



Newsletter, Autumn 2020

'The Pro-Am edition'

Flying our Pennant high

Axedale will be well represented in this year's GCV Pennant series, with four men's teams and four women's teams flying our flag.

Pennant co-ordinators Rod Jacobs and Jan Walklate today announced their line-ups (subject to change if handicaps move too far). Thank you to all players committing to represent the Club ... and good hitting!

MEN

Division 1 (play off the stick)

Lex Johnstone (Capt)

Reece Thompson (Vice-Capt)

Drew Drummond

Leigh McCullagh

Hayden Nielsen

Division 2 (5-10)

Stu McGibbon (Capt)

Peter Hoskin (Vice-Capt)

Andrew Schaeche

Travis Fitzpatrick

Fred Kath

Peter Williamson

Allan Andrews (Emerg)

Glenn Laity (Emerg)

Division 3 (10-14)

Steven Lee (Capt)

John White (Vice-Capt)

Vallon Gibson

Open (play off handicap)

Russell McGibbon (Capt)

Peter Andrew (Vice-Capt)

Rod Jacobs

Robin Minne
Rick Franklin
Doug Osborne
Steve Jeffrey
Dylan Knight (Emerg)

Martin Skahill
Rob Murrell
Mark Davies
Bill Gaskill

WOMEN

Splash

Ruth Iser
Joy Kennedy
Kerry Scales
Loretta Prowse
Mandy Hamilton
Lesley Poker

Wallabies

Raye Fleay
Sue O'Connor
Di Wenzlau
Pam Davies
Ann Telford
Bud Winther

Wombats

Annette Purdy
Helen Martin
Muriel Pitts
Sue Gamble
Rosemary Griffin
Maureen Connelly

Kookaburras

Sue Minne
Alyson McCulloch
Ann Whiting
Eily Dal Santo
Irene Murdoch
Barb Collins

2020 Pro-Am in pictures



2020 Symes Motors BMW Axedale Pro-Am as it happened

Following the outstanding success of our inaugural event in 2019, some of us wondered if the gloss would wear off for the follow-up. Far from it - in true Axedale style, 85 Members turned up to help stage another fantastic event.

Not that financial gain was the main objective, but nonetheless the Club profited by around \$4000 on the day.

There to capture the magic for us were photographers **Daryl Fleay** and **Esther Andrews**, wife of President Allan. A selection of their photos follows.

Symes BMW has indicated it is happy to sponsor again and we already have team sponsors lining up for 2021. The Club is also planning to 'beef up' Pro-Am eve following the success of this year's short-game clinic. Stay tuned.



How to drive in 8 frames:



Terrific action sequence captured by Esther.



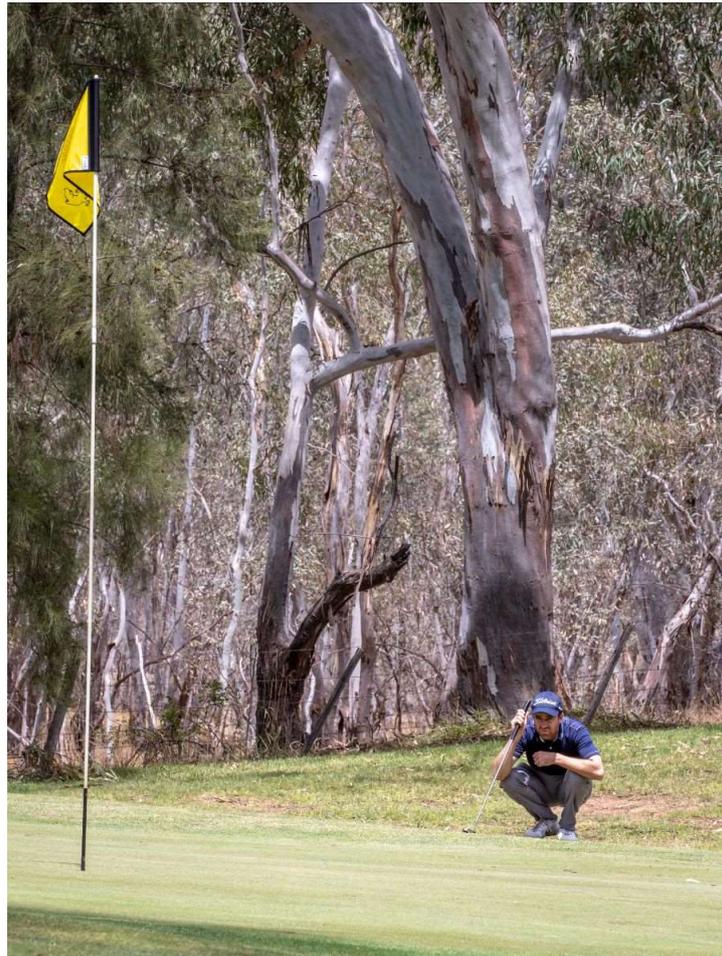
A rake and his rake - Ian Kerr above left. Above right, 'Dan' Pannell and Chappie in contemplative mode. Below, Axedale's version of the Mexican wave. Below left, grub's up! Below right, we spotted some spotters.



Action from across the course









Message from the President

Hello Members

Your Club continues to go from strength to strength with membership and volunteerism growing. What a thrill to have 85 Members turn up and contribute to a fantastic Pro-Am, and each week we see many different faces volunteering in the bar, the kitchen, the Captain's Office and out on the course. Thank you all; you are our life blood.

While your Committee is pleased at our progress, we cannot afford to be complacent. The Club has some big challenges ahead as we strive to become the golf club of choice in the region. Just to list a few:

> Our golf course is generally excellent and never less than very good. This is a tribute to those who pioneered it and all who have worked on it since. But it can be even better - in fact

the truth is we need to improve it in order to keep up with clubs elsewhere that have developed excellent playing conditions. Under Superintendent Dylan Knight, we have started a grass replacement program to introduce one - maybe two in some instances - fairway species across the course. Trials of five couch types are underway on the practice fairway now to see which species thrives under typical Axedale conditions, which can include severe frosts and extended hot dry spells. This turf upgrade is likely to take several years and requires a dedicated investment.

> As our membership ages, demand for golf carts will further increase, putting pressure on storage, charging facilities and course navigation (where the asphalted paths are proving their worth). Committee is currently considering storage options and is obtaining quotes for the considerable cost of upgrading power supply to the cart shed, where we have had some issues.

> Our clubhouse is a good facility but will need to become better. The Captain's Office is cramped and inadequate, capacity will need to grow, storage - including cart storage - is inadequate, and toilets/changerooms could do with a revamp. Extensions and improvements come at great cost, but Committee is already turning its thoughts to how they might be achieved. I hasten to say we are wary - very wary - of incurring debt, having seen clubs elsewhere fold after biting off too much.

> The carpark ... well, needs work. Let's face it, dusty summers and muddy winters are less than desirable. While resurfacing the carpark ranks behind other priorities, it is nonetheless on the radar for the future.

> Technology. Our current entry/scoring system has done a fair job but we have fallen behind clubs that have installed streamlined scanning systems. Committee last meeting took an in-principle decision - and allocated funds - to upgrade our system and we are talking with suppliers. Our website, too, is okay but could be better. Our payment and merchant facilities need further upgrades.

None of these issues are negotiable - they all need attention - but it comes down to priorities and available funding. It's no secret - it's in the annual accounts - that it costs us in the order of \$400,000 each year just to run the Club. That's an awful lot of money for a volunteer organisation to raise, but we manage it. Our big ticket income items are membership, competition fees (it's why we encourage participation, not just membership), green fees, bar

revenue and contributions from our invaluable Women's and Social committees. Every time you pay a membership, enter a comp, buy a drink or buy a raffle ticket you are helping to ensure your Club can not only manage but continue to grow and develop.

... which brings me to our decision to increase comp fees by \$2 to \$12, the first increase in over five years. On current numbers, this will deliver an income boost of about \$450 per week, or \$20,000-odd per annum, or five per cent of the Club budget. That's a modest but not insignificant boost to our income, particularly when some of our fixed costs such as fertiliser and pesticides continue to grow.

Committee last year left membership fees unchanged on the basis that we had not yet mapped out a capital works program and do not believe in increasing fees for the sake of it. With that program now taking shape - and course renovation underway - I think it likely that membership fees will increase modestly when reviewed prior to the AGM (which will now be held on 12 August rather than the 26th as foreshadowed earlier).

As I say, we don't increase fees just because we can - members' money is always returned by way of course and amenity improvements. Over the coming months we will continue to inform you of planned improvements.

On the golfing front, it is pleasing to see comp numbers growing, with 120 on Saturdays, 40-odd on Wednesdays and 70-odd on Thursdays now pretty standard. It's also great to see Members' golf improving, with our newcomers whittling down their GAs and even some old stagers knocking shots off. Pennant season is almost upon us and we look as though we will be strongly represented both in the number and quality of our teams.

Please continue to enjoy your golf and your golf Club.

ALLAN ANDREWS

Roll on the course renos



ABOVE: Superintendent Dylan doesn't believe in letting the grass grow under his feet! This was the scene on the 1st tee last Tuesday as volunteers helped him level and resod. For a little while we will tee off the 1st from an artificial mat in front of the tee, making a short par three even shorter. No excuses now for missing the green.

SPONSOR THANK YOU Bendigo Hire generously donated use of a rotary hoe used in levelling and preparing the 1st tee. Please see John McGrath and the team for all your hiring needs.

BELOW: Before and after ... the practice fairway three weeks ago versus now, with the green shoots of our new fairways clearly evident. Five grasses are being trialled to see which thrives - and survives - in Axedale's variable conditions. The winner will become a turf nursery from which scarified sprigs will gradually be planted out to upgrade fairways.



The process to resow the practice fairway will be repeated as we replace our fairway grasses.

TOP LEFT: The fairway is first poisoned to kill existing grasses, then heavily watered.

TOP RIGHT: Couch sprigs are sourced. In this instance we scarified our 8th tee to gather thousands of small sprigs.

BELOW LEFT: The sprigs are then hand-sown on top of the wetted, bare fairway. This picture was taken moments after Tuesday volunteers had spread the sprigs collected from the 8th tee.

BELOW RIGHT: Dylan then used the wide tires of a course utility vehicle to roll the sprigs into the mud, creating good grass-soil contact.



ABOVE LEFT & RIGHT: Just one week in and four 15-minute periods of daily watering has already produced results. The variety on the left has clearly jumped out of the stalls, while the other has struck but less readily. Dylan and the Course Committee will monitor and evaluate all five species for factors such as ability to establish, growth rates, water consumption, resilience, etc.



UPDATE: This picture was taken on Friday 28 February, just four weeks after this first section was sprigged. It has been mown to fairway height and according to Dylan is already very close to playable.

STOP PRESS

Obviously we should have stopped the press on the new Member Handbook given a few mistakes crept through in our haste to get it to the printer on time. So, for the record (and with apologies to the individuals involved):

Helen Martin is our Woman President, not Raye Fleay.

Joy Kennedy is reigning Woman Champion, not Ruth Iser.

Sue Nielsen and Family sponsor the Peter Nielsen Trophy.

Scrambling to a win



Axedale teams took out the hotly contested Volkswagen Scramble 2020 from a full field of teams from far-flung clubs. Our teams will go on to the Victorian final in Melbourne.

ABOVE: The winning men - Damien Nihill, Hayden Nielsen, Kieran Nihill and Reece Thompson - shot a mind-boggling 57 off the stick.

BELOW: Experience to the fore in our winning women's team of Helen Lindrea, Linda Andrea, Raye Fleay and Loretta Prowse.



Three into one does go!



What are the odds for a golfing hole-in-one? Most clubs average around one or two a year, but not Axedale where good things come in three.

In a recent Saturday competition, three players holed out on three different par threes within an hour of each other. David Ivey (left) aced the short 12th, left-hander Sam Bilardi (centre) the tricky 14th and Craig Lee the 182-metre 18th.

All were presented with their ball mounted on a carved piece of river redgum sourced from fallen timber on the course, a club tradition.

"We had gone months without a hole-in-one and then like Bourke St trams, three turned up at once," said President Allan Andrews. "I think the boys were just as happy with the four Stableford points," he joked. "But no, of course they were thrilled and it was great to be able to present their trophies at a packed clubhouse."

We should also mention Life Member Ian Martin's ace on the 6th recently, a shot that Tony Lindrea swears never left the ground. Your Editor very much doubts the Club's best golfer would be unable to get one airborne, though: We suspect our Bar Manager has put a bit of froth on the story.

AND IT'S A WARM AXEDALE WELCOME TO ...

Welcome to new Members:

Lily Ivey

Emma O'Connor

Matthew Stagg

Peter Watson

Josh Cummins

Kristian Smith

Michael Lee

Joshua Williams

Allan Williams

Matthew Butcher

Hayden Alexander

Upcoming events

SPECIAL MONDAY COMP

Monday 9 March

AUTUMN TOURNAMENT:

Wednesday 11 March, Women's Irish 3-Ball

Friday 13 March, Men's 4BBB

Saturday 14 March, Men's & Women's 4BBB

Bendigo Veterans

Monday 30 March

GCV Junior Tournament

Tuesday 7 April

Natural Hazards starts - Pinehurst

Sunday 19 April



Thanks to Drummond Golf Bendigo principal Chris Wilkinson for his continued support of the Club. We are fortunate to have a specialist golf store in town, so please support Chris. Shopping online does nothing for the town or our sponsor.

