

SWANSTON LADIES' AGM – Friday 12th November 2021

LADIES' CAPTAIN'S REPORT

Welcome to our 2021 AGM, it is a delight to see so many of you here given that we were unable to have this last year. Don't think anyone could have predicted all the challenges we would have to face in November 2019 when we had our last AGM but here we are with living with Covid, vaccination and now passports all those seem to be words cemented into our vocabulary but thank goodness for golf and getting out there to play whether it be good, bad or indifferent has been a savour to many of us this past 2 years, so hopefully no more restriction and onwards and upwards with our golf and life in general.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have been your Ladies Captain for the past 3 years, 3 years which have flown by, not sure where they have gone, maybe a sign of getting old, not sure about that but certainly the laughter lines seem to be more like wrinkles now. There have been lots of challenges to face during that time which we have overcome but in amongst all of those there also has been lots of rewards, laughter and some great fun.

As I said 3 years have flown by, not quite sure where 2020 went to or even this year, but 2021 has been a better year for golf and life in general.

The main course ladies section is not a big one, but we are certainly quite a dedicated group who have over the competitive year managed to play all bar one of our scheduled competitions.

New year didn't start very well for the club with the fire at the academy and us back in lockdown, we then had lots of snow at the beginning of the year, the only one who made use of their membership at this time was Zoe who had great fun skiing all over the Pentlands. Me I

preferred to be tucked up sewing in the heat at home. Don't think Fiona was impressed with the snow either, falling and breaking her ankle, and prior to that we had Annette having an argument with a stool and work surface resulting in a broken wrist, then Anne disagreeing with a drain cover and another broken ankle. Took a while but glad to see all back out on the course.

Please all stay safe this winter.

As I said in the bad weather I preferred to be at home sewing and due to Covid wasn't able to do my normal Marie Curie fund raising so in a moment of madness I decided to make a quilt and raffle it off and a huge thank you to all of you who contributed and I managed to raise nearly £900 from the quilts, aprons and paintings I sold, think quite a few of you have won some of my creations over the years in all of our raffles etc. that we have had, so a huge thank you

The competitive golfing year started off very cold and we did struggle to keep the ball on the fairways particularly the 6th as there was very little growth, soul destroying to play lovely shot up the 6th and then it just watch it roll and roll all the way down the slope, even worse hit it up and watch it roll all the way back down and past you, but, then the sun came out and what a glorious summer we have had, could get used to playing in shorts, tee shirts and no breeze.

In the February and due to Covid restrictions it was decided that our Open wouldn't be played in the May and was rescheduled to September which given the condition of the course at that time was an absolute blessing. More about the Open later. Extremely pleased that the new green on the 1st came into play end of April as the temp one over the water was a nightmare and destroyed quite a few cards in the first competitions.

We managed, after quite several years of fighting for them, 2 signs

directing us to the lady's tees, one at 6th and the other at the 10th, still fighting for one for 11th and proper detailed signs on lady's tees where we are not beside Gents medal tees. Andrea going forward can take up the baton for those ones.

The new WHS was introduced at the beginning of 2021, it has been a challenge managing and understanding the new handicap formats but after a season of playing think everybody has come to grips with it and over time should result in a fairer reflection of everyone's handicaps. Over the winter although we are not playing competitive golf, if you are playing 18 holes you should still be entering your score under general play into WHS, can do this either via the shop or using the Golf app.

Was looking in my diary to help to put this report together and note my first game of golf this year was on 6th March with first competition on 3rd April so lots of golf has been played both here and away this year. The first Trophy competition was played in April with Zoe winning. We also had the Coronation foursome qualifiers in April which Andrea and I won. This competition has been one of the absolute highlights of this year for both Andrea and I, we went onto win the Area finals through at Newtonmearns which then took us to the final at St. Andrews in September, where we were runners-up being pipped by just one point by 2 extremely talented young players. We were spoiled rotten by the R&A for 2 days; this competition is run every year so hopefully a couple of you will be able to repeat our success in 2022. Although we were runner's up this was from an initial entry of over 18,000 entrants from 850 clubs throughout GB and Ireland. The winning girls go on to play at Muirfield next year in the pro/am prior to ladies Open, Would have been a wonderful experience but I do know my limitation and playing with professional at Muirfield although would have been something, very glad that it is a 15 and 22year old that are going and hopefully that is the start of an amazing golfing career for them both. But even coming runners-up was not to bad for 2 seniors.

Not only did Andrea have success in this but with Margaret as her partner got through to the quarter finals of the Daily Mail foursomes seeing off challenges from Mortonhall. Lanark and Harburn, unfortunately getting beaten at home by Lochend players, one ex-Swanston lady and partner, but well done for a great achievement.

Teams of Muriel, Linda, Susan and Zoe represented Swanston playing 36 holes in the Morrison Millar competition which was played at Baberton on what was probably one of the hottest days in June, not winning but well up there with their scores. Well done to all of them.

Had some fun games as well as our competitive ones, and the Ladies Captain Day is also a great fun day playing Bingo, Bango, Bongo and I was delighted to welcome quite a few of our new Academy members who joined us to play and then for tea and cake afterwards.

Our 2 competitions with the Seniors, Lady Captain v Gents Senior Caption for the JS Trophy and the JMMT were both able to be played this year, the JS Trophy was played on a beautiful June day and £280 was raised for local charity Vocal, first time every competition resulted in a draw, The JMMT played beginning October was played on a miserable morning but hardy souls that we are, only a few withdrew, £238 was raised for Marie Curie, the seniors quite substantially won, think there needs to be a bit readjustment of teams for next year.

We have managed to play all apart from one of the friendlies this year and Nan will cover these in more detail but just delighted that we were able to play these and offer hospitality to our guests.

Unfortunately our Friendship cup fell foul to the weather, which was such a shame as day before and after were lovely and we actually had 18 ladies coming to play but the rain just never let up all day and given that I am a fair weather golfer no pleasure for anyone going out in that, hopefully we can play it next year.

Had Glorious weather for 2021 Championship day, Linda again Ladies Champion she is difficult to beat and unfortunately Susan once again got pipped, changes to the groups for these competitions will be discussed under AOCB later. Rebecca won the Bronze championship, but it could have been anyone's game on the 14th it was so close but well played to all and great to see lots of the ladies out supporting the players as well. Rebecca's win was especially sweet for her as her son Jackson was home from abroad so was able to celebrate his mum's victory. Must also mention the 2020 champion winners, was a Linda Susan final and Linda won and Margaret won the Bronze final, well done to all the winners.

We had an extremely successful Open in September, with 33 teams, 66 ladies coming to play, up there with one of our best entries for a while, was a lovely day weather wise and the course was in a much better condition than if we had played in May, that is about the only think I can thank Covid for, we had lots of extremely good feedback on the day especially the refreshments between 12th and 13th and have to thank the club for that and Kim and Anne for managing the table, Nan's husband Peter did an excellent job as the starter, he did the role superbly, think we will be booking him again for next year. Also had a very successful raffle, these monies are used to support the ladies section over the year, have to say a huge thank you to all who sponsored holes, donated to the raffle and helped on the day. The tablet along with the strawberries went down a treat.

Was delighted for the first time Midlothian Ladies choose Swanston to hold their autumn competition and again the weather was extremely kind to all with only a slight breeze later in the day, was delighted that the handicap winner, winning the McIntyre Trophy was our own Andrea, well done Andrea.

Over the Summer lots of us have participated in the 9-hole challenge, the winner of the trophy beating Zoe in the final was Norma, she won it on the day before all the trophies were going of to be engraved, very timely indeed;

The winter Greensomes on the Templar are now underway as well. Have to say a huge thank-you to Nan and Joan for all their organisation in both these competitions and the Friendlies.

Way before Covid kicked in 2019, Adam, Margaret and I attended meetings run by R&A about how we could organise GIG here at Swanston and was delighted that Adam got that running this year, should have started last year, with group lessons and then following up with scrambles and support on the Templar course. Over the summer Adam has had over 100 ladies go through these lessons, think I have met most of them but he has had support from lots of lady members and I have to say a huge thank you to Nan, Joan, for looking after the ladies on a Thursday night giving me a night off, but also all others who have come along to help and support the ladies. Am delighted to say that quite a few of these ladies have joined, some here tonight and we look forward to getting to know them more and hopefully encourage them to get handicaps, play more golf and join in lots of our fun events and eventually get them out playing on the main course and in competitions.

Beginning October 8 of us went to Arran, 7 of us to play in the Arran challenge, we had, apart from the wind great weather for the beginning of October and some excellent golf was played. It is a course where you do need a supply of balls as there are some challenging holes, all I can say is the 3rd hole has defeated me for another year and I lost more balls than I found. The challenge is run over October with this year over 330 ladies playing and delighted to say that Nan came in 4th in the 2nd group, players with handicaps over 13. Well done Nan.

The Kinloch hotel where we stay is gorgeous with lovely views over to the Mull of Kintyre and the food was excellent.

We have 2 nights there and first night Joan supplied the quiz, 2nd night we played beetle and card bingo, what a competitive noisy lot we all are and all for a bar of chocolate. All booked for 2022 so if this is something that appeals to you more details will be sent out beginning of the year.

Nan, Joan and Andrea, also went and played the Corrie course on the other side of Arran, braver ladies than me, was reliably informed that once you got to the top of the hills and got your breath back the views over the sea towards the mainland were incredible and it is a beautiful course, one for next year.

A couple of weeks ago, 8 of us eventually made it for our outing to Gogarburn, this was the 5th time of trying to have previously been rained and Covid off and apart from 10 mins or so of rain had a lovely day. Such a change from Swanston as relatively flat and only 12 holes but lots of trees, bunkers and a bit water so still quite a challenge.

We haven't had a Handicap Secretary for the past few years and she would normally give a report, so I am just going to tag it onto the end of my report.

So that is about it, the end of my captaincy and my report but I can't finish without saying a huge thank you to all the committee and all of you who have helped so much over the past year and have helped to make my job so much easier. Good luck to Andrea as she takes over and all of you in your ongoing golf endeavours.

