

Case Study Golf Development – Female Participation

Get Started @ Oaklands Golf Club

As with many ideas some of them aren't always new and this was the case at Oaklands Golf Club. In the 90's the Club had previously run a program called "Get Started – An introduction to Golf @ Oaklands". This program was targeted at attracting new female members to the Club and many of the current Ladies Committee had actually attended this original series, there was even a very nice trophy that was still in the Club's display cabinet.

With female participation rates declining greatly it was agreed that the Club needed to address this situation by firstly providing a reason to try our product.

The Club's aim was simple, attract more women to the Club and the reason to attend was a simple coaching model that would teach the basic skills required to play the game (It worked before so why not again).

The Club's Director of Golf designed an 8 week program (8x45 minutes sessions see attached), that saw participants make their way from the practice green to the course proper. Once the program was designed the Club then ensured that it had enough equipment and teaching aids onsite to ensure that participants could just simply turn up and not have to worry about anything other than learning the game. It was important to demonstrate that the game can be fun, it is often portrayed as a game that can be frustrating to take up and we felt it important to break that idea so the sessions would be light hearted and enjoyable, serious golf could come later.

In terms of promotion the General Manager designed material that was distributed to the local area but the greatest success came through the usual member referrals and the You Tube video that was shot on site and promoted through the Clubs online outlets, this included, website, Facebook and Twitter, see "2014 Get Started" link below:

<http://youtu.be/xJgSL7zXLtq>

The video helped people connect with the Club and also showed a varied level of golfing skill, footage was taken from the Club Championship final for Men, a normal Ladies day at the Club, someone practicing and someone being taught.

Those that signed up, approx. 70 people since 2011, started the program with a cup of coffee, a printed copy of the learning outcomes and a briefing prior to their first lesson. At the completion of the event a certificate of achievement was provided along with a very generous membership offer.

To date the response has been fantastic and of those who have attended the program over 90% have joined the Club with many progressing to representative golf. The programme has also evolved and is currently being run for male golfers under 35 years of age.

We found that the key to introducing women to the game was to get them to invite a friend or a group of friends to attend with them. An extension of this was the new "Buddy" system that the Ladies have introduced at the Club to ensure that new members are being integrated with the existing membership as well as periodic clinics where Ladies of varying handicaps attend a work shop for a specific skill area, for example the bunker clinics held recently were oversubscribed.

All in all this program has worked extremely well and is currently being offered twice a year.

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