

Ashburton Golf Club

Well, what a week that was, another National tournament successfully hosted by Ashburton golf club. Although we had to do plenty of hard work in the lead up and throughout the week, it was wonderful to be around the course all week and take all the plaudits from players, supporters and management staff.

It started out with the opening ceremony on Monday, a brilliant piper led the teams out, the Lochlea Singers were amazing. Mayor Liz McMillan didn't miss a beat as the NZ Golf manager forgot her name while announcing her and mumbled something in Klingon, I think, but Liz, like a true professional delivered a wonderful speech. The matches kicked off on Tuesday morning and after around 9 holes everyone was called in as a massive downpour flooded the course. A two hour delay was all that was required and the rest of the week was perfect weather. Anyone who came to watch saw some amazing golf. The Northland and Tasman teams as well as a couple of the Aorangi team were more mature ladies, but the bulk of the golfers on show would have been under 16 years old. The Waikato and Wellington teams both had 12 year olds playing and they made the game look effortless. Just to put the skill level into perspective, our third hole measures 290m off the ladies' tees, so a 14 year old girl from Wellington steps up and drives it onto the green and rolls in the putt for a two. The game is easy! When the dust had settled on Friday afternoon we had the same final as last year. North Harbour against Auckland and in the end North Harbour retained their title with a good 4-1 win. I need to give a massive thanks to all the greens staff and volunteers, Simon, Bryn, Catherine, Neil, Tim, Dave Knight, Gaby and their many, many helpers. Lynn, Mary Ann and all the ladies for keeping all the players needs met and just doing jobs before anybody else knew they needed doing. Bruce, John, Chris, Nutts and David for the starting, Mr Rush may need a new alarm clock! Matt and Alan for keeping the driving range ticking over and finally Brent, Barry and Kevin, who oversaw club and trundler storage. The whole week ran seamlessly, and I just had to sit back and take all the thanks and well done's from all the teams. Top work team.

We held our AGM on Thursday and it was great to see a good size crowd turn up, with everyone wanting the best for their club. We welcomed new President Terry Kingsbury, incoming captains Mary Ann Blair and Richard McKernan and two new elected board members David Rush and Hayden McMillan. These five people join incumbent member Pauline Bell, to form a very strong board. New treasurer John Ramsay will keep the finances in good check, and with very strong greens and match committees the club is in very good health, and we're looking forward to a big 2026.

On the club playing front, we held the Vision Insurance Xmas salvers last Saturday. These were won by Geoff Wright and Wendy Bruce with some great scoring. Geoff is one of our new members and recently had a lesson from Matt, so obviously the proof is in the pudding. If you want to up your game, just give Matt a shout and put the work in. The prize table was full of Christmas cheer thanks to James and Laura and the great gang at Vision Insurance. The prizes went down to the low 30's and just about everyone got a prize, though Davo, Hamish and Spuds table looked a bit sparse.

Saturday also doubled up as the first qualifying round of the Property Brokers Shootout, the most followed tournament that we hold at the club. Geoff's 46 points obviously puts him on the top of the table, but he needs another score to go with it. We have 5 more rounds to play over the next 5 weeks, so it's not too late to join in. Just give the starter your \$10 entry before you start. I am going to stick my neck out and state that the course is playing so well, you are going to need 78 points to cement yourself in the top 19, but once you are in the final it is anyone's game and a club sub for next year could be heading your way, thanks to Hamish and Karen and the Property Brokers. Good Golfing.

Many thanks,

Paddy Bradford