



Staff News

Issue 23 - April 2020

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Colin Mayes
Chief Executive

Company Update Q1 & Covid-19 Impact

Well what a start to 2020 with some of the worst flooding we have seen in our country ever recorded and record heavy rainfall which has meant that our business has had a really tough start to the new year. Then to just add a few further hurdles for us the country is in the grip of Covid – 19. A very nasty little virus that is causing a huge impact to almost everyone around the world. Here in the UK we are seeing the spread of the virus to almost all parts of the country and the country almost coming to a stop with restrictions being put in place to reduce movements etc. We are all hoping that with the Government's policies, the infection rate will reduce rapidly and that we can get back to business ASAP. But we also need to be thinking about the consequences of this not happening as quickly as we would all like. Your leadership team is doing everything it can to try and think through all the possibilities that may or may not occur if we are still in this situation in 3, 6 and 9 months' time. Hopefully it will be a great deal shorter and we can all get back to work sometime in April.

With this sort of devastating start to 2020 we are encouraging all General Managers to be very cautious about business levels for the future as getting over this emergency situation is going to take some time and will almost certainly see us coping with reduced levels of trade for the next 12 months.

Whilst we will be doing our utmost to protect everybody's jobs, it is clear that in order for the business to survive this huge hit to our revenues, costs will need to be reduced including our by far biggest cost which is our payroll. To keep this to a minimum we need all employees to be as flexible and open minded as possible about any necessary changes that might be considered about their roles in the months to come. I cannot hide the fact that we will all be facing some tough decisions in the months ahead particularly if the current lockdown continues past May. Meanwhile we must all do everything we can to adhere to our Governments instructions and you will find more about this further in our newsletter.

It is also vital that the key workers stay in the business and continue to do their job, like our greenkeepers, maintenance teams and of course General Managers ensuring the security of our buildings and assets are looked after during the close down period.

Thank god many of our people put the wellbeing of the majority ahead of their own personal situation. As I am writing this piece for you all, our payroll department headed by Karen and ably assisted by Julie and another Karen are working flat out trying to make sure everybody is paid in full for March and setting up the payments with the Government for all those that will be participating in **cont...**

the Government support scheme from April onwards. Without their commitment, fortitude and the rest of our accounts team nobody would have been paid at the end of March. None of this gets done without the dedicated people we have working with us.

I would also like to express my thanks to all team members who have helped us through the first part of closing all our units and golf clubs. Our General Managers and their teams have all done a cracking job in closing our facilities as safely as possible. During this time I know many of our team members volunteered their own time to help ensure we protected our businesses as much as we could and I would like to take this opportunity to again thank each and everyone of you for the effort and support you have given, it has been very much appreciated by all of us.

You will be aware that unlike many businesses out there we have arranged to pay everyone their full salaries and wages for March other than our casual employees who will be paid for their work that was done, when effectively we had closed all of our businesses by Monday 23rd March.

In April the vast majority of us will be taking advantage of the Government job retention scheme & taking furlough, senior management will also be on a voluntary 80% of their annual salary. We have done this to try and avoid making anybody redundant and we will be keeping this under constant review. If the situation continues past April it is highly likely that we will have to review this situation again.

A huge amount of this will depend on whether the Government will continue the support past the end of May. We will all have to await that decision and hopefully we will all be getting back to normal by then.

After ensuring all of our team members have been advised of what is happening to them regarding their own personal circumstances and trying to ensure

no job losses occur. Our next priority is to ensure the long term survival of our business so we all have a job to come back to as and when this period of National Emergency is over. If only we knew!!

All of this is very difficult reading and certainly not what I was expecting to be telling you all after such a successful 2019. And thank god we did do well in 2019 as without that success this business would have found it far more difficult to see out this current situation.

We had planned for further expansion of our Adventure Leisure business as well as significant new investment into upgrading our existing golfing facilities. Some of that work has actually begun and where it has at Hoebriidge, Wycombe and Redbourn we will continue and finish the projects. This will then hopefully encourage more new customers to come and try us and hopefully help us recover many millions of pounds in lost revenue during the National Emergency period.

Through your General Managers we will be doing our utmost to keep you informed of the progress of the company in these unprecedented times. 2020 is set to be probably the most challenging year I have ever experienced in the whole of my business career. All I can promise you all is that we will work tirelessly to keep our business alive and therefore as many of your jobs as possible as we try and ensure we can continue in business. I am confident we will re-open, but have not got a clue when and with how many people and we will just have to all await further announcements from our Government in due course.

I am sure everybody can understand that this situation is constantly evolving and we as a business will have to respond and adapt to the events as they are announced. We all have a duty to adhere to our Governments recommendations and I urge you all to follow them. Stay safe and I look forward to getting back to business as soon as possible.

Warmest regards,
Colin

**STAY CALM, STAY SAFE &
WE WILL BE BACK STRONGER**



How can I try to stay well and avoid spreading the virus?



Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use a sanitiser gel



Stay at home only go out for the basic necessities & maintain 2 meters apart



Catch coughs and sneezes **and throw away used tissues**



If you don't have a tissue **use your sleeve**



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid close contact with people who are unwell

TRACKMAN

UNLEASH YOUR POTENTIAL

TrackMan arriving soon at Hoebridge & Redbourn!



With technology becoming a standard offering at modern driving ranges, TrackMan was the chosen partner for the recent range refurbishments at Hoebridge and Redbourn. Used by 97 of the worlds top 100 golfers TrackMan delivers the most accurate ball tracking system in golf, the system also delivers a virtual experience to enable golfers to play hundreds of golf courses around the world, including St Andrews. The technology also includes fun games to suit all standards of golfer including Bullseye, Capture the flag and Hit It. Hoebridge and Redbourn have always been very popular in their local area and will be the third and fourth venues in the group to install technology, should the technology prove successful then TrackMan or Toptracer (Wycombe & Sidcup) may be extended to other ranges in the group.



TrackMan opens up a range of new experiences for everyone!

Both Redbourn & Hoebridge TrackMan ranges were due to open to the public on Friday 10th April with the club's grand opening event, however due to the club closures & the government restrictions the public opening has gone on the backburner.

The good news is that whilst the clubs have been closed, the build has still taken place & will be ready by the time the clubs re-open.

When we commence with the grand opening, it promises to be a great day with a fantastic competition to win a membership worth over £1000 which will be announced on the day.

BUNKERS!

CRAZY GOLF & DRINKS

Bunkers! Goes Bonkers at VIP Opening Night

Swansea was rocking in late January as BUNKERS! VIP Launch Par-Tee was held on Monday 27th January.

The epic party night handed out some incredible prizes and gave guests the opportunity to put the Loco and Zoro 12-hole themed courses to the test, while enjoying a mix of retro cocktails, mouth-watering food and plenty of entertainment with music, Electro darts and Ping Pong.

The venue was packed with more than 300 guests 'bunkering down', including a selection of notable VIPs from across the local community, to launch the exciting new concept with unlimited golf, a free drink and the chance at the main prize draw.



Louis Marsh, an Aerospace Engineering student at Swansea University took home the main prize, a £2,000 holiday, and was announced live at the venue and across BUNKERS! social media at midnight.

Plenty more prizes were up for grabs including an annual BUNKERS! pass, giving the winner free entry for a year.

Our first BUNKERS! venue to open, it features two 12 hole crazy golf courses, Ping Pong and Electro Darts. It doesn't just stop there, lush, retro sweet cocktails await you with "dirty dawgs" and "naughty nachos" to keep the hunger at bay.



Facebook now has over 3,500 followers and over 1,250 Instagram followers which is phenomenal achievement overtaking the number of the total number of Facebook followers at Mr Mulligans Basildon. In January over 20,000 people visited the website with online bookings accounting for 37% of all activities.

"We're extremely excited with the successful introduction of BUNKERS! here in Swansea in what is our first Adventure Golf venue to open in Wales." "The VIP launch night and the first few weeks of opening have created a lot of buzz and excitement in the city and we are looking forward to growing the brand across the UK commented Adventure Leisure Operations and Development Director, Andrew Scholey".

BGL Awards 2019

Cast your minds back to 13th February and many of you will remember getting those glamorous dresses, James Bond like Tuxedos and reaching for the bubbles as we embarked on the annual BGL Awards at Aldwickbury Park. Greeted by a red carpet the attendees from all 21 of BGL's golf and leisure venues, were in a celebratory mood to toast another hugely successful year for the group while enjoying an outstanding performance from comedic operatic quartet, Opera on the Run.

"Our annual awards night is always a great event and a fantastic opportunity to shine a spotlight on the hard work and dedication of our employees and reward some of the exceptional work being done at our venues across the country," commented Colin Mayes, BGL CEO. "It's one of the rare chances we get to bring all of our staff together under one roof to have a thoroughly enjoyable night and celebrate our colleagues' successes."

Thornbury Golf Centre enjoyed a particularly fruitful evening in the golf division awards, claiming a bevy of accolades including the prestigious General Manager of the Year award for Tim Good and Best Operating Profit Performance award, among a total of seven honours. Lisa Almond at Stevenage scooped General Manager of the Year for Adventure Leisure.



Tim Good
General Manager of the Year GD
Thornbury Golf Centre



Lisa Almond
General Manager of the Year AL
Stevenage

It was also a successful awards night for Ramsdale Park Golf Centre, as the Nottinghamshire-based venue recorded the highest average Net Promotor Score (NPS) and was awarded with Sales Team of the Year for the Golf Division, in addition to taking home two more awards. Adventure Leisure saw Sales Manager of the Year go to Siobhaun McCartney from Newcastle.

Staying true to its commitment to rewarding long-standing individuals for their service, BGL handed out special recognitions for staff with 10 years of experience with the group, as well as an extra special presentation for David Marshall, a greenkeeper at Ramsdale Park Golf Centre, and Heather Pickerill at head office for a remarkable 25 years each with the company.



Employee of the Year 2019



Clair Roberts
Abbey Hill



Matt Cross
Aldwickbury Park



Amanda Rolland
Basildon



Hannah Smalley
Birchwood Park

"I was really pleased to win Employee of the year, as Mr Mulligans Basildon have not been open long. I couldn't have done such a great job without the help from all of our team. We all support each other to excel at our roles within Mr Mulligans.... "

Amanda Rolland - Basildon



Connor Kingsley
Birmingham



Vickie Tavener
Bournemouth



Kasia Skrobot
Burhill



Lewis Marlow
Cheltenham

"Picking up the employee of year has topped off my year we'll with starting in the business as the reception manager and getting promoted to assistant general manager I feel hard work and dedication pays off in the end."

Connor Kingsley - Birmingham



Kevin Kidman
Hoebridge



Amanda Johnson
Milton Keynes



Steve Brindley-Bates
Ramsdale Park



Julian Bamford
Redbourn

"To win the employee of the year award was firstly a shock as i feel being in a HOD position going the extra mile is a requirement not an optional thing, my work levels are consistent yoy but then on the 2019 results we had our best year on record in the retail department."

David Ashton - The Shropshire



David Ashton
The Shropshire



Deb Duthie
Sidcup



Danielle Wilson
Stevenage



Joanne Blake
Tonbridge



Nicola Burrill
Thornbury



Kiel Sagers
Wycombe Heights



Rachel Mitchell
Head Office

BGL Leads The Way With Staff Development

Burhill Group Ltd (BGL) is leading the way in providing development pathways for employees at its 21 golf and leisure venues across the UK. The group offers a variety of schemes, including apprenticeship training opportunities such as Business Administration, Catering and Hospitality Management and Greenkeeping, and currently has 24 apprentices in place across its portfolio, with a further eight in registration.

This totals up to an impressive £42,000 investment into BGL's apprenticeship training for 2019, with an increased £60,000 forecast in place for 2020.

The significant investment highlights the Group's desire to encourage progression from within, across the portfolio of golf clubs and Adventure Leisure venues. BGL has continued its steady growth in both elements of its business, bucking the trend in the golf industry with increasing participation figures and opening several new adventure golf venues, including bringing new brand, BUNKERS! to market at the end of 2019.

As a result, BGL has developed a number of schemes to further the development of its employees and to build a pool of staff ready to progress internally when the opportunities arise.

"We are committed to developing our own people and providing opportunities for them to rise through the ranks at BGL," commented BGL CEO, Colin Mayes. "It speaks great volumes about the management and support at our venues and the great opportunities to not only find a role, but to develop a career within our group.

"We've seen the success of candidates in our organisation who have come through these programmes and this has only reinforced our desire to continue to grow and expand the schemes in 2020 and beyond."

In response to staff feedback for more training, just over a year ago, the group appointed Janice Moore to the position of Learning and Development Manager.



"My goal is to equip employees with the tools and resources to become agile, self-directed and collaborative learners," commented Moore. "I am steering expectations away from a training mindset, toward a performance mindset. "Where there is friction in the business, we try to identify where people development is the answer and when I understand what the issues are, and what it's like in the deep end, I'm able to design for that and deliver resources that are going to make a real difference to the performance of our staff."

Among the measures in place to improve, BGL is trialling a replacement for their once-a-year staff survey with a system that will measure employee engagement at regular intervals throughout the year, highlighting the value it places on gauging the mood of its people. "Part of my job is to gather information from the business about issues that are impacting performance and to assess where people development could help," continues Moore.

The group's long-term pledge to advancing the careers of its people includes the successful internal Manager in Training (MIT) programme, which has placed several key fast rising leaders within the BGL Group.

Renovations at Wycombe Heights

Wycombes clubhouse refurb began on 10th Feb. The pro shop, main entrance and coffee shop will be redesigned and refurbished. There has been a lot of progress so far & should be ready for the upcoming season! We are sure you will agree, it will look fantastic once completed.



Burhill welcomes in the new Captains in American/British Tradition

The Burhill AGM was held on the 23rd February 2020. With both new captains (married) hailing from Texas there was a distinct theme of combining their place of birth and their current home.

The wonderful 'Best of Britain' & 'Best of Texas' day included a parade around Burhill on horse & carriage followed by a procession of Hersham & Weybridge Scouts performing with drummers & bag pipes playing Amazing Grace & Scotland the Brave. Even their 'drive-off' had the National Anthems!



Mr Mulligans Introduces Business League events at Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes introduced a Business League which was an opportunity for locals businesses to compete against each other at adventure golf.

The inaugural event took place on Tuesday 4th February across all Adventure Leisure sites. It was an extremely successful event across all Adventure Leisure sites and due to the popularity and financial success they will be running these monthly throughout 2020 when we re-open.

Take a look at the trophy & winning MIK team.



Employee Spotlight



Welcome to the Employee Spotlight section. This month we talked to Christine Sparks, General Manager of Mr Mulligans Milton Keynes.

BGL: What's your current title. How long have you been with Adventure Leisure?

CHRISTINE: General Manager, I joined the Adventure Leisure Team in February 2016.

BGL: How long have you been in the leisure industry and what was the journey to where you are now?

CHRISTINE: I have been in the golf and leisure industry for over 20 years. I started as a pro shop assistant and waitress at Mentmore Golf and Country Club where I worked after school and in the holidays. After University I joined England Women's Golf for a couple of years as a Regional Training Officer and then returned to Mentmore working my way up to Golf Operations Manager. In 2010 I felt like I needed a change, so moved to South Africa for 5 years where I worked as a Manager and Personal Trainer for Virgin Active. On my return to England I joined Adventure Leisure and opened the first indoor site at Stevenage.

BGL: In 3 words describe your job?

CHRISTINE: Challenging, rewarding and unique

BGL: What's your favourite part about working at Mr Mulligans?

CHRISTINE: It's an adventure! I have been involved since the beginning and love that we are growing and developing every year. I have been involved with the majority of the openings and training/supporting the new management teams and looking after the Sales Managers. Over the last 4 years with the support of

Andy, Victor and the Head Office team I have been able to grow and develop new skills. The best part I would have to say is being challenged on a daily basis, no day is the same and we are encouraged to think outside of the box and come up with new ideas. I love that from the FOH team all the way through to Senior Management it feels like a family.

BGL: Can you play golf?

CHRISTINE: Yes, I play off 12 now when I can find the time. My lowest was scratch when I was on a Golf Scholarship in the states, a long time ago!

BGL: What would you say is your biggest achievement since you joined the Adventure Leisure Team?

CHRISTINE: Winning GM of the year, Operating Profit and Financial standards in 2018.

BGL: Do you have an unusual story to share from Mr Mulligans?

CHRISTINE: Plenty, could write a book! One that stands out amongst my staff was chasing a half-naked homeless man around the courses to get him out while he was hurling profanities at me and threatening to beat me up! The other one which I am reminded about on numerous occasions is when, a young girl had an allergic reaction to ice cream, while on the phone to the paramedics the mother of the child handed me her epi-pen without the lid on and I managed to inject myself! After administering the second epi-pen, we were both taken to hospital in an Ambulance and both recovered well.

BGL: What is your favorite three-course meal?

CHRISTINE: Starter - Oysters, Main - Chateaubriand Steak with creamed spinach, butternut and mash potato. Dessert, no thanks just a Gentleman Jack on the rocks.

BGL: What keeps you motivated?

CHRISTINE: My Team, we all just know the expectations for the day and we just work together and help each other while keeping the team motivated and having a bit of fun along the way.