



CONSTANTIA BOWLING CLUB

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FALCON DECEMBER 2016

It is with much sadness that we report the passing of our dear friend and good bowler **Aubrey Heuer**. Aubrey was taken ill on Tuesday of last week and passed away last Sunday in the Vincent Palotti Hospital. He missed his midweek game in the Bergvliet tournament last Wednesday after feeling unwell. He has been an active member at Constantia BC ever since the closure of Claremont BC. Our sincere sympathies are extended to his dear wife Lynore and family. **A wake will be held in the Club on Monday 12th December at 3-00pm. All members are welcome to attend.**

The President of WPBA, John Edwards, is in hospital with serious leg ailments. There is a possibility that he will have to undergo a major life changing orthopaedic operation this week. Members are asked to keep him in their hearts, minds and prayers.

Ron Joubert underwent surgery last week and after a period in intensive care he was able to leave hospital. Ron is now recovering at home while he waits for the results of analysis. We all wish Ron a speedy recovery and a good prognosis.

Back to more pleasant matters, this season is still young but already our Ladies have reached both the finals of the Sully Cup and Western Province Fours and these notable achievements have been recognised by the Western Province selectors with the following members having been chosen to represent our Province in a practice match against Boland on Sunday 11th December 2016, at Durbanville:

Open side: **Darryll Edwards**

B Side: **Moirra Stanley, Lynda Nurrish, Linda Stringer and Taz Bright.**

Senior A: **Flo George and Lyn Clark**

C Side: **Cheryl Saunders**

With 8 players selected this is twice as many as any other club, good luck to all of our players and let's hope they all make the Inter-District team.

Flag & Muter days we held last weekend and went off very well except for a problem on Saturday morning of understanding and communication between the event organisers and the green staff. Terry has taken the trouble to document what happened so that all members can better understand how things should work in practice:

MESSAGES FROM OUR GREENS CONVENOR TERRY HEPWORTH

ITEM 1

“As a result of the unfortunate start to the Muter Day event this past Saturday, may I remind those involved in the organisation of similar events of the procedure that seems to have worked quite well in the past.

If a time is set for the commencement of an event (ie 09:00), our staff will schedule their preparation to meet this deadline. On most occasions, we will be ready for play at the scheduled time and either Henri, Trevor or I will let the convener (or match official) know that the green has been dressed. Occasionally, as happened this past Saturday, there will be a hiccup. In this case one of the machines had to be re-set, which set the staff back a little. I notified those involved that we were running a bit late. So, it came as quite a surprise when hordes of enthusiastic bowlers descended on the greens prior to our being ready.

Inevitably the comments flowed. “This board has not been cleaned”, said one, “where is the chalk?” said the next, “must we supply our own water?” said the third. So, when the fourth person, one of my favourites, said “we haven’t got a jack”, poor Joan bore the brunt of my embarrassment and annoyance. The cherry on the cake was when Lynn, in full flight, tripped over the string while we were trying to put in the dots.

Not a great advert for Constantia!

I have operated on the assumption that play only commences once the all-clear is given. I hope this is OK, as there are sure to be the odd occasions in the future where we might have to delay the start”

In order to keep all members in touch with Club matters that will affect them, Terry has sent the following message to Exco for discussion and consideration:

ITEM 2

I think I indicated previously to some members of Exco that we might have to reconsider the scheduling of some of our events due to the condition of our greens. It has become fairly obvious that we cannot provide decent conditions for a 3-green Spring Midweek followed fairly closely by Muter and Flag Days, the Jack Muller Day, and then in under a month have the greens ready for the first round of Flag and Muter.

My initial suggestion was to limit the Spring Midweek (and perhaps the Flag Day) to two greens only.

At a recent Greens Seminar held at our Club, where WPBA plus a number of Clubs were involved, this issue was debated at length. The following points were made:

1. All greens should be renovated once a year.
2. The degree of renovation varies from
 - 2.1 Light (scarifying and aerating, where the levels are good) to
 - 2.2 Severe, where topdressing has to be applied.

3. The optimum time to renovate is from November onwards when the soil temperature is high enough to accelerate growth
4. If renovation is done at this time of the year, light renovation will take about 2 - 3 weeks to recover and severe from 4 – 5 weeks.
5. WPBA has recognised this fact and agreed not to schedule any competitions during this period.
6. Unfortunately, Clubs have jumped on this bandwagon and used this time to schedule midweek and Club competitions, rendering the intended closure of the greens meaningless.
7. The WPBA Competitions Organiser had experienced great difficulty in finding suitable greens for WPBA competitions in October and early November.
8. Club Representatives at the seminar felt strongly that NO WPBA events should be scheduled for the early part of the season, but moved to June/July/August when most of our greens are running well.
9. Our embarrassment at charging visitors to be play on our inferior greens during the Midweek, was echoed by representatives from Bergvliet and WPC.

One suggestion arising from the discussion at the seminar was, that we drop the Spring Midweek. As it is, we do have two bites at the cherry where our neighbours enjoy only one, plus the fact that we are able to fill three greens as opposed to the two at the other Clubs.

If we did this, we could run our Snowball a little longer, close one green towards the end of September, another 3 weeks later, and the last one at the beginning of November. In this way, we would have three greens in good condition for our prestigious Muter and Flag Days.

I look forward to members' reactions to this serious issue.

Terry

JACK MULLER DAY 16TH DECEMBER 2016

We are still looking for more teams to enter this event which is on a national holiday. The event was revived two years ago, and we are ready and willing to hold it again but without many more entries than we have so far it will have to be cancelled. We will have to look at the format of this event which involves 3 matches and lasts all day which is too long for many of our members. At the time of writing we have about half the minimum number of entries we need to stage the event. If it does not take place, then the usual Bank Holiday tabs-in game will take place followed by a lunch and then the draw for the Christmas Hampers. All members who entered the event will be catered for. A final decision will be taken on Friday 9th December, as that is the closing date for entries.

The Christmas draw is about 20% down on ticket sales from last year so we will only be drawing for four hampers instead of the five we had last year. It was decided this year that members could buy

more than one ticket if they wish. If Jet Clark receives R50-00 from any member, then an additional slip with that member's name will be added to the draw.

A message from Chris Nurrish to all members:

UMPIRES/TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

During the 2016 All Cape we had to import Technical Officials from other clubs and we are now faced with the same problem for the Inter-Districts being held in Cape Town in March 2017. To prevent this embarrassment happening again I would like to appeal to all playing members who have not already done so, to consider doing a level 1 technical official course. If we can generate sufficient interest, we could probably have the course run at CBC. Please let Chris Nurrish know if you are interested.

AMATEUR COACHES

We all love our game and want to do well and we often offer advice to other bowlers that is perhaps ill considered. Coaching is a complex system and needs a defined step by step approach. If you have not completed a coaching course, please don't undo the work of the coaches by giving advice to your fellow bowlers – you may inadvertently be doing more harm than good. If you see someone battling advise them to talk to one of the club coaches.

If you enjoy helping other bowlers then a club coaches course is being offered in the second half of 2017, Please speak to Chris Nurrish for details and let's get more people in the club involved in coaching effectively.

SOMETHING MORE LIGHTHEARTED

I am indebted to a fellow member for this story

A clearly inebriated woman, stark naked, jumped into a taxi in New York City and laid down on the back seat.

The cab driver, an old Jewish gentleman, opened his eyes wide and stared at the woman. He made no attempt to start the cab. The woman glared back at him and said, "What's wrong with you, honey? - Haven't you ever seen a naked woman before?"

The old Jewish driver answered, "Let me tell you sumsing, lady. I vasn't staring at you like you tink; det would not be proper vair I come from."

The drunk woman giggled and responded, "Well, if you're not staring at my boobs or ass, sweetie, what are you doing then?"

He paused a moment, then told her..."Vell, M'am, I am looking and I am looking, and I am tinking to myself, Vair in da hell is dis lady keeping de money to pay for dis ride?"

Now, that's a REAL Businessman!

EVENTS

We had a good turnout for the Oldies but Goldies on Sunday 20th November and those who attended were treated to a splendid afternoons entertainment. Monique Cassels was particularly good and received several standing ovations. By the time this edition goes out we will have had “Carols and Bowls by Candlelight” but we still have to look forward to:

Trivia Night

Who will it be? Man Smart, Woman Smarter?

JANUARY 2017

Friday 13th January, 2017

18h30 for 19h00

Teams of 2 or 4 Cost R25-00 per person

Bring your own snacks

Our thanks go to Heather & Peter Cawood for organising these events and they deserve our support. I am sure I speak for all members when I say that I hope there will be more similar type of events in the New Year.

CONTINUATION OF THE CONFUSED ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

Another slow month for news so I will continue the story of my experiences in South Africa. This time it's with a commercial entity not a government department. Our grandson in UK was due to change schools from Junior to Senior starting in September. As he has a little further to walk to his new school and goes on his own his parents decided he could have his first mobile phone. His only request, it was actually a profound plea, was that he did not want a phone like granddad & grandma that had buttons. This got me thinking that perhaps it was time to get a more modern phone, one that had Facetime and could be connected to the internet. As I had a pay as you go Vodacom SIM card, I took myself off to their branch in Constantia Village to get a iPhone on contract. Armed with the usual proof of identity, residence and income I sat down to explain that I wanted to keep my existing number and needed a iPhone, but did not need the latest version. The young man began entering my life history into his terminal and then made copies of all my documents. He then asked for the last three months' bank statements which was odd because he had full details of my monthly income from both my company pension and my state pension. I thought I would have to go home for the bank statements but he said I could get them from the ATM just near Exclusive Books. Knowing that to argue about the necessity for them to see how I spend my income would get me nowhere, I did as I was asked. Although he had just directed me to this ATM when I got back to the shop he told me that each page had to be stamped by the bank. How he thought I could have forged the bank statement in the few minutes it took me to obtain it I do not know. Back I traipsed across to the Standard Bank branch and then had to queue for 20 minutes but I came back armed with each page stamped back and front. (just in case) and sat down in the same chair once another customer had finished. Almost two hours had passed since I first arrived at this Vodacom branch.

With all these requirements fulfilled and all the boxes ticked I thought I was in the home straight but having uploaded all my information the chap then told me, in a very apologetic manner, that my application was refused. I was so taken aback my expression generated additional sympathy and I was half expecting to be offered counselling. The reason I was so shocked was that I was lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time when final salary scheme pensions were still possible and the City of London was generating about 30% of all taxes collected by the UK Exchequer. We were heroes then and were paid very well so given my rand income (helped by the exchange rate) puts me in top 1% of earners in South Africa, I was amazed that Vodacom considered me as a credit risk. My polite request for an explanation was met with a whole lot of clap trap about confidentiality and was told I had to ring a number to find out why my financial position was not acceptable. I got home and rang what I then discovered was a general number for Vodacom which required me to listen to very repetitious music that must have been chosen by a committee. This music was punctuated by requests to press numbers that did not exactly meet my criteria. Needless to say, I ended up in the wrong section and each time I was transferred the self-same music was played. In the end, I found myself talking to the “After Sales Department”, who apparently deal with my type of problem even though no sale has taken place. The young lady, who had an accent that made her difficult for me to understand then demanded my SA-ID number which I assume she then punched into her terminal. Some minutes later she told me that on her screen my ID had a legend against it that stated “I was suspected of fraud” It took me over a year to get my ID and it was only a few months old, but already apparently, it says I am suspected of fraud. Well I have from time to time been critical of the President but I doubted my opinion of him reached his ears or warranted the need for him to cast doubt about my honesty. I expressed my horror at this information and asked who I should contact to explain the reasons for this outrage. She gave me a number which turned out to be a fax. Worried that the next person to ring my doorbell might be the Fraud Squad, I called back to Vodacom using the direct number I had obtained at the end of my last call. This time someone else answered the phone and I explained my problem and gave my ID number. This girl then asked me to give her the name of the person I’d spoken to previously. I said that I had great trouble understanding the previous girl’s words when they were words I would expect to recognise so I would have had no chance with an African name. This new person then told me that no legend had appeared on her screen regarding my ID, which initially came as a relief but then that relief turned to anger as I thought that I might have been a person with depression who was pushed over the edge by the news that on top of all my other problems I was now under suspicion for fraud. I demanded that the tape of my conversation with her unknown colleague be listened to by senior management and some retraining be put in place. She told me this would be difficult given the size of the staff. I politely stated that if my experience was anything to go by I was surprised they needed any staff at all in After Sales. She asked me to E-mail copies of all my documents to an Email address that took three more phone calls to get right after my first two attempts bounced. It’s an irony that the correct address was yadmin@likeminds.co.za Not much like mindedness from my perspective but in the end I accept that my English is as hard for locals to understand as African English is for me to grasp. I dutifully sent off all my documents to this address having painstakingly scanned them into file form and surprise, surprise no answer. Sent them again five days later, still nothing so I wrote a stinking letter to the Director of Customer Services not expecting a reply but it made me feel better.

I then took my business to Cell C and although I got a phone they limited me to a credit line of R300-00 per month explaining that I had no credit rating in South Africa. I said I had no need of credit so I have no store cards that one needs apparently to get a rating. I did point out that three times in the past I paid off my former domestic workers' debts at Trueworth and did that count. I was told that it did count and if my former domestic lady wanted a new phone they would give her a top of the range model with no questions asked. For me well that's another matter. My current domestic lady tells me that she could buy me a phone & a contract in Mitchells Plain, with no questions asked.

A chap from Vodacom did call me about my letter and started with the usual string of meaningless apologies. I was staying on a farm in Springfontein with Keith Ingram and Hector Minott when the call came but reception was not good and he had a difficult accent for me to hear. I gave him a hard time and demanded compensation for the lost credit on my Vodacom SIM card (R500-00) and for the distress caused by their incompetence. He promised to refer the matter to his manager and now two weeks have gone by and no further contact. More letters to follow.

On behalf of the President & the Executive I wish all members and their families an enjoyable Christmas and a healthy, prosperous and happy New Year for 2017.

John Perryman

Editor

PS we are going back to the UK for Christmas this year so the January edition will be published a little later than usual and if there are no urgent items then it might not come out until February (spot the deliberate mistake)