# NATO GOLF CLUB cAPTAIN’S Report 2023

The NATO Golf Club saw quite a few leadership changes in 2023 to include my assumption as Captain from Darryl Rupp. It has been a pleasure to serve the NATO Golf Club and I look forward to what the year will bring to our group. This report is intended to capture activities from years 2023-2024, highlight areas to sustain, and provide recommendations on how we might improve as a club.

I am pleased to report that participation in our events in 2023 and the first half of 2024 continues to be well represented by members of NGC.

For the season (2023-2024) we completed 8 events, 3 more are planned from May to July 2024.

**NGC Competition Schedule:**

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| **2023-2024 Season** | | |
| **Month** | **Event** | **Location** |
| July | Friendly | Rinkven Golf Club |
| September | Opening Cup | Golf du Chateau de la Bawette |
| October | Captain’s Cup | Royal Bercuit Golf Club |
| November | Friendly | Golf de Rigenee |
| December | Christmas Cracker | Royal Golf Club of Hainaut |
| ~~January~~ | ~~Celtic Quaich~~ | ~~Golf de Falnuee~~  \*Cancelled due to weather |
| February | Valentine Massacre | Golf de Pierpont |
| March | Friendly | Winge Golf and Country Club |
| April | President’s Cup | Louvain-la-Neuve |
| May | Celtic Quaich | Golf L’Empereur |
| June | Club Championship | Chateau de la Tournete |
| July | Closing Cup | Rinkven Golf Club |

**State of the NGC – Areas to Sustain and improve for 2024:**

***Areas to Sustain:***

The NGC continues to serve as venue for members to gather in a social setting and enjoy camaraderie away from the NATO headquarters. We have seen a steady flow of new golfers wanting to join the NGC which will bode well in future years on the viability of this club. We continue to maximize the use of proven golf courses in the Brussels area and do our best to keep costs within reason to encourage increased participation in our events.

This year we attempted to balance scheduling events on Saturdays and Sundays which was a change from past years (most events were on Sundays). This was done in the attempt to accommodate golfers that may prefer to keep their Sundays open to attend worship services. While the data still requires analysis, we have seen that participation in Saturday events is in line with those that take place on a Sunday.

Mixing of skill levels in golf pairings is something that we attempted to address as the year progressed. Upon assuming duties as the NGC Captain most of the pairings that were done were based off handicap levels which resulted in many of the same groupings of golfers playing together each event. I made a conscious choice to change the approach and mix skill levels to encourage socialization amongst our members. Feedback to this point has been that NGC members prefer mixing handicap levels which is something that we will strive to continue next year.

***Areas to Improve:***

Outreach within the NATO Headquarters should be a focus area for the next season. NATO has multiple venues to broadcast the fact that we have an active golf club and welcome members of NATO to join. We should look at means to digitally advertise that our club is active through use of the NATO communications team which currently lists advertisements for many NATO social activities and clubs on the main screen in the agora in the NATO Headquarters.

As with past reports, events scheduled by the NATO Golf Club on average result in 10 to 12 participants. Most local golf courses offer special reduced rates to the NGC based on an understanding that we will have 20 or more golfers participate. While most courses have honored agreed upon reduced rates when we fall under the number of 20 golfers, in order to maintain a good working relationship with local golf clubs it would be beneficial if more of our members participated in our monthly golf outings. Sustained outreach amongst the club through email campaigns, blog posts on the NGC website and the establishment of a voluntary WhatsApp group may help to improve participation.

We were unable to schedule our annual match with the International Golf Club due to competing events on the schedule. This event should be made a priority for the 2024 golf season.

**Final thoughts:**

Participation from members of the NGC in our monthly events remains healthy and I look forward to what the remainder of 2024 brings to our club.

*//Original Signed//*

Jeffrey Smith

Captain

NATO Golf Club