

Director of Golf Report

The 2011 season marked the 90th Anniversary of Ken-Wo Golf Club. The playing season began on Friday, April 22nd, the beginning of what proved to be a successful season at Ken-Wo Golf Club. One of the many highlights from the past year was the sold out Gala Dinner that was held on Friday, April 29th as Ken-Wo Golf Club celebrated its 90th Anniversary. Many thanks to Mary Ann Culliton, Cheryl Hawboldt and Debbie Barclay for their efforts in making this event such a memorable evening! Another highlight of the year was the Boyd Lockhart Recognition Dinner that was held on September 1st to recognize the great career and innumerable contributions of Boyd Lockhart to Ken-Wo Golf Club during his storied career at the club. Many thanks to the hard-working committee for their efforts in making this event such a success, with special thanks to my co-chair for the dinner Mr. David Muttart! I am sad to say that the other big story of 2011 was the weather as April and May, as well as the better part of June, were filled with cool temperatures and rain. Thankfully, the second half of the year was a little better and the finish to the season was wonderful as Mother Nature certainly cooperated throughout the fall with the course remaining open for play until Sunday, November 20th.

Having played host to approximately 32,500 rounds of golf in 2011, slightly down from the 35,000 rounds in 2010, the management and customer service teams in all departments were kept busy from the onset of the season. I would like to recognize our management team of Rick Phelan – Golf Course Superintendent, Brandy Martin – Administrative Assistant, Debbie Barclay – Food and Beverage Manager, Derek MacKinnon – Head Golf Professional and Dan Fraser – Associate Golf Professional, for their efforts and leadership throughout the 2011 season. We are very fortunate to have these high quality individuals as part of our management team as they each play a vital role in the success of the club and overall satisfaction of our members and guests. I would also like to commend our clubhouse custodian, Annette MacGillivray, for her continued hard work and efforts.

This past season's membership numbers were positive, but slightly down from the previous year with 560 adults and 125 juniors. The late start to the season, along with the inclement weather, certainly played a factor in the decline in membership numbers. It is also evident that the stumbling economy is still impacting many people's decisions when it comes to the use of their monies for leisure activities. Moving forward, the Director of Golf and management team, as well as the Board of Directors, will focus on the retention of existing members as well as the recruitment of new members to the club.

As was the case in recent years, the overall outlook remains positive as the two key contributors to the bottom line, revenue from memberships and green fees, were once again positive this year. With membership revenues of approximately \$508,000 and green fee revenues hovering around \$303,000, it is evident that the club had another busy season, especially when considering the challenges with the weather and the economy. This is very promising news to report, as it is these numbers that have a direct impact on the success in all revenue departments such as pro shop, power carts, food and beverage, etc, so to our members and guests "thank you" for your continued support.

The golf operations department had an exceptional season in terms of merchandise sales with sales that were over 15% ahead of last year's pace. The golf operation was once again led by our returning professionals, Derek MacKinnon and Dan Fraser, who were very well complemented by our newest professional Fenwick Zwicker. This group of individuals did a tremendous job in all areas of the operation as this is the busiest

department in the club day in and day out. The administration of the daily tee sheet, the management of the power cart fleet, the high level of customer service in so many ways and the “golf” expertise that is evident on a regular basis led to a very successful season in this department. It goes without saying that the success of the golf operation in terms of sales is directly related to the support of the membership through merchandise sales in the pro shop, use of power carts, use of club storage facilities, use of the driving range, etc! So to all of you who supported the golf operation in any way in 2011, a very big thank you!

The food and beverage operation experienced a slight decline in year over year sales and this can be directly attributed to the fact rounds played were down almost 10% from 2010. The dining room was abuzz several times this season, with the highlight’s being the Gala Dinner – Club Opening held in April and the Boyd Lockhart Recognition Dinner held in September. Both of these events were planned in conjunction with the celebration of the club’s 90th Anniversary and I am pleased to say that all attendees at both events left thoroughly impressed by the efforts of our food and beverage team. The dining room and bar were also very busy with special events as the club played host to 10 weddings in 2011 with a solid number of weddings already booked for the 2012 season. The operation performed well in many areas and it is fair to say that the newly designed canteen, now known as “The Turn”, was a great addition to the club for so many reasons and not just the simple fact that sales were up in a year with less rounds played. Although overall sales in the F&B department did decline slightly - \$311,000 in 2011 vs \$313,000 in 2010 - and overall profit also dipped as expenses continue to rise, the overall year should still be considered a success as the quality and consistency of the food service improved, the addition of The Turn was well received and our “special” event business remained strong. The continued support of our members on a daily basis, as well as via participation in “special” club events, has played a large role in the success of this department. To those of you who regularly support the Ken-Wo food and beverage operation via Friday Social Golf, Ladies Day, Sr Men’s Day, Men’s Night or just regular daily play, Thank You!

The 2011 season was yet another season of change here at Ken-Wo Golf Club as several minor and major improvements were made to the golf course and clubhouse. The major changes to the golf course included the redesign of #10 green as well as the newly constructed practice green. The comments and feedback on both projects were very positive and we look forward to the continued maturation of these greens in 2012. There certainly weren’t many days where the new practice green didn’t get used so it is fair to say this was a much needed improvement. There was also a lot of focus on the day to day maintenance of the golf course, more specifically the season long conditions of our greens, as this was an area of concern throughout the 2010 season. Following some recommendations from Mr. Jim Skorulski, a senior agronomist with the USGA who visited the club in the spring, our aeration and top dressing programs were tweaked. The end result was much improved greens throughout the entire season, especially the second half of the season, albeit the newly implemented practices were time sensitive in terms of completion time and healing time for the greens. I would like to thank the members and guests for their patience and cooperation throughout this process as Rick and his crew learned the nuances of the new procedures (bigger cores, more sand, etc). I can assure you that the “turn around” time of the aeration process has been investigated and discussed with plans in place to speed up this process in 2012 and beyond. Another major change that took place in 2011 was the relocation of the administration offices to the main level as well as the construction of the new Stop N Go, now referred to as The Turn, now located adjacent to the pro shop in the northeast corner of the building. This

project represented a major facelift to the clubhouse that was long overdue and discussed for quite some time, but never did come to fruition for various reasons. The project is now completed and I am happy to say the end result is exactly what we had envisioned and the response from everyone has been “great changes”, “job well done”, “much better location for the offices”, and so on and so on.

The club’s irrigation / watering system is another topic that has been discussed for quite some time as the club’s system was audited in 2004 with major changes recommended at that time; however, these changes were not implemented and the time had finally come where the Pump Station was in such poor condition that there were major concerns the pump would not last through the 2012 season. Therefore, the Board made the decision in August to purchase a new Pump Station with a system that is far more advanced and that will certainly be more effective and efficient moving forward. The original pumping station was installed in 1995 with a life expectancy of 15 years so the time had come to have the unit replaced. The life expectancy of the new station is upwards of 20 years so we are certain this is an expense that will not come up again anytime soon. The cost of the new station including installation and setup was \$93,500 with this amount being paid through the club’s cash, with no new debt being added to the club’s existing debt. The installation of the new pump took place in late November of this year so we head into the 2012 season in excellent shape with relation to our irrigation system. Although this is a very costly venture, and some may question the decision to make such an improvement at this cost, the club will be far better off in the long run. The new pump station will enable us to protect and continue to maintain our #1 asset which is the golf course itself. The new pump station will also reduce power and water consumption, allow a great deal more flexibility when watering greens and fairways, limit breaks throughout the course, while also being a much safer unit to work with. All in all a great improvement that was long overdue and very necessary!

As is the case in every season, there are several “competitive” events held throughout the year, more specifically our Club Championships in each division. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and congratulate our 2011 Club Champions for their accomplishments. The 2011 Club Champions are as follows:

Men’s Club Champion – Allistair Tidcombe
Senior Men’s Club Champion – Ray Hogan
Men’s Match Play Champion – Steven Ward
Ladies Club Champion – Beth Lloyd
Senior Ladies Club Champion – Renda Vandertoorn
Mixed Club Champions – Maggie & Sam Kenny
Junior Boys Club Champion – John Deacon
Junior Girls Club Champion – Darcy Fuller

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who played such a huge role in the success of all club championships, as well as many other club events. Without the help of our volunteers who assist with planning, promotion, preparation, scoring, registration and presentations, these events would not be as successful as they are, so to all of our volunteers a very big “Thank You!”

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their efforts throughout the past year as they are certainly a pleasure to work with on a regular basis. Many thanks as well to the committees and divisions who worked so feverishly throughout the season to ensure that there committees and divisions, and Ken-Wo as a whole, had successful years. Once again, many thanks to the management team and their staffs for their efforts this past year! And last but certainly not least many thanks to the members of Ken-Wo Golf Club for the support and loyalty shown towards “your” golf club all season long. It is the continued support of the members that impacts the club’s overall success and enables the club to move forward in many areas.

On behalf of the staff and management team I would like to wish you all a healthy, happy and enjoyable off season. We look forward to welcoming you back for the 2012 season!

Respectfully submitted,

Rene MacKay
Director of Golf & Operations