

Altos *news*

nº 223 September 2023



PINHEIROS ALTOS
GOLF CLUB

Introduction from the Captain — Mr Steve Coull



Taking a relaxing deep breath; here we find ourselves in the month of August. For those who remained in Portugal, the role of the committee was pleasantly quiet, offering the perfect opportunity to reconnect with loved ones. Whether it meant hosting visits from friends and family in our little slice of paradise or simply enjoying a leisurely break by the beach or the pool. August was a time to unwind. It was also the moment to confront those tasks at home we've been avoiding for the past six months, either by ticking them off our to-do lists or simply transferring them to another list!

With temperatures occasionally soaring into the 40s, we faced unique challenges that reinforced the importance of staying well-hydrated and nourished. While I'm no expert, it's safe to say that official recommendations likely don't include beer and chocolate bars. Instead, it's advised to consume 3-4 litres of water with electrolytes, complemented by fresh fruit and nuts to keep ourselves in top form.

During this serene period, we have a golden opportunity to hone our golf skills and refine different aspects of our game, if not all of it! Fortunately, we have Ross and Kenny, two of Europe's finest

PGA coaches, at our disposal, along with top-notch practice facilities in the Algarve. I strongly encourage everyone to make use of these resources. Golf is a sport that greatly benefits from professional guidance and practice, especially as we transition into the cooler months—a perfect time to perfect our swings. You can reach out to them in person, through the website or on app.

The Junior Open took place this month, which is a source of pride for Christophe. Although we didn't see many local players from PA, it would be fantastic to inspire our local talent to participate next year. Let's come together, involve our grandchildren, and aim to bring home the trophy. Congratulations to all who participated and contributed; your efforts were truly commendable.

Looking forward to September, we have some exciting events on the horizon. The match play championship, spanning over 4 days for the truly skilled but generally 1 or 2 for most of us, promises a great test of golf and loads of fun. Then, on Sunday, we have the stableford, an excellent way to support and cheer on the finalists and eventual winners. Please participate or come along to show your support.

President's Day, on Saturday the 16th, is always a blast filled with laughter, banter, and of course, some golf. It's a return to our usual fun, so please get involved as much as you can.

At the end of the month, we have the PA Ryder Cup, which is guaranteed to be an exciting few day. Register as soon as it becomes available and be sure to catch the action on the clubhouse TVs—the atmosphere promises to be electric.

Preparations for the Charity event are now in full swing. Most on-course sponsorships packages have been snapped up, and we've received some generous cash donations from members unable to attend, along with some incredible auction experiences. A heartfelt

thank you to all involved for their support, generosity, and hard work. With one final push, we're confident we'll reach our target. If you'd like to get involved, there is information on the App but please don't hesitate to contact directly either myself or Christophe.

So, that concludes our August update—short and sweet this month. I eagerly anticipate welcoming everyone back, witnessing some improvements on the course, and diving headfirst into the fun come September.

Happy golfing.

Steve





*Iain and Lubna Cater receiving their prizes, not only for winning the Shoot Out but also winning the best buggy
(The space ship which took them to victory)*









Director of Golf – Monthly Report

August as usual was a very quiet month as many members abandon the Algarve for the month and the tourism coming is more interested by the beach than the golf especially with the kind of temperature we have had.

We did however run the Junior open on the 8th August 2023 with an entry of 47 youngsters from local clubs and others from abroad. We were able to witness some unbelievable golf from the young golfers and I am sure some of them will carry on with golf in the future. The tournament was followed by a snack lunch and all the juniors and some parents enjoyed the venue. Alexander Amey was a fantastic winner, 17 years old from Vilamoura Golf club shot level par gross from the yellow tees to take the trophy. As well from Vilamoura Golf Club the under 12, left handed, Rodrigo Sousa Correia also shot level par from the red tees. There are some very net scores especially in the 9 holes section and some handicap revision will take place I am sure with many of those young golfers.

Once the Junior Open was behind us, August had very few events, The August medal was won by John Carver with a 71 beating Dan Henderson on a count back while the August Stableford played at San Lorenzo was won by Gerry Naughton with 42 points only one ahead of Jean Marc Thibonnier but any other opposition was at least 10 points behind!

I had the chance to take most of the rest of August away from the office, I did get a lot done during the holidays as I did not go anywhere. We launched the Algarvian Charity program which is played in January and is already almost full with 80 teams taking part plus the Algarvian Invitational which see some of the top 100 senior amateur & pros playing for a week in January 2024.

Unfortunately, the Summer was very tough on the conditions of the golf course and as I am writing this newsletter, I am also about to release a letter to the members explaining what happened and what we are doing about the problems we have had. This letter is attached to the end of this newsletter.

September is the start of the busy season and also of many more tournaments, with the President Day, the Ryder Cup and then early in October our Charity day which already has 140 players but we have space for another 5 teams. The auction site is already online and you can bid for items on **www.auction-pa.com**.

I look forward to see many of you back in the next few weeks and attending all the various events.

Please remember to enjoy your golf and look after your golf course by avoiding buggies on the course, raking bunkers and repairing your pitch marks!

TOURNAMENT RESULTS
PLEASE CHECK THE APP!

Members Communication Notice



Dear Members,

If you have been in Pinheiros Altos this Summer you have unfortunately seen the course deteriorate since Mid-June as it was in really good conditions by then.

There are various reasons for the decline of the quality of the golf course during the Summer which I would like to list below and explain:

1. Irrigation Pumps

Irrigation Pump station has 3 pumps and during the month of June 2023, 2 of the 3 pumps broke down mainly due to being aged and in use for many hours per day. It took 5 weeks to get parts to repair one pump which only came into action late July, a few days before Gala Week. We are still waiting for parts to have all 3 pumps working which should be towards end of this month. This caused major failure in the Irrigation of the course creating lots of dry patch. Starting on the fairways, but also tees & greens. By Mid-August the greens were seriously affected with dry patch some areas were dead and almost unplayable.

2. Climate

As you all probably know this Summer was particularly hot and with the irrigation pump problem, it made it even more difficult to water the course evenly across Fairways, tees & Greens. As we only had one pump working for the all of July and still short of a pump in August we should have been watering 24 hours a day to get the full coverage of all areas on the golf course. Unfortunately, the Government only allowed for a 9 hour's watering at night which in our case due to the lack of capacity was nowhere near enough. Every course in the Algarve have been requested to reduce their grassed areas to save on the water consumption. Pinheiros Altos is no exception and we are required to reduce by 30% our grassed areas.

3. Staff

Since covid-19 that lack of staff has become a real problem and this relates to many other establishments in the Algarve. I would point out the main cause is the high price of accommodation in the Algarve has seen non-local labor moving out the Algarve. Before Covid-19 we had 24 staff which was reduced to 22 during covid-19, we lost a few through Covid-19 but this year we are down to 15 staff, this includes the green-keeper & 2 mechanics. This is the lowest level we have ever been and does not allow us to cover all the works needed around the Golf Course. Many of the staff working now have been with us for over 20 years and some are due to retirement and another 2 have been on a sick leave for months.

4. Machinery

The machineries are aged and while we managed to buy a fairway cutter, a rough Cutter, a root cutter and a blower after covid-19, we still need the renewing of many of the machines we are using such as greens, bunkers etc..... This mainly to improve the quality of cuts but also will be a time saver for our staff.

5. Outsourcing

Some of the works done on the course is done by outsourcing with the help of our staff such as buggy path repair & tree cleaning and cutting. It has been very difficult to find appropriate time to have both our team and outsourcing team to plan those operation. In the case of the buggy path the lack of staff in PA is the cause we have not been able to repair all the areas we intended. In the case of the trees it was planned for late April at which time the government prohibited all kind of cutting due to high temperatures which are totally unusual to April known as a rainy month in Portugal. It is now only possible to be done from late October.

These are the main issues we are facing at the moment and we are working on solutions to correct the failures on the golf course which I would like to list below:

1. Irrigation

In 2018 we planned to renew all the satellites on the San Lorenzo & Pinheiros Altos Courses, the works were to be carried out on San Lorenzo in 2019 which did happen and 2020 was planned for Pinheiros Altos. Unfortunately, Covid-19 delayed this to 2021 and then 2022. We are now in 2023 5 years later of the original project and while in 2018, the needs were only for new satellites, there is now a need for new satellites but also new irrigation cables and even pipes within the next 5 years. The cost which was 100K is closer to a cost of 800k. The plan we had in 2018 is now out of date and new materials have come on the market which might mean we will opt to change the Toro irrigation to Rainbird system. We are getting final quotes from companies and have visited other courses to see both system working. I was quite impressed to see what some of the new system can do. We will inform the membership of the progress and are well aware of the need to implement it. The upgrade of the irrigation would mean closure of each of the 9 holes at a time and would probably be spread over the period of 3 years to get all the work completed. This would guarantee a perfect coverage of the irrigation of the course and much simpler operation to run the irrigation system requiring less staff hours. The main challenge being getting the quote, the correct product, planning of the installation and get permission from the senior management to go ahead.

2. Climate

The irrigation upgrade will help face the problems of the climate with a much better control of the water. Many roughs areas will become waste areas and grass removed like many courses are already doing such as Quinta do Lago South & Vilamoura Laguna & Millennium. These areas when duly treated will give a nice definition to the course. The challenge there is to get rid of grass and weeds in those areas and make sure they are cleared and maintained cleaned. This is very labor intensive operation specially at the beginning to avoid weeds to come through and make these areas untidy.

3. Staff

We have been interviewing many people but unfortunately so far, we only managed one extra staff. We have many more interviews to go through and I am hopeful with the Summer behind us and accommodation reducing in value in the area we should be able to build the team back. The salary & conditions we offer have already been adjusted to make it a better offer and we hope to be able to have a full team of 22 staffs before the end of the year.

4. Machinery

Machinery has been a problem with the company policy of not leasing machinery until now but only straight purchase but with the change of senior management the door is now open to new policies. We have now 3 different proposals of renting machineries which will make a big difference on the quality of cuts but also time saving for the staff. The challenge is to get approval of a new operational system such as renting but we are confident the proposals are good enough to be approved.

5. Outsourcing

Buggy path repairs will start as soon as we have more staff available to assist the outsourcing company and when we can get availability of the outsourcing companies. Tree cutting is due for late October and we look to be improving areas around tees and greens. The main aim is to remove roots which are encroaching into greens & tees, also reduce shade areas where growth is seriously affected and last but not least improve the golf experience by making the course fairer. The challenge here is getting the manpower to be able to do these heavy and time-consuming works

The presentation of the golf course over the last few weeks has deteriorated as we have roughs to be cut, many spaces to be pruned, bunkers to be repaired, buggy path to be repaired, vegetation to be pruned. All these are very important to the presentation of the course and have been left behind due to more important works needed to be carried out urgently.

As mentioned before the greens and tees suffered immensely during the Summer and we almost lost some greens completely. Therefore, during the all of August, António our green-keeper had to decide and take options. Due to the lack of staff he had to choose between having them repairing areas which could die such as greens & tees or do the presentation works around the golf course. He opted and quite rightly to over-seed greens, sanding of tees & greens to make sure those areas would recover. Pinned all the greens for water infiltration as well as fertilizer and water retainer. These important works which took a lot out of the staff reduced by a third will make the greens and tees to recover for the winter. There is bigger risk of dollar spot as the greens are weaker and a needed iron sulfate treatment would make them weaker. All the work done is to make the greens back to what they were in June while our green-keeper is well aware of the risk of dollar spot and has sprayed for prevention. The product to fight dollar spot is already in stock for more application as we know it will appear. These works have taken place on all the greens & tees and recovery should be seen in the next few weeks.

The presentation of the course should now improve as the major repairing works have been done but will only really be a reality when we have a full team again as 7 staff extra as budgeted would make a big difference on our capacity to respond.

Gardens and car park around the clubhouse are also an issue and will be addressed as we have new staff coming in and again António is well aware of the first impression importance but had to opt for other priorities.

I can assure all the members that the company and the staff are doing everything to recover the course and with the support of the company and the continued dedication and hard work of the staff I am confident we will be able to improve substantially in the coming weeks to present a much better course.

I will continue to keep the members updated with our progress.

Kind Regards,

Christophe Rindlisbacher

Director of Golf





Eventos de Golfe / *Golf Events by*

JJW HOTELS

2023 | 2024



HOTEL	EVENTO / TORNEIO <i>EVENT & TOURNAMENT</i>	DATAS <i>DATES</i>
Dona Filipa Hotel	International Amateur Tournament	25/11/2023 – 2/12/2023
Penina Hotel & Golf Resort	Charity of Penina Golf & Hotel Resort	02/12/2023
Dona Filipa Hotel	Amateur Senior Tour	18/02/2024 – 25/02/2024
Dona Filipa Hotel	Spring Amateur Tournament	23/03/2024 – 30/03/2024
Penina Hotel & Golf Resort	Penina Golf Week	05/05/2024 – 11/05/2024
Penina Hotel & Golf Resort	XXXIII Henry Cotton Trophy	25/05/2024

Ladies Section by Melody Cotterill



August gave us 5 Ladies Wednesday golf events so we had lots of golf in the extremely hot weather that August brought this year. I had escaped to Scotland but Ingrid and Debbie (as always assisted by Cristina) were looking after everything - thanks to them and to Heather and Lucy the other members of my committee who whilst also on their holidays were always in contact.

We had a monthly medal which was won by Leeza Lynn in division 1 and Wendy Evans in division 2. Then a fun traffic lights tournament and the winners by a fantastic margin, were Chie Crowdey, Wendy Evans and Charlotte Parker. On the 16th the competition was at San Lorenzo where four teams of four competed in the sweltering heat. Paula Hopwood, Anne Young, Majida Lester and Stella Jeffrey were victorious. In the absence of a clubhouse there, it was great that everyone came back to PA afterwards; where a warm (definitely in August!) welcome is always given by Paulo and his team

By the 23rd heat and holidays saw our numbers reduced to 12; for our monthly Stableford, but Sally Evans won division 1 and Majida Lester won division 2 and Cathy Harper the 9 hole compe-

tion. For the last monthly fun competition we had a 2 ball scramble which was enjoyed by everyone. Jackie Stringer and Wendy Evans won with a terrific 41 points while in 2nd place Pat Murrish and Sarah James had a better back 9 including a putt for birdie on 8th Corks! Paulo kindly took the time to rearrange the furniture on the members terrace and put together all the comfy armchairs and sofas in one area. Whilst it was still very hot up there, it was wonderful to hear that everyone stayed after their golf for a drink and a chat.

Lots of activities in September and October so really hoping now that so many have returned to the Algarve we will see many more participating in Wednesday competitions and social events. If you are reading this and not in our Ladies Information WhatsApp group - please let me know and it will be a pleasure to add you.

Hope to see you soon

Melody Cotterill
Lady Captain





BUFFET PESCADOR FISHERMAN'S BUFFET

TODOS OS DOMINGOS, ENTRE 19:00 E AS 22:00
EVERY SUNDAY, BETWEEN 19:00 AND 22:00



DONA FILIPA
HOTEL

FIM DE ANO . NEW YEAR'S EVE . 2023/2024



PENINA HOTEL
& GOLF RESORT

MASQUERADE *Ball*





XXIII INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR GOLF TOURNAMENT 25TH NOV. - 02ND DEC. 2023

Program

- 26th, Sun.** Practice Round – from 9:16 AM
Welcome Cocktail at 7:00 PM
- 27th, Mon.** Aggregated Stableford – 1st round – from 10:04 AM
- 28th, Tue.** Aggregated Stableford – 2nd round – from 10:04 AM
- 29th, Wed.** Rest Day
- 30th, Thu.** Aggregated Stableford – Final round – from 10:04 AM
- 1st, Fri.** Four Ball Better Ball – 2 player's Team – from 10:04 AM
Cocktail followed by Prize Presentation Dinner at 7:00 PM



Prizes:

For the 3rd day Aggregated Stableford:
– Overall 1st, 2nd and 3rd;
– Nearest the Pin in each day.

For the Four Ball Better Ball:
– 1st, 2nd, and Nearest the Pin.

Maximum playing handicap 28 Men or 36 Ladies.
All handicaps shall be converted according to the
published tables of Course Rating.

Electronic measurement is permitted. Ties are decided by the best result on the Last Round, the Last Nine, Six, or Three holes of the course or the Last Hole. The Best Gross prize is not accumulative with the overall 1st, 2nd or 3rd prizes. The starting for the Final Round of the Aggregated Stableford shall be according to the result over the two initial days. The Best Scorers to start at first.



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Report from Greens Committee

The full committee met on the 15h September in the absence of David Ford who was playing in an interclub match.

Our course manager, Antonio, was quick to acknowledge that the course was very far from the condition which he wanted to deliver to the members.

We had to accept that there were exceptional conditions which have affected the course and we will set these out but the better news is that he believes the course will be back to normal by mid-October, subject to any unforeseen changes.

The main reasons for the poor condition are as follows:

Man power is down to its lowest number due to absenteeism, sickness and inability to recruit new staff. There are approximately 15 green staff on the course including 2 engineers. STRI our consultants recommend a minimum of 24!

Members will wonder whether this number work every day as those of us who play in the afternoon will see few workers who start at first light and stop at 3.00 or thereabouts. Those who linger are often doing lost ball retrieval! Christophe believes the greens staff are being properly managed.

Recruitment is a problem for all the local courses and this is despite in our case PA paying staff more than our competitors! Antonio remains optimistic that we can recruit more but we will have to see?

Weather - We have had the hottest and driest conditions ever reported from early this year. This has forced the authorities to impose a 30% reduction in our watering allowance. That would have been bad enough but lack of funding over previous year has led us to be vulnerable on the operation of our bore holes (we have 7) failing and this has resulted together with old pumping equipment in severe drought conditions and burning on several greens and in browning on fairways.

The pumps and the irrigation system is planned to be replaced by a satellite system similar to that which was put in place in the San Lorenzo course 3 years ago. This is still on the agenda but we doubt if our system will be operational before next year.

The planned removal of trees and roots has been stalled by the unavailability of sub-contractors and the very hot weather which caused a fire risk. We believe the tree removal should go ahead this autumn.

The clover problem has been dealt with but Olives still remains in poor condition and worst of the 3 nines. Trimming of fairway edges has been delayed which together with uncut rough has meant balls being lost in many cases. We believe that further cutting will return the fairways and rough areas to a satisfactory position.

There are real challenges for Antonio in bringing the course back and his promise to do so is we believe only possible if green staff and machinery is available as promised.

We know he will do everything to improve the course. We also know that Christophe has prepared a detailed report on course condition with a clear and honest view as to how we are dealing with course problems.

There is optimism and the next 4 weeks are critical. Our visitors remain supportive with very few complaints but we cannot compete with our neighbours who ignore the sanctions imposed on water irrigation and keep their fairway green!

Recent rain albeit not heavy is showing improvements and whilst Antonio's promise is a risky one in a months' time we will see if his promises are met?

Our course and its members remain loyal and keeps PA as one of the most desirable clubs membership in the Algarve. We must not let it deteriorate!

Stewart Harper Chairman, David Ford, Duncan Evans.







Property Matters.

This year has seen another incredibly active and vibrant real estate market across the entire Golden Triangle, with asking price typically being achieved and on some occasions over asking pricing. All the factors that have made the area so attractive remain – excellent communication infrastructure to allow more remote working/digital nomads, stable politics, sound land registration, excellent travel links from Faro to most European cities or hubs, NHR – Non Habitual Resident tax regime offering no wealth tax, no minimum stay, exemption on all foreign income amongst the benefits this offers and of course the climate, golf, beaches and amenities the golden triangle has to offer.

A lack of product is another factor that is driving the market, we have 2 clients specifically looking for a property in Pinheiros Altos and a lack of product available to show, all local agents we work with are seeing this trend as well. So, it is still a seller's market, despite all the strong headwinds of interest rates, inflation and the war in Ukraine. At the moment the market is dominated by buyers looking to relocate or have a holiday home, developers are less active than previously, with the prices at a premium and a new build project taking typically 2 years from planning approval, perhaps for a developer, the market is a little too warm and more uncertainty in Europe than previously.

What we have seen this year is a softening of the rental market for the summer, with some local agents are offering up to 30% discount on villas in Quinta for August, it's too early to be definitive on the reasons behind this, but our impression from talking to potential customers is that cost of living in Europe is starting to have an effect, families who typically chose to vacate in the Algarve are opting for alternatives such as Spain, Turkey, Greece and Croatia.

Although not likely to affect tourist resorts of Quinta, Vale do

Lobo, Dunas Douradas etc, the government earlier this year announced reforms to the AL license laws and qualification, aimed at reducing the level of properties in condominiums operating solely for short term holiday lets, to ensure there is more accommodation available for long term lets and affordable to the average income of Portuguese citizens.

Winter Lets and long term lets continue to be vibrant, we focus on winter lets typically of 4-6months in duration

Accommodation rates have on average seen increases by inflationary amounts of 5-8%, but the cost to a family once they are in the Algarve is an important factor as most families want to dine out for lunch and evening meals and I think we all have noticed the significant increase in dining out!

New build and property renovation projects were incredibly strong again this year due to the buoyant real estate market, €3000-3500 per Sq.m is the average cost of build, the professional builders are typically working on 6-8month lead time for a renovation and up to 12months on demo/new build.

So overall a very positive year for the property sector.

About

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Dear Members,

I wrote to you some months ago regarding the launch of our new App.

We are now ready to go live, however to comply with data protection, we need you to do the following:

- A. Please supply us with a unique email address for title holders and associate members attached to your title. Most of you have already supplied this information. However we are looking at having all Pinheiros members registered, so please come back to me if you have not done it yet.
- B. Download the App by typing the internet address "pagc golfus.club".
- C. Go to my profile and set up your profile. Please use the access code 1234, and enter your name and email address.

If you are happy to have your name, email & Telephone number visible in the members list, press YES and if not press NO.

If you wish to only display your name or email, please contact Cristina to set your profile with the details you only want to show.

Once you have sign up, you will have access to the club diary, competitions and other useful information.

In the coming weeks, we will be offering tuition in the management and operation of the app.

In the meantime, if you have any issues you wish to raise, please don't hesitate to contact Cristina or myself.

Christophe Rindlisbacher

Director of Golf