

2015 South Australian Golf Industry Awards Night

Saturday 17 October 2015

SCRIPT

Ben Hook (MC)

I would like to invite Award Sponsor **Jeff Zadow** (Managing Director of Innovision Consulting) to come forward to present a special award for:

SERVICE TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOLF INDUSTRY

Ben Hook (MC)

This award has been presented twice before, in 2013 to decorated Sports Journalist Geoff Roach and last year to Women's Golf SA Administrator Raelene Collings. It is awarded to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the South Australian Golf Industry.

This year's winner is being acknowledged for his **contribution to golf, at Club, District and State Level over a 59 year period**. His service in any one of those categories themselves would be enough to win this award.

The award recipient was born at McLaren Vale in 1923 and lived there until aged 5 when his family moved to his mother Vivienne's home town of Orroroo, where his father John started farming.

However severe droughts soon forced the family to Blyth, also in the Mid-North.

The award winner went to primary school, first at Orroroo and later at Blyth. And with no high schools in the area he moved to Adelaide and lived with his grandparents and attended Norwood High School, returning to Blyth in 1941.

The award winner played his first game of golf in 1939 but golf would be put on hold for good reason.

War had been going for nearly two years, so soon as the award recipient turned 18 he enlisted. He had set his mind on the glamour of being a pilot but after enlisting was found to be colour blind! So instead he joined the Air Corps as a fitter.

After basic training in Adelaide and Melbourne in late Dec 1941 he was sent as a Fitter 2A to the 12 Squadron in Darwin.

The Japanese attacked Darwin on the 19th of February 1942 only a few weeks after he arrived and in his own words "all hell broke loose" and hundreds ran down the Adelaide Road to get away from the town.

His squadron worked on Australian Wirra-way Planes, American dive bombers and helped build four air strips on the Adelaide Road.

He was transferred to Canberra and again to Sale in Victoria until discharge in January 1945.

After eighteen months working as a blacksmith with his Uncle at McLaren Vale, he returned to the Mid-north, it was 1946. He then joined with his father and younger brother in an engineering business at Crystal Brook staying in the business for 38 years.

Like many country folk, he immediately became involved with many activities in the township of Crystal Brook, most especially with the CFS, Tennis Club, Church, and Lodge. He was appointed as a Justice of the Peace in 1968, a position he held for forty years.

Despite these heavy commitments **he joined Crystal Brook Golf Club in 1946** and over the next 38 years held numerous administrative positions including being Captain for 9 years, President 2 years and Secretary.

In 1948 he met Shirley, and had three children, Barry, Desmond and Robyn and said his kids basically grew up on the Crystal Brook Golf Course, spending many a year out there practicing and playing and making the kids their own golf buggies.

At a District level, he was a delegate at the first meeting of the Northern Group in 1958, and became the first President in 1962-63 as well as Secretary for 12 years including seven combined as Treasurer.

He was awarded **Life Member of Crystal Brook GC in 1979** and **Life Membership of The Northern Group Golf Association in 1982**.

In 1982 an unusual situation arose when a vacancy occurred for another SAGA Country Councillor and it coincided with his possible retirement to the city in the next year or so. The Northern Group nominated him for the position and he was duly elected.

After 39 years as a member of Crystal Brook Golf Club he made the move with Shirley in 1983 to the city and Warradale to retire.

Prior to leaving his home town, he was awarded **CRYSTAL BROOK CITIZEN OF THE YEAR** in 1982.

Upon his **"retirement"** to Adelaide, he refused to slow down!

He joined Riverside Golf Club (now West Lakes) in 1982 and was a member there for 20 years until 2002.

As a SAGA Councillor from 1982 until 2003 (6 of those years was on the Executive Committee) his record was exemplary. He attended AGM's all over the state, in fact he attended the Mid North AGM in Wirrabara last Friday with Golf SA CEO Chris Luz Raymond (this is despite being 13 years retired from the Council).

One of the roles he is widely known for is being the **Official State Tournament Starter**.

As Chief Starter throughout the 80's, 90's and 2000's he was the 1st tee starter at almost every SA Open, the SA Amateur Championships, State Foursomes and was always present at Country Week.

Last year he caught the ferry to KI and started the field yet again at the Sand Greens Championship in Kingscote.

He continues to serve and at the age of 92, will start the field this Tuesday at The Grange, for Country Open Week.

He has been awarded:

- an Australian Sports Medal in the year 2000, nominated by the Northern Golf Group.
- And in 2006 he was awarded an OAM for service to golf and lawn bowls in South Australia, as a competitor and through administrative roles.

He has regularly said that when the time comes and he's tapped on the shoulder to be relegated from the 1st to the 10th tee as starter.....he will duly retire.

Ladies & Gentlemen, the Award for Service to the South Australian Golf Industry goes to

Allen Hurst

Ben Hook (MC) interview with Allen Hurst