry, Beauchief, Ben Rhydding (O Berger), Bingley St. Ives (J Barrott), Boothferry (C Woodcock), Bradford (B Cummins, M Dixon), Bradley Park, Branshaw, Bridlington Belvedere, Bridlington Links, Castlefields, Clayton (J Marsh), Cleckheaton, Crosland Heath, Darrington (T Teasdale), Driffield (P Marshall), Elland, Filey (S Fish, M White), Flamborough Head (G Hodgson), Fulneck, Garforth, Halifax – Ogden, Hanging Heaton (G Dixon), Headley, Hebden Bridge, Keighley, Leeds (Cobble Hall), Lighcliffe, Longley Park, Low Laithes, Marsden, Moor Allerton (T Milner, I Archibald), Northcliffe (A Smith), Oakdale (B Allan), Otley (B Stockdale, D Toft), Outlane, Pike Hills (N Jones), Rawdon (M Sykes), Ripon City (B Barnett), Romanby, Ryburn, Saddleworth, Scarborough North Cliff (H Pomfret), Scarborough South Cliff (P Kitson), Shipley (S Rhodes), Silkstone (P Deakin), Skipton (S Hunt), South Bradford, Stocksbridge, Temple Newsham, Todmorden, Wakefield Woodthorpe, Wath, West Bradford, Whitby, Whitwood

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS:

Mr Robin Langhamer gave his final report as President.

Good evening gentlemen and thank you all for attending tonight's AGM. I believe this will be the 86th such meeting.

My year got off to a great start when I was guest at Woodsome Hall G.C centenary luncheon on the 20th March. It was a fantastic day which I enjoyed immensely.

Our YRGA committee meetings started in April at Crosland Heath followed by Wetherby in June, then Wetherby in August and finally at Normanton on the 3rd October. Many thanks to those clubs for allowing the YRGA the use of their courses and facilities. Thanks to all the committee members who attended these meetings, their involvement is vital to the success of our association.

I had great pleasure in leading the YRGA Presidents matches against other area teams. Unfortunately we had four losses, victories went to Halifax & Huddersfield at Low Laithes, Wakefield at Wath, Bradford at Baildon (a real thrashing, we did manage one halved match from our President) and a further loss to Harrogate at Pike Hills. We had a halved match against Flamborough at Driffield in July. Our one win came against Leeds at Headingley. Guess what? I was unable to attend that day!! These matches were played in a friendly but competitive manner and, as usual, plenty of friendship and humour abounded.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who played in these matches and those of you who took part in all the annual YRGA competitions. Congratulations to all the winners. I would also like to thank Iain Pearson for his massive help as competitions secretary.

Our annual dinner and prize giving was held at Driffield golf club on 30th September and those who attended truly enjoyed the food and occasion. Many thanks to Dave Stephenson our guest speaker who gave an amusing talk (free of charge).

The committee lunch for member and their partners was also held at Driffield on Sunday 4th December. Again an excellent meal was partaken. This was a great occasion thoroughly enjoyed by all who came. I know my wife Elizabeth really enjoyed the occasion meeting up with other gold widows!! Phil Leadbetter won the Christmas quiz that I set.

Tonight, Derrick Howell steps down as the Fowler Trophy organiser. Many thanks to him for his numerous years of outstanding work as Fowler secretary. We wish Derrick a well earned rest and his successor, Kevin Dwyer, (provided he is elected) steps into the breach and we wish him well.

I would like to thank all the committee members for their great help during my year as President. It has been invaluable, David our secretary has been particularly helpful in keeping me on the straight and narrow.

2022 has been a marvellous year for me and I thank you for giving me the honour of being your President for the last 12 months.

I was especially proud to win the Presidents cup, beating Mr Geoff Senior by a very small margin. It is in pride of place at Oak Lodge.

Thanks once again to Knaresborough for again supporting the YRGA and hosting the AGM. Finally I wish our incoming President, Geoff Senior of East Bierley, a successful and very enjoyable year, I am sure you will give him your best support as he gave me over the last year. Thanks everybody

MINUTES OF THE 2022 AGM:

The Minutes of the 2022 AGM had been circulated to all clubs in accordance with the YRGA Constitution. Accordingly, the Minutes were not read out.

It was Proposed by Mr Malcolm Elam and Seconded by Mr Trevor Gurney that the Minutes were a true record of the 2022 AGM.

This was agreed unanimously.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES:

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Mr David Oakes gave his report.

2022 was my first year of being the YRGA secretary and even though large parts of the job have been farmed out to Iain our competitions secretary and Craig, our web manager many hours have been spent. Who knew that the YRGA secretary received so many emails each year. I think that I have balanced those figures with the number of emails I have sent out though! Craig is always asking me to reduce the number of emails in the sent items box to reduce the amount of storage space I am taking up. Last year Phil asked the club contacts to keep me updated with contact changes, this has worked well, hopefully those changes have been reflected in a timely manner throughout the year? Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to send me those changes.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Each golfing year the YRGA hold four meetings, these along with the Thornton and Plowright are hosted in rotation by the six areas that form the YRGA. Our first meeting in April was organised by the Halifax & Huddersfield area. Our second meeting in June was organised by the Harrogate area. The third meeting in August was organised by Wakefield and our final meeting of the year was organised by the Leeds area.

Thank you to each of the four clubs involved, at each and every meeting the YRGA were warmly welcomed, space for our meeting made available and excellent food and refreshments provided. Sometimes even the golf went well...

Huge thanks must go to the committees of each of the six areas, but particularly the secretary's for organising the venues and liaising with the clubs on our behalf. The area secretary's do a tremendous job in organising the meetings and doing the leg work for me to then take over at the last minute.

From the two remaining areas, Bradford area hosted the Plowright and the Flamborough area hosted the Thornton trophy which I will leave Iain to report on.

YRGA ANNUAL DINNER

The annual dinner was held at Driffield golf club on Friday 30th September graciously hosted by our President Robin Langhamer. Circumstances transpired to have as many clashes as is possible so attendance was slightly down on previous years, but a thoroughly enjoyable evening was had by all who attended.

The 2023 annual dinner will be held on Friday 6th October 2023 at East Bierley golf club.

WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM

WHS continues to bed-in and the YRGA continues to monitor things. This evening H&HDRGA have lodged an agenda item for the YRGA to adopt a scheme that they are to implement this year. The main aim is to balance some of the discrepancies between lower rated courses and higher rated courses where some former rabbit members became ineligible to play due to the use of the handicap index. It has certainly raised some interesting comments and has been a big discussion point through the email channels in the days leading up to this meeting. What is certain is that whichever way the vote goes this won't be the last AGM at which a vote is taken.

CLUB CONTACTS

Please do continue to keep me updated with changes as you have your Club or Area AGMs over the next few months and please do enjoy your golf in 2023.

COMPETITION SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Mr Iain Pearson gave his report.

As we gradually return to some sort of post Covid normality the YRGA are delighted that we managed to host the Thornton Trophy and the Plowright Trophy.

The Thornton Trophy was held at Driffield golf club on Friday 24th June. I wish to record our thanks to the members and management of Driffield golf club who made our competitors extremely welcome. All competitors I spoke to had nothing but compliments about the course and members.

Congratulations to the Thornton trophy winners, Castlefields golf club with 79 points beating Moor Allerton golf club on a back nine countback. Once again we would like to apologise to Moor Allerton for the confusion caused by the Club V1 system not recognising that a player had dual membership. Congratulations to Mr Fred Leek from Castlefields golf club who won the Norman Watson cup with 43 points and to Mr James Wood from Moor Allerton golf club who won the Fred Brown salver with 42 points.

We look forward to hosting the 2023 Thornton Trophy on Thursday 22nd June at Woodhall Hills.

The Plowright trophy was held at East Bierley golf club on Thursday 14th July. Once again, I would like to record our thanks to the members and management of East Bierley golf club for all the hard work and effort they put in to make this a successful day.

Congratulations to Bradford area for winning the trophy, they have now won the trophy nine times.

We look forward to hosting the 2023 competition on Monday 24th July at Normanton golf club.

FOWLER SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Mr Derrick Howell gave his final report as Fowler secretary

2022, it was good to get back to something like normality after 2021 when Covid caused us a few problems. The weather turned out to be good which helped things along nicely. We started in April with 95 clubs in each section so a total of 190 teams completed in the Fowler last year. Things moved along OK with results coming in on time.

For the section semi-finals we went to Darrington golf club, we moved to Otley for the semi-final and the final was held here at Knaresborough between Castlefields and City of Wakefield. Both clubs came through the semi-finals strongly so the final was pretty even up to the 15th when Wakefield finished the stronger to win the trophy, well done to both teams.

Yes it has been a good year, thanks to all who took part. I would just like to say that I have really enjoyed looking after the Fowler over the past few years, you come in contact and meet a lot of people. I wish the new secretary, Mr Kevin Dwyer, all the best and wish you all a good golfing year, enjoy.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mr Brian Ashford gave his report.

Committee Proposal – Annual Subscriptions:

“The Committee proposes that the annual subscription for 2023 remain at £20.00, which includes entrance to all competitions. Clubs that have not paid by 28th February will not be eligible for the competitions.”

Proposed by Mr Ken Richardson

Seconded by Mr Malcolm Elliott

This was agreed unanimously.

WEBSITE MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr Craig McMinn had to give his apologies due to a family wedding in Tenerife.

HANDOVER TO NEW PRESIDENT:

The outgoing President, Mr Robin Langhamer, then introduced Mr Geoff Senior of East Bierley golf club as the new YRGA President for 2023 and duly handed over the Chain of Office and his President's Tie.

NEW PRESIDENT'S REMARKS:

May I start by thanking Robin for being such a good President of the Association during the last year. I will do my very best to follow his example. I will repeat my apology for the only time you did need me to deputise I was on away on holiday myself.

Quite sadly, I have been a big of Huddersfield Town for more than 70 years which takes it's toll. I know that Robin is very loyal supporter of Hull City. He said in his opening remarks at the AGM last year that he expected some friendly rivalry between the two of us and also with Malcolm Elam, the 2019 President weighing in on my side as a fellow Terrier. Well Robin, the Terriers came out on top last season but the situation now has certainly been reversed. I do hope that the Tigers good form continues and that they make the play offs this year for you Robin. Hopefully they will go one better than we did at Wembley in the final.

The President then presented Mr Langhamer with a memento of his year in office

I now wish to introduce Richard Poynton of Normanton GC as the nominated Vice President for 2023. Richard is a proper Yorkshireman with a fondness for good pork pies. He started playing golf at Normanton in 1998. He was Rabbits Captain there in 2004, Rabbits Secretary from 2005 to 2010, Club Captain in 2011 and Membership Director from 2012 to 2020. Apart from that he tends not to get involved too much..... oh and President of the Wakefield Area in 2018. His other sporting passion is Rugby League. He is a big Trinity fan. Most of you will not know that Richard is a bit of a movie star. The cast list of the 2018 film of the famous 1968 Watersplash Rugby League final between Leeds and Trinity includes the name of Richard Poynton amongst those of the legendary Trinity Captain, Harold Poynton (his dad's cousin), Eddie Waring and the late HM Queen Elizabeth II. One appears in the film playing in the match, our late Queen (bless her) presenting the trophies and the third was the TV commentator of course. You can guess who the cameraman found having a pint with his mates in Sharlston Club and made him a part of the film due to his obvious good looks and charm.

My own golfing career does not match either Robin's or Richard's. I started playing in 1995 and peaked too soon. I became a Tiger for almost two weeks before falling back into the Rabbits section where I have remained to this day. I have been Rabbit's Captain twice at my home club of East Bierley and once during a spell of six years at Dewsbury District. I was President of the Bradford Area in 2011 during which year I was proud to be part of the Bradford team which somehow managed to win the Plowright at Moor Allerton. We do not win it often but we did take advantage of one of our courses to do so again in 2022.

I love Rabbits golf, which is just as well, but I do enjoy playing in mixed events alongside my wife Ruth. Playing in Rabbits events either at my club, in the Bradford Area or at Yorkshire events is a valued pleasure and I hope to be able to do it for a few more years at least.

I wish to thank the Bradford area for my nomination as President. I believe that the area started 75 years ago which is 25 years after my club East Bierley which celebrates its Centenary in 2023. I hope to welcome more than a few of you there this year.

I wish to thank the officials, all the Executive and the club members attending tonight. I am honoured to be the President of the YRGA for 2023. I will do my best to represent you all and I look forward to meeting as many of you as I am able.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The Secretary announced the Committee nominations and proposals for the Officers for 2022 as follows:

President	Mr Geoff Senior of East Bierley golf club
Vice-President	Mr Richard Poynton of Normanton golf club

The Executive's recommendations and proposals for your approval are as follows:

Hon. Secretary	Mr David Oakes (Woodhall Hills)
Hon. Treasurer	Mr Brian Ashford (Bradford)
Hon. Fowler Secretary	Mr Kevin Dwyer (Heworth)
Hon. Competitions Secretary	Mr Iain Pearson (Dewsbury & District)

Auditors: Brown Butler Chartered Accountants - Committee Approved

The Committee proposals were seconded by Mr Malcolm Elliott and approved unanimously.

AREA REPRESENTATIVES TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The President then announced the Area elected representatives to the Executive Committee:

Bradford Area	Mr Peter Magee
Flamborough	Mr Stuart Fish
Halifax & Huddersfield Area	Mr John Turner
Harrogate Area	Mr Mel Goody
Leeds Area	Mr Rob Barnes
Wakefield Area	Mr Keith Culshaw

APPOINTMENT OF HONARARY LIFE VICE-PRESIDENTS

Mr Bill Smith made the following proposal:

"That Mr Derrick Howell be appointed as Honorary Life Vice-President in recognition of his outstanding work for the YRGA as Fowler Secretary"

The proposal was seconded by Mr Trevor Gurney and approved unanimously.

YRGA DEFINITION OF A RABBIT GOLFER

The Executive Committee proposed that the YRGA definition of a Rabbit Golfer remain as follows:

“For the purpose of the Yorkshire Rabbit Golf Association, a Rabbit Golfer shall be a male playing member aged 18 or over with a Handicap Index of 15.0 or greater”

Halifax and Huddersfield counter proposal:

“For the purpose of the Yorkshire Rabbit Golf Association, a Rabbit Golfer shall be a male playing member aged 18 or over with a Handicap Index of 14.0 or greater.”

As was expected many views were expressed with very valid points made both in favour of and against the H&HDRGA proposal. Amongst the view expressed many clubs suggested that their rabbit section hadn't noticed major losses of section members despite being clubs with higher slope indices. A Leeds member praised the report produced by the H&HDRGA secretary for its depth of analysis. One attendee suggested that the handicap change would be better suited at individual area level but that it wasn't needed at YRGA level due to the competition types being run.

Concerns were expressed that by lowering the handicap index to 14.0 there would be an overlap with the Tigers section.

Another suggested that if we were to ask 100 different people we would invariably get 100 different answers so the YRGA couldn't possibly please everyone whichever way the decision went so it would be better to get the vote out of the way.

The H&HDRGA secretary then addressed the room to say that the point of the exercise performed was to try and avoid the apples and oranges comparisons being made of the old Congu handicap and the WHS handicap index. The comparison cannot be directly correlated due to the underlying average slope of 113 which is somewhat lower than the current UK average of 125 indeed the EGU didn't like the calculation as it meant that for most UK courses competitors would gain a shot. Given that it is a worldwide system though there was little they could do about it. The system was developed for club stroke play competitions where competitors are placed into broad divisions and to allow competitors visiting different clubs to play off a realistic handicap at that club. They didn't think about the impact on organisations such as Rabbits and Tigers so we have to try our best to accommodate as many members as is possible. The H&HDRGA had no idea when they started the investigation what the handicap index would be but when they calculated the average slope of their clubs, which came out at 123 then the optimum handicap index was 14.3 but they decided it was neater to round down to 14.0. They had no intention of approaching the YRGA until the YRGA secretary mentioned that the average of all Yorkshire member clubs was the same figure at which point it seemed logical to try to apply the same formula for the YRGA.

The competition secretary then let the room know that the original plan for the WHS introduction had been to have a large meeting to discuss the scheme in depth and present the different schemes that had been generated. Covid scuppered this plan which made the decision process for the executive at that time all the more difficult.

What is clear is that the executive will need to continue to monitor the situation and, undoubtedly, there will be more proposals put forward in the coming years as the system continues to bed in. The President concluded that whichever path we chose there would be winners and losers.

On the night there were 70 attendees eligible to vote, 2/3 being 46.6 therefore a 2/3 majority would need 47 votes for it to be considered approved.

On a show of hands the secretary counted 42 for the H&HDRGA proposal and 27 against with one abstention. Given how close this was to the 47 needed for a 2/3 majority the President called for a

second show of hands to discount any mistake. The secretary and treasurer duly counted 43 for the proposal and 26 against with one abstention.

Accordingly the Proposal was rejected as the proposal hadn't reached a 2/3 majority

The YRGA will therefore continue to use the definition above as voted for previously i.e. handicap index 15.0 and above.

President Closing Remarks

I congratulate my friend Derek Howell on becoming a Life Vice-President of the Association. Richly deserved.

Thank you to Knaresborough GC for hosting our meeting. The bar will remain open for a short while for anyone wanting another drink. Our next AGM will be Tuesday the 13th February 2024 here at Knaresborough GC.

Thank all for attending again, a safe journey home and enjoy all your golf in 2023.

THE PRESIDENT

With no further business the President closed the meeting at 8.35 pm thanking Knaresborough golf club once again for their hospitality.

The next AGM will be held on Tuesday 13th February 2024 at Knaresborough Golf Club at 7.30 pm.