



15 March 2022

Dear Member,

The winter is melting away and preparations for the 2022 golf season are underway. The managers, volunteers and the Board have been hard at work over the winter and below are some changes you can look forward to this season.

First off, I'd like to introduce you to our new Director of Golf Operations / Golf Professional, Steven Coulthard. Steven and his family are moving up from Kelowna and are excited to help improve the club and become a part of our community. Steven has provided us with a short bio, which is attached below. Steven is already hard at work getting to know our systems and will be opening the pro shop and simulator on March 22 (hours will be posted). Steven is looking for a house to rent or buy, so please pass on any leads you may have. I would like to thank the Hiring Committee for their hard work in running the job competition and bringing Steven here. Please don't hesitate to stop in to the pro shop and introduce yourself to him. The club is also welcoming a new Restaurant Manager and Executive Chef, which are part of the Noir Food Services team. These changes present a great opportunity to build a team atmosphere in the clubhouse and address the short-comings that the membership has brought to our attention. Our bookkeeper, Marj Emmelot, will thankfully be returning and a special thanks goes out to her for going above and beyond her normal duties this past winter to help the club.

Moving on to the grounds crew, the Board is happy to report that Murray Grasdahl is also returning and expects to have most of his crew from last year returning as well. The greens unfortunately did see a large amount of ice buildup over the winter, which will setback growth this spring. The reason why ice build-up is so detrimental to the greens is because it cuts off oxygen to the grass and prevents an air exchange to occur. Poa annua bluegrass, which partially makes up our greens, can survive between 30 – 90 days under ice before suffocating and dying. As mentioned in the last newsletter, an innovative tarping system was tested on #9 green this winter and we are eager to see the results. Knowing that ice buildup had occurred, Murray cleared the snow from the greens in early February and applied a darkening agent to try and encourage melting. With the snow cleared, a team of 25 volunteers came out in mid-February and were able to clear the ice from 8 greens while the weather was warm. Thanks to all those that came out and took part in the back-breaking work! Hopefully the weather continues to be warm and our growing season gets an early start. The irrigation project will continue as soon as the ground allows and the plan is to have this project completed by the end of the year. Once completed the Board will be looking for member input as to what the next on-

course improvements should be. Feedback from the winter survey highlighted the sand traps as being a top priority along with green protection and flattening fairways. A more formal discussion will take place in the future.

Another project that many will be pleased with is the paving and curbing of the parking lot, which will take place next month. While this project was not actively being planned, the Board was approached by a member this past fall, who wanted to provide a generous donation to help have this completed. Delwisch Design Group was contracted to provide an initial design and site plan and the project was approved and financing secured. The Celebrity Golf Tournament organization is also supporting the project and plans to help repair some of the worse-off cart paths. While the donor wishes to remain anonymous, the Board wants to thank all those involved in what will be a major improvement to our club. Construction will start as soon as the ground dries up, but will result in the parking lot being closed until the end of April and the spring meeting will also be postponed until after completion. Members are asked to temporarily park on the street or if dry the grass overflow parking area until work is complete, and please be patient with this short-term inconvenience.

Lastly, the Board is again sending out a call for workers. Staff shortages will continue to be an issue this season and in the interest of improving operations in the pro shop, restaurant, and on the grounds crew we ask that you consider helping out. The Board is also seeking candidates for the key roles of Treasurer and Secretary, as well as, Directors at Large. The pro shop is looking for volunteers to lead the Junior Program (with Steven) and is also considering other roles such as a Course Marshall to help with speed of play on weekends. Should you have any questions regarding work or volunteer opportunities please don't hesitate to speak with Murray, Steven, or Andrew L'Orsa.

We are very pleased that the Provincial Health Officer announced the removal of most COVID-19 restrictions this month and the removal of the vaccine passport requirement after April 8th. We are looking forward to a return to more "normal" golf (men's club, ladies club & tournaments) and clubhouse operations. I hope you are all looking forward to a new season and as always, thank you for being a part of the Smithers Golf Club.

Sincerely,

The SGCC Board

11 March 2022

Dear Members,

As your new Director of Golf at the Smithers Golf and Country Club I would like to introduce myself.

Golf has been an integral part of my life starting at the young age of 14 when my parents opened a driving range in West Kelowna. Having a place to practice and work in the industry, along with the ability to hit countless hours of balls, helped develop my understanding and love of the game, and the fundamentals of the swing.

After working on the grounds crew at the Shannon Lake Golf Course in my early 20's my career took a winding path, working in the Diamond mining industry, then on to small business as an entrepreneur opening and operating a coffee shop in Kelowna, and then as a Bank Manager in the Kootenay region of BC.

Although the careers changed, golf was a constant throughout. I am so lucky I had golf (and a very adventurous family) as it gave me a way to meet new people in the many communities in which we moved to and helped create networking opportunities and long lasting friendships in those communities.

I'm happy to say that my career path has come full circle, and delighted that after making the leap to follow my dream of becoming a golf pro, I was able to join some great courses (The Rise, and Okanagan Golf Club) as the assistant pro working in operations and teaching.

I look forward to helping the Smithers Golf and Country Club and its members grow the game, and to creating many great memories for years to come as your new Head Pro.

Thank you,

Steven Coulthard