



It's been a rough year.  
But there is still a lot to  
be thankful for!

# The Osprey

November 2020

AND SO IT  
GOES...  
  
*Black Hall Club*  
*Old Lyme, Connecticut*

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**CURT CLEMENS** [president@blackhallclub.com](mailto:president@blackhallclub.com)

As the 2020 golf season comes to a close, we should all take a moment and give a huge thanks to our entire staff and committee members in recognition of the excellent way they successfully met all of the challenges (Covid-19 rules and restrictions, tropical storm damage, record high temperatures, drought conditions etc.) that challenged us this year. Through their combined efforts we were able to maximize use of the golf course for the enjoyment of our members while maintaining Covid-19 safety protocols.

A conservative estimate of rounds played in 2020 is 17,694 which represents an increase of 2402 rounds or 12.3% over an average year. Overall, the course was in the best condition that I and many members can remember. As always, we have several "winter" projects to make the course even better.

The driving range also experienced a large increase in usage, which is evident by the amount of visible divot damage. We are in the process of securing a contract to sharply increase water drainage on the driving range. This drainage system should virtually eliminate pooling of surface water and reduce the wetness of the sub-base. In turn, this will provide for a stronger, deeper root system which will reduce divot damage. We hope to have this project completed prior to re-opening the driving range in the Spring. Also, since we now have a state of the art short game practice area, we will be

removing the black and gold nets and some of the "barber pole" targets on the range in the hopes of reducing the number of wedge shots being taken on the range and encourage use of the short game area.

I wish to acknowledge Bill McNamara's 6 years of service as a member of the Board of Governors. Bill has ably served as Golf Committee Chairman, Secretary of the Board, and Chairman of the Grievance Committee. This year has been exceptionally challenging on the Golf Committee, and, as usual, Bill and his committee did an outstanding job.

Welcome to our newest board member, Richard Bacci, who will also serve as Chairman of the House Committee.

With the holidays coming up, please consider doing your shopping locally – specifically the Pro Shop!

The list of board members, officers and committee chairpersons is as follows:

### **OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

#### **OFFICERS**

Curtiss Clemens... President  
Anthony Stratidis Vice President  
Michael Sheehan.. Treasurer  
Lee Ann Palladino Assistant Treasurer  
Tom Degnan ..... Secretary



**OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS  
& COMMITTEE CHAIRS, CONT.....**



**BOARD MEMBERS**

Steph Brodeur	Anthony Stratidis
Tom Degnan	Lee Ann Palladino
Henry Amdur	Curtiss Clemens
Ian Featherstone	Richard Paterson
Richard Bacci	John Jensen
Michael Sheehan	Martin Smith



**CHAIRPERSONS**

Executive Committee	Curtiss Clemens
Finance Committee	Michael Sheehan
Green Committee	Tom Degnan
Golf Committee	Rich Paterson
Men's Golf Committee	Fred Fichtman
Women's Golf Committee	Pat Ermler
Membership Committee	Steph Brodeur
House Committee	Richard Bacci
Grievance Committee	Rich Paterson
Long Range Planning	John Jensen
Memorial Committee	Michael Sheehan
Carl G. Anderson Sch.	Randy Clegg
Junior Golf	Tom & Nicole Dolan

**HOUSE**

**RICHARD BACCI**

housechair@blackhallclub.com



The dining room is now closed for the season. Again, many **THANKS** to Kathy Lane & her staff!

A reminder that all lockers must be emptied no later than December 31st to allow for our annual cleaning. Lockers will be available for next season come March 1, 2021, upon payment of the annual locker fee (\$45, shoe locker; \$80, half locker).

As the year comes to a close, please feel free to pass along your suggestions for the upcoming season. For your convenience, a drop box is located outside the office door for suggestions & payments. You may also email me at the above address.



**REPORT FROM THE TREASURER**

**MIKE SHEEHAN** treasurer@blackhallclub.com



Despite our partial opening and reduced schedules caused by Covid this year, the Club was able to realize a small surplus from operations for FY 2020.

Last fall, we had approved a balanced budget, inclusive of projects, acquisitions, and short game practice area maintenance, and we were able to more than meet that goal. Based on our management prepared financial statements, our revenue was \$102K less than budgeted. This was primarily due to lower than budgeted income from dues (-\$41K), initiation fees (-\$22K), greens fees (-\$6K), food (-\$10K), and lockers and storage (-\$11K). This reduction in revenue was more than offset, however, by our reduced operating expenses which were \$165K under budget. Therefore, we realized a \$63K operating surplus for the year which increased our end of year operating cash balance to \$699K.

It must be noted, however, that our operating cash balance is partially offset by \$213K in PPP and EIDL loans. We were able to obtain these loans from the Cares Act and use them for payroll, insurances, and utilities during the Spring. However, as of yet, our bank has not authorized us to apply for forgiveness of these loans. If we are unsuccessful in receiving forgiveness of these loans and we decide to pay them back immediately, then our end of year operating cash will total \$486K, which is still slightly higher than at the end of last year.



**NEW MEMBERS!**

Black Hall would like to extend a sincere welcome to the following new members:

- Tom Impellitteri
- John DeMarsilis
- Zachary & Nicole Weil
- Karl Ravech



*"There is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing."*

*(a.k.a. "Suit up!! and we'll see you on the course.")*



**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE****ANNUAL REPORT: 2019-2020**

As of October 28, 2020 the membership count is:

Single	199	Family	70
Associate	36	Senior	20
Osprey	19		

**NEW MEMBER ACTIVITIES**

During the past fiscal year, we have answered 165 membership inquiries. Thirty-two of those inquiries are now new members of Black Hall. Of the 32, 23 new members were introduced through current members, ~72%. Our best marketing tool remains our current members and, therefore, we kept the voucher program in place; propose a new member and receive a voucher for 3 Guests & 2 carts.

In a different twist of fate, COVID-19 actually had a positive effect on our membership interests. Golfing was a great way to get outside, socialize safely and experience a sense of normalcy. We continue to give all our new members the welcome basket we created last year.

New Initiatives for 2020: The initiation fee was reduced to \$4,500 and a new 3yr payment plan for the initiation fee & bond was introduced.

**MARKETING**

New Website: Improved SEO, online presence, updated information and new photo galleries as well as an introductory video from Frank DiNardi. Website traffic was up most of the season.

DiNardi Visual Productions: Frank DiNardi came to take new drone footage/photos/videos of Black Hall.

Direct Mail Campaign: A targeted database of 700 addresses was created and a promotional postcard and golf voucher was sent to each address. Unfortunately, this campaign did not have the positive effects we hoped for.

Lymeline Online: advertised online from May 2020 through July 2020 – resulted in 149 new website visits.

Joined Old Lyme Chamber of Commerce

Increased Social Media presence: FB, Instagram & Twitter. With our new footage from F. DiNardi, FB accounted for 122 new users visiting our club website.

Member-Guest Advertising Poster: created and displayed at all Member-Guest events this season.

**CURRENT MEMBER ACTIVITIES**

Unfortunately, our Associate Membership Gathering had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. Hopefully, we will be able to reinstate this event next season.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

In an effort to keep our members informed of important information and events here at Black Hall, we continue to utilize the following avenues to “get the word out”: Osprey Newsletter, Text Messages, Facebook Private Group Old Bogey, Website ‘Latest Updates’ (scroll down on main page) & Emails.

**WEBSITE**

The new website is a valuable tool for member information. In addition to many other attributes, it includes our club calendar, full dining menu with take-out number, you can access a member directory with email addresses and also a PDF of our own Yearbook with addresses and phone numbers. Next year, we hope to implement online registration for golf events.

Thank you to all who served on the Membership Committee this past season and welcome to our new chairman, Steph Brodeur!

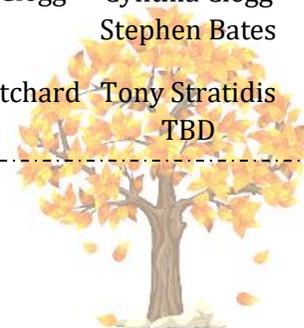
**2020-2021**

*Steph Brodeur, Chairman*

Tony Stratidis	Andrew Hinckley
Jack Ready	Mark Hoppes
Mike Spagnola	Henry Amdur

*The following have been proposed for Membership:*

<u>CANDIDATE</u>	<u>PROPOSER</u>	<u>SECONDRS</u>
Gregory Berger & Phoebe Chiang	Paul Tracey	Susan Tracey Tom Davies
Stephen & Alison Brinkmann	Randy Clegg	Cynthia Clegg Stephen Bates
Alan Sheiness	John Pritchard	Tony Stratidis TBD



## 2020 Greens Committee Annual Report



As with most things this year, COVID 19 certainly disrupted business as usual at Black Hall. A lack of sand and rakes on the course for the members to use resulted in additional time spent by the crew maintaining what traditionally is the responsibility of the golfer. On another note, not having benches, ball washers, garbage cans and golf cart signage lead to a very uncluttered looking golf course that a lot of members mentioned they liked.

2020 was another good year for improvement projects around the course. The mild winter weather allowed the crew to complete all the scheduled work plus a few extras. It also resulted in a very active winter golf season for the folks that enjoy playing year-round.

As in years past, moisture on the course is one of our biggest challenges and one we have committed to addressing to the best that our resources allow. There is a very fine line between a lush, green golf course that has received plenty of water and a dry course that is unhealthy. Our commitment to expanding our top-dressing practices and “dialing in” our water usage with more hand watering on greens and approaches was affective at creating firmer conditions through the first half of the golf season this year. As the heat and humidity of July and August set in, extra time was spent looking over the course for areas where the grass was suffering in order to only apply water only as necessary. While water usage was reduced during July and August over previous years practices, more water was necessary than the earlier part of the season to keep our grass healthy.

We will continue to look at improvements such as drainage work, new technology and specialized chemicals that allow us to continue with our commitment to firmer conditions, while always keeping the health of the course as our number one priority.



We had some persistent challenges with insects in the rough this year in a few locations that have left the crew with some additional work to get done this fall. While most of these areas have been repaired, we have new sod scheduled to remedy the most visible spots.

Tree removal work has been slowing over the last couple year, but will continue, focusing on removing trees around the course that impact air flow and sun, as recommended by the USGA and the Green Committee. Maintenance pruning continues to occur to keep the trees we want to preserve healthy and safe. This past winter, pruning occurred on the large oak on the 1<sup>st</sup> hole, the large maple on the right side of the 3<sup>rd</sup> hole and the oak tree on the right side of the 4<sup>th</sup> hole to mention a few spots. Mother nature also added to the list of removals on the course during an August tropical storm. Large trees and limbs were lost around the course, most notably, two large linden trees that were blown over on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> holes. Kudos to our maintenance team for cleaning up the mess so quickly!

Bunker improvements were completed this year on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> holes and are planned again for this winter. We upgrade 3 to 6 bunkers per year in-house and use the waste material taken out of the bunkers for fill around the course covering rocks, roots or building new tees.

New drainage was installed under the 12<sup>th</sup> fairway and the tee project added forward tees to the 6<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> holes.

The tee project, which includes new forward tees as well as adding length to back tees on a few holes, will continue this year with a new forward tee on the 15<sup>th</sup> hole and general improvements to the other portions of the 15<sup>th</sup> tee. We expect to have all the new tee work completed in the next couple years.

I would like to thank Phil, Chris and our entire crew and the Green Committee for their hard work, participation and input throughout the year. Thank you.

*Tom Degnan, Chairman*



# GOLF PRO'S REPORT

ANDREW CAMPBELL pro@blackhallclub.com

Our annual Fall Four Club Classic has been canceled due to COVID -19 and related challenges. Rest assure, our beloved Fall event will be back next year in full force!

Having our artificial turf on our practice tee allows us to extend the range season. The range will be open at least through Sunday, November 22nd from the mat. Carts will also be available until then. Enjoy Black Hall in November!



\*\*Our bag room staff & services are finished for the season; if your clubs & carts are still in the basement, please plan to bring them home on your next visit. *THANK YOU!*

## MEN'S GOLF



### OCTOBER MEMBER-GUEST RESULTS

"1-2-3" Friday, October 2nd

#### BEST 2 OF 4 NET

- 1st JC Flaherty, Kyle Gerrish,  
Zack Back & Dave Faenza 93
- 2nd Paul Bocciarelli, John Thomas,  
Mark Moriarty & Guy Piccolo 94

#### BEST 2 OF 4 GROSS

- 1st Tony Stratidis, Dan Terray,  
Rich Rosenthal & Chris Gearing 107

### MEN'S CLOSING DAY RESULTS

"Shamble" Saturday, October 10th

- 1st Rob Graham, Bob Alger,  
Arthur O'Connor & Tony Karosis 122
- 2nd Alex Romeo, Fred Fichtman,  
Dimi Orphanides & Doug Bombay 123
- 3rd Brice Craven, Randy Clegg,  
John Eckert & Ron Soccoli 124

### MILE CREEK MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP

#### *Blue Tee Division*

- CHAMPION:** Jeff Riley
- RUNNER-UP:** Carl Fortuna
- SEMI-FINALISTS:** Ian Featherstone & Tom Dolan

#### *White Tee Division*

- CHAMPION:** Bill DiBella
- RUNNER-UP:** Andy Gregor
- SEMI-FINALISTS:** Dimi Orphanides & Mike Bjorkman

## WOMEN'S GOLF



### WOMEN'S CLOSING DAY RESULTS

Wednesday, October 7th

- 1st Debra Miller, Joan Wright  
& Marian Bairstow 63\*
- 2nd Audrey Charlson, Jane Fox  
& Joan Flynn 63\*



### 2020 BHWGA

### PLAY w/ THE PRO RESULTS

Thank you for playing with us,  
we look forward to playing with all of you next year!

- 1st Beth Rodgers, Joan Flynn,  
Betsy Lomas & CARTER 130
- 2nd Lee Ann Palladino, Ethel Davis,  
Pat Ermler & ANDREW 135

### 2020 BLACK HALL CLUB

#### SEASON LONG PRO-MEMBER

#### GROSS

- 1st Rob Tyler, Jon Pope,  
Pat Donnelly & BRIAN 143

#### NET

- T1st Fred Fichtman, Will Rodgers,  
Rich Bacci & ANDREW 134
- T1st Kelly Rainey, John Giacchetto,  
Lynn Giacchetto & CARTER 134
- 3rd Steve Merrick, Frank Lavezzoli  
Bill Christopher & BRIAN 136



# GOLF PRO'S REPORT

ANDREW CAMPBELL

pro@blackhallclub.com



## GOLF SHOP NEWS

### \*\*\*NOVEMBER SAVINGS\*\*\*

Save an additional 20-40% on select men's and women's clothing

Get a jump on some holiday buying!

\*\*\*

The golf shop is still stocked with many great items heading into the holidays and we hope that you consider us as an option for some of your holiday gift buying. We will continue to provide personal services including special orders, shipping items out to others and gift wrapping. Easy & Affordable!

*A cure for those cold-weather golf blues....*

## WINTER INDOOR PRACTICE AREA



- 2 indoor hitting bays set up in the dining room
- \$50/Single Membership; \$75/Family
- Facilities open Nov. 1st-Apr. 9th
- Hours of operation: Daily, 9AM-4PM
- Launch monitor will be available
- Lessons with Andrew available upon request
- You may reserve your time in advance

**YOU MUST SIGN UP IN ORDER TO USE THE NETS!**

*To sign up or for info:*

*Call or visit us in the golf shop*

*OR email Andrew: pro@blackhallclub.com*



## NOVEMBER GOLF SHOP HOURS



*Mondays: 11am - 4pm*

*Tuesday - Sunday: 8am - 4pm*

*The practice range (Inside & Out) will close at 4PM. Carts should be returned at this time as well!*

## GOLF SHOP Holiday PARTY

Our Annual Holiday Party in the golf shop will likely not happen in its original festive form. Stay tuned as the elves are planning for an alternative format!



## Hole in One!



CONGRATULATIONS TO

- **FRED FICHTMAN**

Fred made his hole-in-one on Thursday, October 8th, aching it on the 7th hole from 130yds.

## NOVEMBER GOLF REMINDERS

**\*\* SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND \*\***

**NEW DATE!**

- PRACTICE RANGE CLOSSES
- CARTS GO INTO HIBERNATION

**WE ARE NOW OPERATING ON LIMITED STAFF & THE BAG ROOM IS CLOSED.**

- If you use the putting or chipping green, please retrieve your own balls
- Due to COVID-19, no bag self-storage

# FIRST RESPONDERS APPRECIATION DAY

It seemed Mother Nature was not a big fan of us holding our First Responders Event on Columbus Day. Reluctantly, and with some Murphy's Law frustration, we made the decision to postpone the event until the following week.

Mother Nature blessed us the second time around! A majority of the First Responders arrived at Black Hall on Sunday, October 19th, for an absolutely beautiful day of golf! The two groups that had to reschedule for Monday also experienced fantastic fall weather.

Receiving feedback in person and over email the last week, it was unanimously a successful event. The First Responders were quite appreciative of the opportunity to be at Black Hall, very thankful for our hospitality, and loved the course.

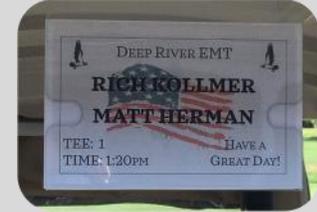
Thank you again to all members who sponsored the day! We achieved our goal; we covered all first responders and have extra to donate back to our surrounding towns.

## THOSE IN ATTENDANCE

Old Lyme FD	Deep River EMT
Old Lyme PD	East Lyme PD
Lyme FD	New London PD
East Haddam FD	Essex FD
Old Saybrook PD	Middlesex Hospital
Old Saybrook FD	L & M Hospital

*"I am writing on behalf of the foursome from OSPD that was fortunate to play in the Black Hall First Responders Appreciation Day outing. We were all very impressed with the club, from the welcoming gift received at check in, to the superb condition of the course the Black Hall reputation was met. Please send our thanks to the staff and most importantly to members for allowing us to have the opportunity to enjoy the course for the day. Everyone should know it is greatly appreciated by all who attended."*

*~Sgt. Ryan Walsh (Old Saybrook PD)*



## FROM THE RESPONDERS.....

*"Just wanted to say Thank You again for having us at your beautiful course. We had an awesome time and really appreciate your generosity. Please extend our thanks to the rest of the Black Hall crew." ~ John P Romano (Old Saybrook Fire Dept.)*

*"We just wanted to drop a huge thank you to you and your staff at the Black Hall Club. You all went well beyond the call to give us a great day of golf. Thank you for everything and the opportunity to play an outstanding course. Tell the grounds keepers great job on the fairways and greens. Thanks again."*

*~Rich, Matt, Jim & Geoff (Deep River Ambulance)*

*"Thank you so much for letting us play there, it was great. Even though my driver didn't agree with me most of the day it was a blast and we really appreciate everything you've done for the Old Lyme fire department."*

*~Tom Negrelli (Old Lyme Fire Dept)*

