

Plettenberg Bay

4 July 2021

Dear Members,

On Sunday 27 June 2021, in view of the rapid spread of Covid-19 variants creating the “3rd wave”, the President announced a shift to Level 4 of the lockdown. Whilst we agree that these additional restrictions were very necessary, they will definitely have an effect on the operations and profitability of your club. Alcohol sales are banned and the halfway house is operating on a “grab & go” basis.

Nationally the number of Covid cases has increased exponentially and in the Bitou area our cases have grown from around 5 to 7 active cases daily to in excess of 70 active cases daily. These figures are really frightening. Obviously a number of our members have tested positive for Covid-19, including your Chairman. Thankfully most of our members who have contracted this virus have made a satisfactory recovery. There have been rumours circulating that 14 or 15 members contracted Covid at a “super spreader” event at the club – these rumours are totally unfounded.

We are all aware how easily and quickly this virus spreads. Accordingly, I would request that if you or one of the members of your household are not feeling 100%, immediately the whole household **MUST** isolate and all close contacts should be advised and told to isolate. This is an **OBLIGATION** and not a request. Having to let your 4 ball down is so much better than giving your 4 ball Covid.

Operations of the Golf Course and Other Sports Facilities

Our Golf Captain, Nico Westraat, has been keeping the golfers informed of the progress of the golf course. Due to delays in hosting the South African Senior Open, we had to delay the work on our tee boxes and unfortunately we missed most of the growing season. Nevertheless, an enormous amount of work has been done and they should be excellent when finished. I would like to thank our member, Tyrone Yates, for joining the Greens Committee – his contribution has been amazing. Otherwise, the golf course is in excellent condition.

The tennis courts have recently been resurfaced and I am advised that they are playing well.

Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic has had a devastating effect on our Bowls section. Membership has decreased substantially and your committee are currently formulating a way forward for this section.

Club Finances

Our financial year ended on 30 June 2021 – as our members will appreciate, due to the Covid pandemic, lockdowns, restrictions on travel, etc., it has been a difficult year. Our Treasurer, John Lloyd, has done an amazing job controlling and regulating the finances of your club together with our Club Manager, Greg Phillips.

We are extremely fortunate that the club finances are reasonably stable and sound, however, as with the latest lockdown, circumstances can change very quickly. The non-arrival of our “Swallow” members and visitors is very evident when looking at the golf rounds and the resulting income. Another cause for concern is the annual renewal of club membership – we would urge members to attend to this as soon as possible.

Club Staff

At the beginning of lockdown in March last year, your committee decided that, despite the obvious effects on the club income, they would do their best to avoid any retrenchments. Thankfully, and with the government TERS support, we have been able to avoid any retrenchments.

We are currently in negotiations with the staff union for salaries and conditions. Hopefully, they will understand the current conditions in the country and the club and will agree to our offers which will avoid any retrenchments.

Caddies

In our Members' Newsletters last year, we highlighted the plight of the caddies who received zero income whilst the course was closed and reduced income upon the opening. Appeals by the club through the Caddy Fund and the "Beans" golfers for the Plett Caddy Association were well supported.

The restrictions on travel have seriously affected our Swallow (overseas) members and visitors, together with a reduction of South African visitors due to beach closures, etc have had an obvious knock-on effect on the caddies' income.

The club has recently supported the caddies through the Caddy Fund. For those members who would like to support the Caddy Fund, donations can be made via EFT to the club's account at FNB Plettenberg Bay account no. 53374617085 giving your name and Caddy Welfare Fund as a reference. In this regard I would like to thank Mrs Rosy Henneberger-Noras for her awesome donation to the fund, may thanks Rosy.

I would request that our members and guests playing at Plett do their best to support the caddies by employing a caddy or a spotter.

In Conclusion

We live in very difficult and unprecedented times which have had an effect on all of us. We have survived 15 months of this pandemic and hopefully with vaccinations and following the Covid-19 protocols, there may be some light at the end of the tunnel.

In conclusion, I wish all the members and their families, our staff and their families, God speed and health during this difficult time.

Regards

Howard Garmany

Chairman PBCC