

**Somerset Golf Captains
Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
(to be approved at the AGM 2023)
Long Sutton Golf Club
Tuesday 12th April 2022**

Present: There were 23 members present including the following officers: Bob Acland (President), Roy Parmiter (Vice-President), David Andow (Honorary Treasurer), John Beer (Honorary Secretary), Stephen Butterfield (Captain of Captains), Rob Ford (Captain Elect), Iain Robertson (Fixture Secretary)

Before the AGM, the President presented a cheque as a donation to Long Sutton Golf Club and thanked the Golf Club for their hospitality today.

1. **Apologies:** Paul Chesney, Mike Usher-Clark, Andy Carter, Mike Newell, Ian Suttle, Mike Newell, Mike Nash, Murray Parsons
2. **Minutes of the AGM 2022:** The minutes of the AGM 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate record
3. **Matters arising:**

The President refereed to the issue raised by John Chillington regarding the possible recoupling of the Hampshire and Sussex games. He explained that this would not be possible unless we played Hampshire twice in the same season (Home and Away) and so this was unlikely to happen.

4. **President's Report**

I would like you to welcome everyone to the AGM and thank you for both playing today and staying for the AGM. Two years ago, we had a non-AGM because of COVID; and one year ago we had a Zoom AGM; and so it is good to be back in person. The last year was almost normal. We only lost two fixtures (against Cornwall and the South West Golf Club Managers Association). On some occasions, there were no showers. The actual Covid pandemic itself meant that we missed one year of golf! However, "Long COVID" will have a lasting impact. For example, the effect on clubs has been dramatic; not all clubs are coming out of COVID in the same way; we could no longer rely on the normal arrangements which we've enjoyed over the last 60 years. Some clubs have adopted different business models; some have different arrangements for catering; some have different arrangements for Captains; and some may no longer be able to offer us courtesy. The committee think we can react to these changing circumstances and we hope that we have got

most options covered. We will continue to operate as we have always done all the last 60 years, but it may cost us a little bit more in the future. Over the last five years, there has been a huge difference in the way we operate through the use of the website. Five years ago, everything was done by letter, with the secretary driving around to different golf clubs in the county. This year, nearly 700 registrations were made on the website and the system only works with an efficient computer system which is capable of sending out 700 emails in one day. One big issue for us last year was web hosting; we have had to move our website to another host provider which meant lots of hard work for John Beer and Andy Carter. However, the new website is now up and running. We previously did have to rely heavily on John (and indeed will rely heavily on his successor) to run the website, but now we have organised some technical support if we need it. In terms of fixtures, we welcomed the new fixture secretary Iain Robertson just over a year ago and the fixtures for 2022 have been done. Indeed, the fixtures for 2023 are nearly ready. Thank you, Iain. I could say a lot about our previous Captain of Captains, Stephen Butterfield and his jokes, but for now I will leave him to say a few words in a moment. Thank you for to all our members. I have now completed one year as your President, and will be doing one more (if re-elected later this afternoon) but I am now giving notice that I will not be staying on for a third year and I will step down at next year's AGM after two years in post.

5. Captains Report

I would like to begin by thanking my playing partners today for a great afternoon of golf. After two years of being your Captain of Captains, I now pass back to the ranks. It has been a blast, one season undefeated and one highly successful, having P. 16 W. 11 H. 2 L. 3...This has all been down to the proactive committee of volunteers that serve you and the support of all the member captains. I thank you all for making this appointment so much fun. Whilst I understand Covid is still with us we should endeavour to return to as much normality as is allowed and continue to do what we enjoy the most, golf, not necessarily good, good food and wine, but above all good company, friendship, and companionship. I wish my successor Rob all the absolute best in his term of office, I am confident he will serve us well and I know he will have the support of us all. Good Luck Rob. And with that: DSM-SMR : 'Don't see me – see my relief'. At this point, the President thanked Stephen for his term in office and presented him with an engraved tankard on behalf of Somerset Golf Captains.

6. Secretary's Report

I am delighted to report to the AGM this afternoon that we “almost” returned to a normal year of golfing activities with Somerset Golf Captains in 2021 following the decimation caused by the pandemic in 2020. Although we lost a couple of fixtures at the start of the year (e.g. Cornwall at Minehead), we nevertheless completed a comprehensive fixture list against our friends and colleagues from other counties. The online-registration again seemed to work well, and it was a great pleasure to rekindle the spirit of friendship and camaraderie which is generated when past captains from Somerset come together to socialise and enjoy each other’s company - as well as the friendship of colleagues from other counties. long may that continue. I was particularly pleased that we were able to successfully resurrect and organise, not just two but three internal events last year. The Spring Meeting and AGM was held at Weston-Super-Mare Golf Club, and the Autumn meeting was held at Mendip Spring Golf Club. Of particular note however last year, was the inaugural meeting of the “Captains Day” a new event held at Oake Manor Golf Club in June. The format of this new meeting was to be an invitational event and the event was well supported by Captains from all over the county who brought with them other past captains, close friends, husbands and wives, and even club professionals! I’m delighted to confirm that Oake Manor have agreed to host this event again this year and indeed the event is already oversubscribed. I will be asking for more tee-times so watch this space. At this point, I would like to record our appreciation for the generous support we from the Golf Clubs in Somerset. Without their willingness to let us stage inter-county matches and internal meetings, we would not exist. So, thank you to our Golf Clubs! The Committee thankfully moved away from on-line meetings via Zoom in 2020, to meeting face to face and in person in 2021! We did indeed hold six separate meetings of the Somerset Golf Captains Committee and the minutes of all of these meetings are available on the website. I am particularly grateful for the work of Iain Robertson who joined the committee as fixture secretary and has done an admirable job in liaising with golf clubs and other county associations. This is sometimes a thankless task and Iain has brought a refreshing open-mindedness and efficiency for which we are all very grateful. Thank you, Iain. Of the many issues covered by the committee during the last 12 months I just want to mention one or two:

- After several years of discussion, I was thrilled that we were eventually able to agree upon a design for Somerset Golf Captains scarf for our Lady members so that we could offer them alternative to the traditional men’s tie
- We did have a particular problem with our email client through the website and (after much research) we adopted a new email and newsletter facility called “Mailpoet”. I do hope that members have enjoyed the fresh new design and style of our recent newsletters.

- A major problem for us was that our web-hosting company ceased trading in February 2022 and we had no alternative but to move our website to a new hosting company in October and November 2021! This involved some highly technical and challenging work but the task seems to have been completed successfully and our website is now up and running, hosted by Publicity Matters in Bristol. Particular thanks to Andy Carter for his technical and personal support during this process.
- Members may also be interested to know that some counties will no longer be providing wine on tables during our away matches next year and moving to the arrangement we experience when we play seniors golf - whereby the home players establish which drinks we would like "post-match" and which drinks we would like "with the meal". We have decided in Somerset to continue with our traditional approach of home players buying the "post-match" drinks but with the society providing wine on the table – subject to review later in the year.
- We continue to recruit new captains peachier and we have successfully welcomed 15 club new Captains from the 24 clubs in the county. Indeed, it was good to see some of the new captains playing at the Spring Meeting earlier this afternoon.

Besides the Executive Committee, we also convened two sessions of the Presidents Committee with a particular, more strategic focus of looking at the future of Somerset Golf Captains in the changing financial climate. In order to support this work, I contacted six other local Captains groups to establish how they were dealing with the pressure from clubs to pay green fees, different approaches to match fees, and the impact of franchising out catering and other matters. As Secretary, I have also been responsible for maintaining the stock of Somerset Golf captains livery and we have replenished (where necessary) our stock of golf shirts, jumpers, crystal tankards, and badges for future Captains of Captains. We have been unable to find a new supplier for our black wind-tops but we are still looking! We still endeavour to post the match reports within 48 hours of matches - whenever we can transfer the SD cards and match reports from the match managers to the Secretary. And I'd like to thank the match managers for their help and cooperation with these arrangements. This can be quite a time-consuming task, but I know many members of the Association (old and new) enjoy the opportunity to look at the website and follow the fortunes of our teams during the year. I would like to thank the other members of the committee for their support during the past 12 months. But the most important people in any group are the members themselves, and for that reason I'd like to thank all of you present for your support for our association and the positive way in which members responds to what we ask them to do in terms of registrations and participation and events. Thank you. It's been an honour acting as your Secretary and I look forward to supporting you again over the next 12 months. Thankyou

7. Treasurer's Report

Mr President, Mr Vice President, Mr Captain of Captains, fellow members of Somerset Golf Captains. It is my pleasure to report that we are showing a small increase in income over expenditure over last year. With the Covid virus being so rampant, it has been a very trying times so many fixtures been cancelled or postponed. The treasurer confirmed the current credit balance, which included a significant sum for today's Spring Meeting. Looking forward to the upcoming year, there are several factors to be taken into account when trying to forecast how much costs are going to rise. It would help if someone had a crystal ball. As the President stated, we already know that several clubs will be looking at their business models. Your committee are aware of this and will have to accept it. All clubs are having to be financially prudent. My proposal is that our match fee for the 2022 season should be £40, a modest increase that should be acceptable and still gives great value for a day out as we have had in the past. With that I shall close thank you.

The President invited members to ask questions but there were none.

It was then proposed that the match fee for 2022 should be £40 (increased from £35). Proposed by David Andow; seconded by John Whitewood. A vote was taken and this proposal was carried unanimously.

8. Election Of Officers for 2022/2023

The President introduced David Bate from Mendip Spring Golf Club and then proposed the election of the following officers en-bloc as follows:

- President – Bob Acland
- Vice President – Roy Parmiter
- Captain – Rob Ford
- Captain Elect- David Bate
- Honorary Secretary – John Beer
- Honorary Fixtures Secretary – Iain Robertson
- Honorary Treasurer – David Andow

These were accepted unanimously. Stephen Butterfield then presented Rob Ford with the ceremonial chain of office, and helped him on with his Captain's jacket. In response, Rob said he had previously thought that the day he was appointed as Club Captain at Long Sutton had been the proudest day of his life. He now felt he was wrong and being elected as Captain of Captains was indeed the proudest day of his life. His first decision had been the choice of bread and butter pudding which seems to have ben well received. Rob invited the Captains present to join him for a drink at the bar after the AGM.

9. Any Other Business.

No matters had been raised by members prior to the meeting and so there was no “Any Other Business”