

press release

18th February 2015



News article

High flying fundraising at Mill Green GC

Wednesday 18th February 2015 – Mill Green GC highest fundraisers for 2014

A staggering £5,041 was presented by Ken Gordon. Mill Green GC Captain and Phil Stokes, Interim General Manager to the Disabled Golf Association CIC, representing funds raised by the Captain's Charity for 2014. On hand to receive the cheque were one legged golfer Stan Bembenek who lost his entire left leg and half his pelvis to bone cancer; Graeme Robertson who has primary progressive MS and is Team England Captain and works for DGA as national events co-ordinator; and Graeme's wife (and carer) Sue who is a volunteer and Marketing Director at DGA.

Captain Ken Gordon said "I couldn't be more proud than to have DGA as beneficiaries of our fundraising efforts". On behalf of DGA Sue Robertson replied "We should like to thank most sincerely all the members at Mill Green GC who are a very special group of people who have believed in the work we do and the difference DGA makes to the lives of disabled and impaired people across the country. 2014 has been an incredible year where we have all had much fun raising much needed funds; we have to look forwards to see if 2015 can match this! This donation is by far the largest single donation we have received to date and represents an incredible effort by the members at Mill Green GC."

Disabled and impaired golfers raised awareness at Mill Green GC early in the season on 13th June where they played a fourball 2-ball better ball format, with one member from DGA playing and being guided around the course by the members at Mill Green GC. Stan Bembenek, CEO of DGA said "We had an incredible day back in June; I had the chance to play with the Captain, Ken Gordon – we played pretty well I have to say. Everyone seemed to really enjoy the format."

DGA is a pan-disability, not-for-profit organization, membership is free. More information is at disabledgolf.org.uk and [fb.com/disabledgolf](https://www.facebook.com/disabledgolf) with events scheduled all over the country.

About the Disabled Golf Association

Our main aims are to promote the game of golf as a pathway to a healthier lifestyle and greater social inclusion for those who are disabled, irrespective of age, gender or disability. This includes providing the means to make it easier for the disabled player to access the facilities both on and off the course. We aim to provide information about equipment to permit that increased accessibility, this can be done by means of single-seater buggies specifically designed for the disabled player, bespoke club and prosthetic adaptation as well as supplying professional coaching at events from those who have been trained to teach the sport. We aim to attract not only those who have played in the past prior to an illness or injury, but also those who have never played the sport but are seeking the unique benefits of a sport which can be played by anyone either alone against the course, or in teams against each other.

We look to provide a playing environment where the clubs are disabled friendly and accessible and the courses are pre-vetted to ensure that they are capable of being played by those with limited mobility. We are helping to assist in the launching of coaching academies and training sessions throughout the UK. Also from our base in Gloucestershire we aim to provide information on courses, equipment and holiday resorts for the disabled golfer. We hope to offer all of these benefits for our members and others but also employment for those in the area who are disabled and can join us.

All our members are kept aware of the activities of the association by a comprehensive web site and active facebook site, which attract new audiences on a daily basis. We also actively seek and need the feedback from our members on such diverse subjects as new events, holiday resorts, new equipment, as well as opportunities to volunteer and assist in future direction.

In our first year in 2010 we achieved over 200 members with associates throughout Europe and have links with other disabled golfing organisations throughout the world. In 2010 we arranged or were involved with 12 events which is unique in the world of disabled golf, we have attracted a true cross section of disabilities and our members realise they can enjoy a friendly and enjoyable experience.

In 2011 we increased our membership to 500 and introduced a series of events for newcomers as well as those requesting competition plus a unique series of par-3 events for those with limited mobility. In July 2011 we were featured in a 4-page centre spread in Motability Lifestyle magazine which led to 100 new members in just one week! We held 24 events in 2011. In August 2011 DGS received notification of official registration as a shared-enterprise Community Interest Company.

By the close of the 2012 season (where we had 40 events) we had over 600 members, making us the largest pan-disabled not-for-profit golf organisation in the UK – and possibly the world! We took the opportunity to rebrand and change our name from Society to Association to reflect our national role in the UK.

In 2013 we held over 50 events throughout – England, Wales and Northern Ireland – and a whole series of taster sessions for those new to golf, supported by Sport England. We closed with over 700 members and with BGL, Glenbrae and Titleist as supporters. We made the decision to cease trading 31st December 2013 as DGS and England/Wales split to form two separate organisations as much to aide with funding streams, still very much working together – DGA in England and WDGA in Wales.

In 2014 we scheduled events every week of the season in England – with 6 courses selected for the BGL Race to Burhill, 11 courses including a large number of Crown courses participating in the Order of Merit (OOM) and plenty more excellent independent courses providing DGA Local Events where we take golf to the places where people live; we also have a good number of charity events planned throughout the season having been chosen as Captain and Lady Captain charities in 2014. In Wales there were a further 8 OOM events planned. **Recognised officially by the Charities Aid Foundation as a charitable Community Interest Company (CIC) we have launched our new website disabledgolf.org.uk produced and maintained entirely in house by volunteers.**

2015 promises to be an equally hectic schedule. We have in place a network of regional volunteers to help us grow the sport of disabled and impaired golf right across the country. **We are now formally recognised as a**

DPULO, which is a Disabled People's User-Led Organisation of which we couldn't be more proud; at a fundamental level, a DPULO is an organisation run by and for disabled people. We will repeating the OOM again this year and use this as means of selection for Team England to play Wales at The Vale in September. To help DGA to grow in a sustainable and manageable way we have formed a Handicap Committee and a Marketing Committee at the start of 2015, to run alongside and assist our team of events volunteers.

We are continuing with support from BGL, Titleist, Glenbrae and from MASS. DGA have an ongoing partnership with the Motor Accident Solicitors Society (MASS) who have chosen DGA as their charity of choice on an ongoing basis bringing much needed funding to support the infrastructure of the organisation.

About the Motor Accident Solicitors Society (MASS)

MASS is a non-profit making national association of solicitors who specialise in road traffic accidents, representing the accident victim. Formed in 1991, MASS promotes the highest standards of legal services through education and representation in the pursuit of justice for the victims of road traffic accidents. MASS comprises 190 solicitor firms that employ over 2,000 legal staff, throughout the UK. Collectively member firms conduct in excess of 600,000 road traffic accident personal injury claims each year. The victim, and what is in their best interests, must remain at the centre of the debate. Our goal in this debate is to both protect the rights and interests of consumers who are victims of genuine road traffic accidents as our constitutional objective.

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