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MANUKORIHI GOLF CLUB



President's Annual Report 2021

I am pleased to present my second annual report as President of the Manukorihi Golf Club.

A smaller committee of 10 was elected last December, and thanks go to all for their contributions throughout the year, with special mention to Trish Crawford who has proven a very capable and efficient secretary in her first year in this important role.

Twilight golf continued strongly in the first and fourth quarters of the year, with many visiting players participating and enjoying their nine holes of golf early on a Thursday evening. The positive and friendly social atmosphere in the clubhouse afterwards is something of which the Club should be justifiably proud. Many thanks to our Twilight sponsor and our organising volunteers.

The Covid-19 coronavirus again impacted negatively on the Club's activities and income this year, with a Level 4 lockdown requiring course closure for a period. However, we applied for and obtained from the Government some financial assistance in the form of wage subsidy and business resurgence payments. In terms of ongoing management of golf in this new Covid-19 world, Golf NZ continues to advise Clubs throughout the country, and most are moving to put in place their individual Covid-19 vaccination policies in terms of access to their courses and facilities.

Last Friday, Taranaki moved into the new Covid-19 Protection Framework Orange category, and the news came that the first positive Delta variant cases in New Plymouth had been confirmed the previous evening. As a matter of urgency, the committee considered its obligation to protect, as far as reasonably practicable, the Club's members, employees, and visitors from health & safety threats such as the harmful effects of the Covid-19 coronavirus and its variants. Also taken into account were the facts that the Club's age demographic is on the susceptible side in terms of the potential health impact from Covid-19, and that we have a significant number of members who have underlying medical conditions.

In view of this, and after considering updated guidelines provided last Thursday by Golf NZ and measures being put in place by other golf clubs, the committee decided that, with immediate effect, individuals will need to be double-vaccinated against Covid-19 to be allowed entry into our clubhouse. In addition, when food and drink are being served, the clubhouse should be treated as if it were a public café, bar, or restaurant, with those entering needing to wear a mask whilst obtaining their food and drink but permitted to take off their mask when seated. All players and visitors must continue to scan in or sign in for contact tracing purposes. Importantly, the committee decided that non-vaccinated individuals will still be allowed to play golf on our course.

There will be an opportunity under General Business to discuss this issue.

The Club held several successful tournaments throughout the year – once again many thanks to those who organised and ran these events, which we recognise take a lot of time and effort, in particular in arranging sponsorships and prizes. Our New World Waitara Christmas Hamper tournament a week ago was a notable success, with 116 participants enjoying fantastic course conditions and generous prizes.

On the subject of sponsorship, the Club is very fortunate to have a number of generous sponsors, led again by our principal sponsor Todd Energy. All sponsors are highly valued for their support of the Club and in return members are urged to support them where possible by directing business in their direction.

Congratulations to all players who represented the Club in external competitions, with a debt of gratitude going to those who organised our competing teams. Special mention must be made of our Ladies' and Men's Pennants teams who won their respective competitions. Congratulations also to all who participated in the Club Championships, and of course to all winners who will rightly be very proud to see their names up on our Honors Boards and engraved on our trophies. Re the latter, action was taken late this year to start having our Club Championship trophies engraved to bring them up to date for the last 10 years.

The Club's weekly newsletter continues to be a very valuable communication medium, and our thanks go to Sue Nobbs for her efforts as editor, delivering a consistently colourful and interesting product week after week. Thanks also to Mike Letherman for continuing to keep the Club's website up to date. For those who access it, Facebook is also proving a useful facility to stay in touch with Club activities and events.

Handicapper Robert Butler has again carried out his important but understated role in a low key and dedicated fashion throughout the year and deserves the sincere thanks of all members.

Many thanks are due also to our caterer Jan Laurence for her reliability and cheerful attitude in providing great food options for all Club events held throughout the year.

At the end of last year, Greymouth Petroleum approached the Club seeking permission to carry out a seismic survey across our course, which lies within one of their petroleum mining permits. The committee's initial reaction was negative, however following negotiation, formal "Permission to Enter" was granted to Greymouth Petroleum in return for a generous donation of \$30,000 towards the cost of the Club drilling its own water bore in the future, and these funds have been reserved specifically for that purpose. Timing for drilling a water bore is uncertain at this stage as the total cost is expected to be in the region of \$60,000. Greymouth Petroleum's seismic survey was conducted in March with minimal disruption to either golfers or our course.

Treasurer Barry Burns will present his report next, but I am pleased to say that the Club's finances remain in good heart due to a tight rein being held on expenditure notwithstanding the number of projects being progressed and the course maintenance equipment purchased during the year. Barry has done an excellent job in his second year in this important and demanding role.

Despite another Covid-disrupted year, we have been able to progress a number of course improvement projects. Status of the various projects is as follows:

- *Bunker refurbishments* – new sand and drainage improvements were actioned on several of our six bunkers, and the rear face of the front bunker on the 10th hole was improved to provide players with a fairer chance of getting out in one shot.
- *Shelter by 1st tee* – now complete following another great effort by our team of volunteers, who put in some 130 hours of effort in total.
- *New hole signage* – many volunteer hours were consumed in constructing and installing the new hole signage, with some final tidy-up paver installation work underneath the boards still outstanding.
- *Greenkeeper's shed* – new tiltadoors were installed and concrete aprons poured, and a major tidy-up inside the shed was undertaken.
- *Amenities block upgrade* – after an extended wait for builder and plumber resources, this project finally commenced last month in the men's amenities area.
- *Online tee time booking facility* – investigations are well advanced towards providing members with the capability to book Saturday tee times online via DotGolf.
- *Carpark upgrade & sealing* – as already reported via newsletter early last month, this project was scheduled to commence on 29 November, but in late October the committee was dismayed to receive from the contractor advice of a significantly increased cost. At such a late stage, the contractor invoked two conditions of quotation, the first being the right to charge its client any increased materials, labour, freight and overhead costs which may arise after the date of quotation. The second condition concerned their recently reassessed need to bring in a significant quantity of additional clean aggregate to provide a sound sub-base for the chip seal finish, with the current sub-base over the 2780 square metre area now being deemed largely unsuitable.

The result was a massive increase in project cost from \$84,000 to \$219,000 (excl. GST), which not surprisingly took the project using that contractor far beyond the \$97,000 budget the Club had set aside. Needless to say this cost increase was totally unacceptable to the committee and was rejected, hence the project has not proceeded on the planned timeline and other options for upgrading the carpark and improving its surface are currently being explored.

Of note, in late March the committee was very pleased to be successful in its application to the then TSB Community Trust (now Toi Foundation) for a grant towards the cost of this project, with the sum of \$37,650 being awarded. Discussions have taken place recently with Toi Foundation over the changed circumstances faced by the Club on the project, and they have granted a time extension of six months to 19 September 2022 for utilisation of their grant, which originally had a 12 month expiry period attached to it.

- *Fairway bunkers* – the proposal to add fairway bunkers to the par-5 12th and 18th holes, and possibly some pot bunkers around the 18th green, was not proceeded with after assessing feedback from a wide range of the Club's membership.
- *Coring and sanding of greens* – I will leave Course Convenor John Rayner to speak to this subject in his report.

Following the departure of Course Superintendent Justin Harper in mid-year, we were fortunate to obtain the services of qualified and experienced greenkeeper Karl Stratton, who made an immediate positive impression in lifting course presentation and in communicating proactively with members. However, Karl was rather hampered in his course improvement endeavors by a very wet Spring. We look forward to continued course enhancements under Karl's leadership.

A particular mention now for our Club Captain Jody Bound, who is stepping down after two years in the role, but I am pleased to say is standing as Vice Club Captain for next year to provide some continuity. It must be said that, apart from leading the Match Committee and carrying out the tasks of Club Captain diligently, "Lofty", as he is aptly nicknamed, has proven to be quite an entertaining individual.

Late in the year, to ensure that golf is promoted in our Club in a healthy and sportsmanlike manner for participants of all ages, genders, and ethnicities, and to maintain standards of conduct for the game of golf for the benefit of all, the committee decided to develop a Code of Conduct which you can find posted inside the clubhouse.

Finally, and in fact most importantly, we all owe our team of willing volunteers a huge vote of thanks for their dedication and outstanding efforts both on and off the golf course during the year. It goes without saying that our Club would not be in such good health if it were not for our volunteers across so many areas. An obvious recent example out on the course was the team of volunteers who stepped up with urgency to clear the large volume of debris when the tall pine tree on the 2nd hole lost a major branch and was then felled: this was a very impressive effort from all involved and demonstrated great Club spirit.

I will not attempt to name here all who have contributed so much this year to the volunteer effort, but particular thanks really do have to go to David Butler, John & Marie Rayner and Jim Newlove for the time they have put in to assist in the running of the Club and maintenance of the golf course.

I look forward to a successful 2022.

Thank you.

Richard Crowe

6 December 2021