

Edinburgh Academical Golf Club

Michael MacPhee (EA 1969-82)

Captain 2019 & 2020

First of all, I hope this finds you and your families well, safe, and coping with the challenges from which we are now, hopefully, emerging. We have all had the chance to appreciate fully our families and friends, and to reflect on priorities. Golf, of course, has a cherished place in the latter for members of EAGC!

Following last year's many excellent team performances, living up to the school motto of 'Always excel', it is bizarre to have to report on an almost total shutdown of competitive golfing activities this year. No team competitions, no knockouts, no medals, no dinners, no sun-drenched photographs of Brancaster or the Honourable Company. In their place, Zoom committee meetings and virtual drinks. A Halford Hewitt team, featuring some eagerly anticipated new blood and facing another benign-looking draw, had to be stood down at the last minute. Even the eventual, gradual re-emergence of holes 1 to 18 has been blighted by the continuing absence of the 19th – an anxious time of involuntary moderation for the Club.

What of results? Well, last year's Club Championship final remains unresolved for the moment. David Simson and your correspondent aim to lock horns once conditions allow and lunch has resumed at Muirfield. The Captains' Challenge took place at Luffness pre lockdown where Heriots, in the form of John Archibald, narrowly but deservedly lifted the honours that had been secured in the inaugural contest by our very own Brian Hay-Smith. Mea culpa... Happily, prolonged golflessness need not mean inertia. Rejuvenation is afoot. The annual club dinner, again at Bruntsfield Links GS.

Work to create golf facilities at the Junior School has regrouped lately and progress is encouraging despite the delay, with architects commissioned. The ambition is to provide pupils with a way into golf at an early age, properly coached, to unlock the potential to do more and better for those who develop an ongoing interest in the game. This includes representing the Academy through the EA Golf Club and we hope to have this up and running at the start of next year.

It is with great sadness, at this point, that I must record the premature passing, in his early 50s, of a long-standing and much-loved Accie golfer, Andrew Simpson (EA 1973-87). Our thoughts are with his family. Andrew is much missed and fondly remembered and we hope his sons will play an increasing part in this Club.

In closing, it has been a great privilege to serve as Captain for these past two years and to experience first hand the dedication, good humour and capability of our committee members. Thanks to all of them for being the real sustaining and enabling force behind the Club. Last, but not least, a warm welcome to Johnny McGlynn another scion of Aberdour and your Captain from January. The club is in good hands and excellent fettle. Younger members are flocking to our doors – let's keep 'em coming!

For further information, please visit www.edinburghacciesgolf.com