

**GOLF AUSTRALIA
GAME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING - 12 and 13 June, 2008
AT VICTORIA GOLF CLUB**

SUMMARY

Present:

Golf Australia Board: Alison Holden (Chairman), Anne Lenagan, Bruce Langford-Jones

Victoria: Bronwyn Young (12 June only), Louise McDonald, Doug Fox

New South Wales: Greg Mills (12 June only), Frances Crampton

Tasmania: Bruce Eaton

Western Australia: Greg Fitzhardinge, Grace Molloy (representing WAWGA)

Northern Territory: Paul Pearson

Queensland: Stephen Pitt

South Australia: Chris Luz-Raymond (13 June only)

Golf Australia Staff: Nick Green

In Attendance: Kevin Tangey, Alex McGillvray, Alison Munt, John Horsell

DAY 1

General

1. **Anne Lenagan (Chairman of Golf Australia:** informed the meeting of Tony Hallam's resignation, the decision for her to act in the short term as Interim CEO, and the search process for a new CEO who will hopefully begin within 3-4 months. She also emphasized the main priorities of Golf Australia at this point were to
 - Obtain naming rights and hole sponsors for the Opens
 - Manage the Opens
 - Conduct the World Amateur Teams Championships
 - Develop a strategic plan for Golf Australia
2. The responsibilities and membership of the Game Development Committee as approved by Golf Australia Board at its April meeting were reviewed and confirmed. Possible outcomes of the meeting were discussed. Kevin Tangey suggested that Coach Accreditation & Education be included.

Member State Presentations– Summary of Key Points

(Many of the State Presentations were provided in written and/or Powerpoint presentation form. These will be distributed to participants and are also available from Nick Green, Golf Australia.)

1. Golf Tasmania

Amalgamation has led to a review of tournaments eg the combining of the men's and women's state championships. A current issue involves Junior Golf Tasmania and the Matthew Goggin Foundation not working together. They would like the Foundation to take over all junior golf development.

General Discussion on Junior Foundations: In Western Australia the Graham Marsh Foundation is managed by the West Australian Golf Association in conjunction with Trustees. In Queensland the Greg Norman Foundation is funded independently (\$150,000) by the Queensland Government. There was general consensus that different demands, funding models and strategies make the combination into one body difficult. It was generally agreed that:

Ideally there should be one national brand/framework with programs implemented by the junior golf foundations (names of foundations do not really matter) and managed by, or at least with the State Associations

It was also noted that

- 2008 is Golf Tasmania's centenary year with a Gala Dinner scheduled for 12 October
- A grant of \$10,000 was received to run, in conjunction with the PGA, beginner clinics for women.

2. Womens Golf Victoria

Emphasis is being given to increasing womens participation and enjoyment of golf. The Womens Golf Network, a 'virtual' golf club, has over 300 members and it is estimated that over 40% go onto club membership. Cost is \$110, plus pay as you go for green fees. Fees include handicap and public liability insurance. WGV also has 290 members in its Under 18 Girls Golf Network.

The league clubs are a special category of membership in Victoria (and Western Australia) - there are 2,500 women and 4,500 male members. These are people who belong to social clubs on public courses (course rated by the state bodies). They pay a reduced affiliation fee to the state bodies.

WGV is in the first year of a four year funding grant of \$350,000 from PICSAR (Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation), the objective of which is to create sustainable links between golf clubs and local communities. An example of working on school and club partnerships is in the Wimmera and Mallee area where programs in 12 schools and 8 golf clubs have introduced 1000 girls to golf.

Other activities involve 4 day Anglesea Camps for girls aged 11 – 17, regional two day camps for girls, adult participation programs (2,500 women have attended 'Come and Try' days), and the introduction of a District Junior Officer Development program to promote and extend the Girls Golf Network (in conjunction with Stuart Appleby Foundation)

WGV presentation was circulated with these notes

3. Victorian Golf Association

Current activities include research trials with the presentation and maintenance of high quality playing surfaces at affordable cost. Of particular interest is the allocation of \$400,000 (interest only, capital base not eroded) in 2008 from the Victorian Golf Foundation to District Associations, Affiliated clubs and other bodies to assist golf development, particularly in the junior area. A number of Golf Industry research projects have been undertaken over the past few years designed to alert and motivate clubs to consider and take action to develop the game and preserve their own future. They have also provided government and other bodies with an indication of the size and impact of the game of golf in Victoria. VGA emphasizes communication – it does maintain a high traffic website (currently 1.6 million hits per month average). The circulation of its magazine to 25,000 subscribers every two months provides information to clubs re successes and ‘best practice’ stories.

The VGA operates successful “Golf Access” programs which has an estimated transition rate of 45% to member golf clubs. It is apparent that clubs will support Golf Access as long as it increases club membership. It is also attempting to connect with social golfers via the provision of public liability insurance and is embarking on a research project focused on club and non-club golfers in the 25-40 year old age groups.

There appears to be a genuine problem in the attitude of some clubs in not accepting more than a few numbers of juniors and in many cases there is not strongly founded culture of junior activity and commitment to junior golf. VGA’s handling of this area is targeted, tailored and multi-faceted. This includes school clinics, Primary Schools Championship (65 events and 2000 children), Schools Championships, Go-Go-Golf, and structuring of the V-Golf pathway to ensure young golfers have opportunities and access to motivate them throughout their golfing life.

In clubs with membership declines, VGA has been successful in gaining government grants for regional centers and projects, for example the South Western Junior Development project and the Dandenong-Frankston, Mornington Peninsula project. Other new projects are scheduled for 2008 commencement.

The South-Western project was discussed more fully and the V Golf Skills Challenge discussed. This resulted in a more general discussion on what to do in relation to Junior Golf on a National basis. New South Wales is running school cluster programs and like Victoria, they are also recruiting adult members as a result.

It was decided that

- **there was currently a large number and fragmentation of junior programs in Australia**

- **there is a need for a National Framework, Program and Brand (but with the facility of local variance when required) – currently the JGAB has a working group, comprising Nick Green, Stephen Pitt, David Greenhill, and Phil Ayres addressing these issues)**
- **the Junior Golf Advisory Board needs to review a number of projects before creating a national program - including the Victorian South Western type program, the Cadbury-Schweppes programs and programs operating like the school cluster programs in the Jack Newton Foundation in New South Wales – it also needs to deal with complexities of sponsorship**
- **Anne Lenagan is to talk to Max Garske, PGA re working together on the junior project (there are currently 170 professionals conducting Cadbury-Schweppes programs aimed at 12 – 15 year olds)**
- **There is a need for Golf Managers Association input**
- **National program should be aimed at 8 – 12 year olds**
- **There would be an increased need for Community Coaching courses**

3. Womens Golf New South Wales

One of its initiatives is an ‘internal’ marketing program involving the issuing of a membership card with benefits such as discounts on car rentals, accommodation etc. The kickback comes back to the organization in the form of a cheque from companies gaining eg Eurocar. The resulting database enables marketing according to age group etc. Also clubs were involved in a Membership Recruitment Survey which gave information of how to promote membership of clubs eg paying off of joining fee. The organization also produces an e-newsletter every month for members, produces its own Year Book and now distributes its quarterly newsletter and bulk mail on CD. One of its new initiatives is the introduction of a 9 hole State Championship at Cammeray. There are also a number of regional junior camps.

Womens Golf NSW has a Womens Golf Club similar to the WGV Womens Golf Network. It emphasized that to recruit women there is a need to get very social.

There is an increase in demand for weekend play and tournaments. Concern was also expressed re the pressures on clubs to host tournaments and a need to co-ordinate requests to golf clubs eg seniors, women’s, juniors, men and women – this will better as the amalgamation proceeds. (Western Australia has a by-law which says there is no charge for events but in other states there is generally a charge for course usage).

New South Wales is gearing up for the World Masters Games in October 2009.

4. New South Wales Golf Association

It was noted that 11 sports academies are funded from the Junior Golf Foundation.

Discussions were held on creating a centralised 1800 number to answer all Rules questions . **It was decided that a centralised answering system was not appropriate as the states liked dealing with club enquiries.**

Apparently there has been some criticism that too much of the affiliation fee was being devoted to 'elite' golf. It was indicated that NSW is trying to build the capital base of its Golf Foundation. Also it was noted that its web site needs rebuilding.

Discussion then centred around an on-line booking system for tournaments. It seems that the possibility of a national program is difficult because of the varying IT platforms. **It was decided that there is a need for Golf Australia to organize a forum with a view to developing a centralised Tournament On-Line System.** Alex McGillvray is to investigate the requirements, brief and issues. States are to fund their attendance at this meeting. Louise McDonald from WGV, which is utilizing a system through My Club, will send out some information on what WGV is doing.

Also there was discussion concerning a Club Managers Handbook to ensure sound governance procedures are followed. The VGA have a guide on its website and NSW is interested in trying to develop a national guide to supplement its own material. It was decided that NSW and the VGA would work on this project in attempt to develop an on-line national handbook for Club Managers. (Doug Fox indicated that this decision will need to go through the VGA board)

NSW also said it fully supported the Insurance Working Group's recommendations. In relation to Golf Access, there is a desire to extend the "Womens Golf Club" to incorporate men as well as women and the length of time one could stay in Golf Access should be investigated.

The Junior Golf Foundation has currently 7 people working as Development Officers – these were basically on contract basis and were trainee pros/community coach type people. There was a need to extend this to 15 people. It was emphasized that the name, Jack Newton attracts people and sponsorship and his name should be retained.

5. Golf Northern Territory

Reference was made to the Coaching and Rules Accreditation Programs, a Top End Junior Series conducted in four centres, the existence of 5 professionals in Darwin and 0 in Alice Springs, 12 golf courses, and the high number of indigenous juniors. Paul Pearson is to communicate with Anne Lenegan re the Arafura Games, particularly in relation to whether there should be State Teams or one National Team.

6. Western Australia Womens Golf Association

It was noted that Pam Glossop has resigned and that funding and human resourcing is a current problem. There is a Womens Golf Network but it is not working in the same manner as in Victoria – it is a little more social. Clubs run clinics and it more about getting women involved and networking.

7. Western Australian Golf Association

In relation to amalgamation a Joint Steering Committee has been established and has met 7/8 times. A proposal recommending an Advisory Board of 4 people is to be considered. Main problems with amalgamation are related to staffing (redundancies) and location of the body including the Foundation (costs and whether to lease or own). It is anticipated that a decision could be made by December 2008 and implemented in 2009.

It appears that attempts are being made to lift the number of Junior Girls via the Junior Girls Golf Clubs. The Graham Marsh Foundation currently has a program of 8 events for the 14 years and under age bracket. The positioning of the Foundation will be determined by the new board following amalgamation.

It was reported that Senior Golf is booming but course usage is fast becoming a problem. In relation to Golf Access they have D Club affiliation with 10 clubs and 550 members.

WAGA offer programs for under 8 & 12 in modified courses. The ratio was 22% girls and 78% boys

A pleasing increase in affiliation numbers by 3 – 4% was noted.

8. Golf Queensland

Tournaments are considered its strength, particularly senior events, and elite programs are conducted very well. However there is a need to introduce more non-elite events particularly for country women. Challenges it faces are low junior girl numbers, many clubs in trouble due to the drought, isolated clubs, Brookwater funding, weak school links, and competition from other sports.

The Greg Norman Foundation gives the state body \$25,000 and is provided with office space. There is no direct representation on the Board and they do an excellent job on formulation of junior pathways and running the Greg Norman Junior Masters.

One of Golf Queensland's key events is the Golf Industry Conference, tailored to golf clubs, every 2 years.

There are only two public courses and its largest untapped resource is the driving ranges – there is a need to improve co-ordination with these facilities. Presentation attached to these notes

9. Golf South Australia

Due to the timing of a Board Meeting, South Australia was not able to attend on this day to make an oral presentation but did provide a written report for the meeting. This is available from Nick Green at Golf Australia.

Presentation attached to these notes

DAY 2

1. Golf Australia: Game Development (Nick Green)

A circular graph illustrating the activities of Golf Australia and the relationship with members states and clubs was presented. Some of the areas discussed were:

Community Partnerships: the role of GA in facilitating these partnerships was raised. Local governments seem unsure as to how golf clubs fit into their strategic plan. Open spaces contribute to a healthy lifestyle and questions were raised as to whether GA should have a role in developing local government resources and facilities.

Link Between Schools and Clubs: It was suggested that it was very costly to get into schools on a long term basis and perhaps they should just be used as a marketing medium. It was noted that the ASC is paying for some school entry programs at the moment. There is a need to review what we do with schools and we should ensure we get the pathway/link between schools and clubs right. The promotion of participation via school teams was considered advantageous and should be encouraged.

Coach Accreditation: It was stated that Golf Australia has responsibility for this and should co-ordinate coach accreditation. There is a service delivery partnership in which PGA are the service provider. Hence Golf Australia's role is in the co-ordination and not the delivery of the programs. A new Community Coaching Course is currently being developed.

Indigenous Programs: \$400,000 has been granted since 2002 for states to deliver indigenous programs. It was suggested that money can be gained at the state level from Departments of Sport and Recreation. However the major problem is that the states do not have the resources to run many of these programs. There is a need to conduct such courses but how can we show we are delivering such programs at the most cost effective level?

Junior Golf: Gemba Research Recommendations.

- A national program for 5 - 11 year olds (or 8 – 12)
- Development officers in every state
- Brand name and logo (need to appoint an agency to develop brand)
- Program structure needs to be defined - must be a good program and they must have fun

- To be conducted in clubs but possible with schools as feeders
- Website and a calendar of activity/communication for all junior golfers is necessary
- Stakeholders need to be trained

The meeting reconfirmed the decision of the previous day. The Working Group of the JGAB is to proceed with the decision to develop a junior brand and program (such as the VGA program) and should report back to the JGAB and then to the Game Development Committee

Presentation attached to these notes

2. Participation in Golf: The Social Golfer

Alex McGillvray provided the meeting with research figures illustrating the number of affiliated members, a summary of the ERASS Report and some figures on the number of rounds played. There are currently 1.1 million golfers with 40% of them affiliated.

There was some discussion on capturing the social golfer. All agreed we should proceed with this challenge. A working group, The Social Golfer Working Group, comprising Alex McGillvray, Frances Crampton, Greg Fitzhardinge, Doug Fox, Stephen Pitt and Alison Holden was appointed to explore this issue.

3. Women's Golf

Alison Munt informed the meeting of the \$150,000 grant (plus an extra \$25,000 per annum for three years) from the ASC for "Building a Better Sport: Better Management Practices". In October 2007 a Steering Committee was formed and employed The Smart Connection Company to conduct the research. They are about to make their final recommendations.

Figures of women participation are very low. Of club membership 21% are women, 73% men, 4% junior boys and .52% junior girls. Sweden in comparison has 30% women and 20% juniors. There appeared to be a concern that some clubs are not aware of the equality laws, and anti-discrimination (club) governance seminars for women.

It was agreed that we need to develop a brand/image for increasing womens participation. Alison Munt, Frances Crampton and Louise McDonald were appointed as a Womens Working Group. They are to develop a national framework/program following presentation of the Smart Connection Report. As part of its role it will examine some international programs – particularly the English Ladies Golf Union (brochures and information).

Presentation attached to these notes

4. Insurance

John Horsell was welcomed to the meeting and with Alex McGillvray presented the report of the Working Group on Insurance.

The meeting supported the recommendation of the group which was to include public liability insurance in the Golf Australia affiliation fee. Player injury and equipment cover will be optional.

Presentation attached to these notes

5. Minority Group Participation

Kevin Tangey spoke of the Sports Connect grants and the work of the Steering Committee. It was suggested that there needs to be a more formal audit of what is happening in Australia and coaching courses should be developed to teach the disabled. Queensland has set up a State Steering Committee and all states are encouraged to set up similar committees. It was noted that there is national funding and support available but of course the main problem seems to be the lack of resources and focus to develop programs (states can't do everything!).

6. 9 hole Golf: 'Your Time, Your Choice'

Kevin Tangey reviewed the marketing campaign which included an agreement from all states supporting the initiative. States are encouraged to increase communication channels with clubs, such as urging them to play more events in the twilight, for juniors, and even to think about developing a form of membership for 9-holers. Also Member States could think about offering some new 9-hole state championships such as that occurring with women in New South Wales.

Concern was also expressed with the differing handicapping systems for men and women (women only need to play 9 holes three times but men need to play 10 times) and junior boys need to play 9 holes ten times to get a handicap. This was quite demotivating for them and the volunteers working hard to increase numbers of juniors playing golf. Some were even suggesting that beginners be automatically placed on 36 (men) or 45 (women).

It was decided to ask the Rules and Handicapping Committee to consider a common system for men and women, such as obtaining a handicap on three cards over nine holes.

It was confirmed that the role of Golf Australia was to provide the framework for 9 hole golf including the image, logo, and resources (website) but programs would be delivered locally.

7. Golf Access

Alex McGillvray confirmed that the review, a result of a grant from the Australian Sports Commission, had been going on for three years. Final recommendations will be reviewed by Ernst & Young.

The recommendations are

- An automated database for processing applications be developed by Golf Australia
- There be provision for course rating for non-affiliated clubs

Considerable discussion resulted in a decision that the Working Group on the Social Golfer would review the Golf Access recommendations made to the meeting.

8. Role of Golf Australia and the Members States in Game Development

There was considerable discussion on these roles. There was general agreement that:

Golf Australia

- should formulate the national frameworks for national programs and industry issues (such as 9 Hole, Junior, Women, Social, IT Issues, Insurance Issues, Coaching)
- should be responsible for much of the research in the industry and should act as the 'public lobby' (speaking with one voice on specific industry issues)
- should try to get sponsorship for national programs
- provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss programs
- represent the golfing industry with the national government (and not talk to State Government Bodies without informing the states)
- alert state bodies two days before sending material to clubs
- appoint and conduct operations of national golf committees
- pay expenses for international teams

Members States

- to be the operational arms – deliver the programs
- implement national frameworks and issues when resolved
- need freedom to add local variance to programs
- offer advice to clubs
- pay expenses for their interstate teams

It was also agreed that Golf Australia fund two Game Development Committee meetings per year

9. Priorities of Golf Australia: it was agreed (not in order) they be

Juniors

Women
9-Hole
Social Golfer
Coaching Accreditation
Insurance
IT – on line booking
Marketing of Golf
Research

10. Conclusion: It was agreed that in the main the proposed outcomes of the meeting had been achieved. The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 4 September, Sydney (during interstate teams series)

List of Presentations (accompanying these minutes)