

# The Falcon: April 2020

## Introduction

What strange times! I'm reminded of a nursery rhyme from my youth which went something like this: "The grand old Duke of York, he had ten thousand men, he marched them up to the top of the hill, and he marched them down again, and when they were up they were up, and when they were down they were down, and when they were only half way up, they were neither up nor down".

That's how I feel these days. Not sure whether to go up or down as I don't know the rules of the game any more. There's no precedent, certainly not in my lifetime.

When I phone around to a few of my friends to find how they are coping with the lockdown, the common reply is "Taking it a day at a time". And that's the way it has to be – but frustrating, if you're someone who looks forward to planning ahead.

What I am fairly sure about is that some things will never be the same again. And maybe that is a good thing. The global lockdown has forced business, organisations and institutions to re-examine their operational models.

And closer to home, the Bowling fraternity is struggling to adapt. A number of local Clubs whose membership fees are insufficient to cover basic running costs, rely almost entirely on Bar profits and, in some cases, the hire of facilities. With no income from these sources, a few are within a month or two of having to find additional sources of income, or face the prospect of closing down.

But let's hope, for their sake, and the sake of Bowls in the Western Cape, that this does not materialise.

## Lockdown levity

Thank heavens to all of you who have cheered us up by circulating humorous clips and inspirational messages over the past two weeks.

Man has an amazing capacity to find light in the gloom of overwhelming events, as history has shown, and this capacity is being revealed again. One of my favourites of the past week, and most appropriate for the lockdown period, is the following conversation.

Woman 1: "Where is your husband?"

Woman 2: "He is in the garden."

Woman 1: "I didn't see him"

Woman 2: "Dig a little deeper!"

And then there is the one from an Afrikaans fellow who has found a really effective remedy for the virus. It is contained in a bottle marked KWV, which, according to him, stands for Koronavirus Weerstand Verslaaner. There is also a prominent 10 on the bottle which indicates that one needs to take it 10 times a day!

I thought immediately of you, Neels, and am sure you have discovered and applied this remedy yourself during your self-enforced period of isolation!

Other Covid19 humour includes the following:  
"Back in my day, the only panic buying was when the barman yelled "last round!""

Sign on a shop window: "No cash or toilet paper kept on the premises!"

Man1: I hear Jack Daniels kills Coronavirus.

Man 2: Probably not true, but why take a chance!

## Coping mechanisms

From phone calls, have established how some of us are coping with the lockdown.

Butch: Has stairs in the complex which he climbs every day. Claims his fitness levels have spiked! In between reading books (9 to date), and tackling monster jigsaw puzzles with Lynn, also pickling onions.

Moira: Cleaning the curtains and general spring-cleaning. Overheard to say to one of her friends "I'm pleased that my house was so untidy. Gives me something to do now!"

Trevor: Said he would cope by putting on his Club shirt in the morning to counter the bowls withdrawal symptoms.

Darryl: She and John coping exceptionally well. Is using the downtime to "declutter" the house. Also regularly participates in the nightly hand-clapping exercise!

Our home: After crossword, jigsaw and su doku puzzles, have in desperation downloaded "Fawlty Towers". Dated, but still a good laugh.

### **Message from John Stamper**

Fellow members,

You would have received a message from EXCO advising you of what actions we have taken in order to cut down on our expenses. Since then, we have experienced electrical problems which lasted for five days until the council sorted things out. During this time, the club was without electricity, which naturally affected all our appliances and our security system.

On Monday, 6 April, a water pipe in the kitchen, connected to the dishwasher blew off, which resulted in 16 hours of water running into the kitchen and club house. This has since been cleaned up as best as possible and our insurance company has been advised accordingly.

With the ongoing lockdown, may I take the opportunity of wishing you all well at this challenging time. We will keep you advised on what further decisions we make regarding our trusted staff and other issues after 16 April.

Butch and Lynn saw the mess that the water leak had caused, and contacted me to point out that John had downplayed the enormous task in cleaning up the mess. He (John) and Henri had spent hours mopping up. When Butch arrived in the early afternoon, Henri was still at work.

Apparently there is a video of the flooding which shows the extent of the damage.

### **Quizmaster Cawood**

Maurice Chevalier sang "Thank heavens for little girls" to which we add "and Heather". Where she finds the time and energy to put together all these Lockdown quizzes I don't know, but we are very grateful.

Thanks for thinking about us, Heather, and for keeping our brains from atrophying.

### **W P Singles**

We're all looking for feel good stories these days. So while their successes have been previously circulated by Maureen to all our members, I feel it appropriate to draw attention once again to the wonderful performances by Darryl Edwards and John Paynter in winning respectively the W P

Ladies Veterans Singles and the W P Mens Novices events.

Darryl beat Margaret Thomas of Durbanville 21 – 18 in the final and John beat Stephan Janse van Rensburg of Helderberg 21 – 12 in his final.

The Club is very proud to be able to share with you these impressive achievements.

### **Inter-Districts**

In the recently held inter-districts tournaments, there were three of the W P teams which secured medals – all Bronze. They were, with Constantia representatives listed, the Ladies A (Colleen Marshall), the Ladies B (Cheryl Saunders and Laurie Keevy-Venter) and the Mens Veterans (Roy Clark).

### **Greens**

As most of you know, the autumn and winter months are when our Heinz greens really come into their own. Probably one of the reasons that our Snowball is so popular. With the improved cover this year, it should be a great winter season – if Covid 19 can be contained.

We are fortunate that the authorities recognised the necessity to keep our greens maintained during Lockdown. We are also fortunate to have a Greens Assistant resident on the property. Henri is able to continue with the programme of applying the autumn fungicides and herbicides, as well as mowing each green once a week.

Our old "friend" the Fairy Ring fungus has made its regular autumn return on A Green but does not present a long- term problem. The greens are looking particularly good. I hope that whets your appetite, for those suffering from withdrawal symptoms.

### **Army Day**

The following letter was sent to John Stamper by Keith Ingram after the successful Robbie Robertson Memorial Bowls Day (Army Day) held on 6 March at the Club.

"Dear John,

I would like to thank you as President of the Club for your tremendous assistance in the preparation and running of the day.

Also please pass on my sincere thanks to all of the helpers on the day for their willingness to help make the day the success it was ! We would like you to pass on our message of appreciation to them via the Falcon newsletter.

We are very fortunate to have members who unselfishly give up their time to assist in the many facets of the day :- in the Kitchen, the Bar, the Music, to the Raffles, Recordkeeping, the printing of the scoreboard etc etc.

Also for Darrel Edwards' most able assistance with the guests from Robertson House as well.

Without their participation, we could never host a day like this one. Our sincere thanks and appreciation to each and every one who assisted. We are very pleased to advise that through their efforts they assisted in raising R41,000.00 for this most deserving cause".

Keith tells me that he has been running this iconic event for 17 years! Please know, Keith, that the Club is incredibly grateful to you for your efforts over all these years.

### **Down memory lane**

We continue with Geoff's recollections of events in the past.

"A weekend of bowls at Clanwilliam became very popular. It is a one green Club which could accommodate 14 teams. Constantia often provided 5 or 6 of these teams. One Saturday it turned into an evening of impromptu musical entertainment. Our guesthouse lady owner could make the piano sound like a one man band and got us rocking. Clive Sinclair was still singing his slow solo while she was onto the next number.

The late Andrew de la Cruz joined in with a minstrel dance act complete with umbrella.

The main event turned out to be a quartet rendering of " Singing in the rain " while removing their clothing and footwear. Fortunately they stopped with only their jocks on – to the dismay of some of the local ladies. It was hilarious. The artists were Paul Eglin, Graeme Elliott, Ian Saunders and Glen Schluter. Any guess who the ringleader was?

The tournament was a popular event because it was well sponsored by BOLAND BANK. The last event with that sponsor took place the day after 9 / 11/ 2001, the day the world changed.

And here is Alan Lofthouse looking back at a memorable Nationals Tournament in Natal in 1992.

"Back in '92, the Nationals was still a two-week event, which meant leave from work was a problem. Fortunately for us, one of the members, Dennis Searson, had donated R10 000 into a

Players Fund which made things a little easier for our team of Ashley van Winkel (Skip), myself (Third), Graham Barker (2<sup>nd</sup>) and Geoff Perrow (Lead).

We had decided prior to the event that Ashley, Graham and Geoff would travel by road and I would fly. We joked that we needed the car to bring the trophies back. Little did we know.

As I look back now I realise how important it is to bond as a team off the green as well as on it. We got on so well together.

I flew up on the Friday the day before the start, met up with my brother John who lived in Maritzburg, and set off to find Botanical Gardens BC which was the venue for the first round of the pairs. With no GPS in those days and even less assistance from the locals, we eventually found the Club at the end of a long winding gravel road which ran down the side of, where else, the Botanical Gardens! Our accommodation in a lovely hotel in Umhlanga was by courtesy of one of our members whose name fails me but I do recall his nickname "loop en val" due to a limp.

So the tournament started with Pairs, I was playing with Graham, Ashley and Geoff were together, and both of us won our sections. How we scraped through on shot aggregate having won 3 and lost 2, I could write a book about, but I won't!

On the Monday we started with five days of Fours, winning our section comfortably.

The middle weekend was singles. If I remember, the bet was who ever got dumped first had to wash the car. The other 3 were very cross when I refused! By the end of the weekend only Ashley was left.

So to the play-offs, Ashley kept winning, Graham and I kept winning and we were doing well in the fours. We now had the organisers in a frenzy as Constantia were involved in so many events it threatened to prevent them completing the finals on the Saturday.

Our Fours match against Stella Park started late on the Friday as Graham and I had to play our last 16 and Quarter Finals matches in the morning. At the stage when the Fours match was called off because of the light, I felt we had them on toast. We came back the next morning at 8 am to

complete the final 2 ends. Scored on both and forced an extra end which we lost. Damn, damn, damn. We were all devastated.

Graham and I won the semis and final comfortably having done the hard work in the last 16 beating Neil Burkett and partner, then Cyril Lahana and Stan Greenwood, both Proteas.

Ashley won the singles convincingly against Stan Greenwood.

And so the three set off back to Cape Town with two trophies in the boot.

Over the late 80's and early 90's Constantia Bowling Club became a household name in the bowling fraternity.

The four of us went to Pretoria the next year but never reached the same heights!"

### **John Smuts**

One of our Tuesday morning regulars, John Smuts, has been in and out of hospital over the past three weeks with respiratory problems. He is now out of hospital and recuperating at his daughter's house in Steenberg. Thanks to a video link which his daughter has set up, a number of us are able to chat to him at a pre-arranged time in the late afternoon. While he is still on oxygen, he was quick to show us the glass of whisky in his hand. Nothing wrong with his priorities!

### **And finally ...**

If you're looking for a little light in these dark times of uncertainty, you may like to read an article written by Alan Knott-Craig, a South African entrepreneur and author. He writes that despite the devastating effects that Covid 19 may have on our health, economic and political structures, it may also be the best thing that has happened to South Africa since the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

Google Alan Knott-Craig BCG to read the article.