

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

TO ALL DELEGATES

Year twelve of administration of Men's Amateur Golf in South Africa has been successfully concluded.

For the second time S.A. Amateur Stroke Play and the S.A. Amateur Championship were held at different venues and on different dates with a positive feedback coming from all quarters.

The 2009 S.A. Open Championship was played at Pearl Valley Golf Estates where the main sponsor was Leisurecorp and the Championship's name reverted back to the S.A. Open Championship. The championship was a huge success with the highest number of spectators in the tournaments history coming through the gate.

The Association has continues its agreement with Acushnet regarding the supply of golf balls, shoes, gloves, caps, and practice balls for our premier events. This was extended to all representative teams and caps have been supplied to the SAGA Executive.

The Association carried the costs of hosting the Challenge Inter-Provincial, South African Country Districts and U23 team's tournament and the SA Mid-Amateur Stroke Play Championship. We hope to attract sponsors for these Tournaments in the coming years. We are grateful for the support of our sponsors and trust that the mutually beneficial relationships in existence will continue to grow.

Amongst many other engagements met by the SAGA the bi-annual Working for Golf 2009 conference was attended by Bruce Younge and Enver Hassen. Bruce Younge also helped with rules and tournament organisation at the 2009 Africa Junior Golf Championship Qualifying in Mombasa, Kenya. This tournament is to be played in South Africa in 2010.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2008/9

It is with great pleasure that I present my report on the activities of the South African Golf Association

The first nine months of my tenure has been a challenging one, I will address some of these in my report. At the outset I must comment on what I perceive sometimes is the lack of unity shown by members of the executive, especially in carrying out agreed to mandates. I cannot allow this to continue as this threatens the very nature of our organisation.

The SAGA has a mandate from Government to govern and administer amateur golf. This is confirmed by our membership to SASCOC. The latter has on numerous occasions advised us to "get our house in order", meaning that all associations dealing with amateur golf need to be brought under the umbrella of the SAGA. I refer here particularly to, WGSA, SASAGA, SAJGF, SADGA and Development of Golf (SAGDB). We have already begun this process and started aligning these organisations in terms of SAGA's broad policy and objectives as can be seen in the awarding of colours and supporting applications for funding from Lotto.

This process of incorporation started sometime back and will need to be consolidated shortly as I have to provide feedback to SASCOC. The process of developing SAGA's business plan also deals with incorporation and compliance of the abovementioned organisations and a successful implementation of SAGA's business plan will cement this.

We are mindful of the current economic crisis and the possible impact it may have on golf, however, it is still important to plan and ensure we do what is in the best interests of golf.

Business Plan

The Indaba held at Bushman Sand's in 2007 provided the impetus for developing a road map and way forward for SA Golf, almost two years have elapsed and we seemed to have lost bit of the initiative. In order to address this, I have made it one of the priorities of the first few months of my term of office to complete this process. To this end the Executive has been widely consulted and I am confident that the business plan will be approved in September. I thank the various members for their inputs.

Handicapping

This remains one of the most talked about issues in Amateur golf, the issue of taking 2 and 3 overs has caused much debate, I need to raise some caution in that we not succumb to the hype and keep on changing the system to quieten criticism, there is a need to stabilise the system and I am confident that once we have control over the Central Server we will be able to apply the changes to suit the South African Golf environment. We need to recognise that there have been technical shortcomings inhibiting the implementation of enhancements to the system, this I believe will be resolved once the central server is in place.

The contract with NGN, which is for the issue of affiliation cards on our behalf, terminates at the end of January 2010. After a lengthy and intense process, a Tender Review Committee has appointed Albatros as the preferred service provider to issue affiliation cards on our behalf and to implement a central server. We anticipate operating in a multi server environment allowing clubs to have a wider choice of service provider to integrate a handicapping service with various club functions such as online booking and back office systems. I believe that this new step will stimulate competition in the market place, ultimately to the benefit of the individual golfer. The implementation of a Central Server has numerous challenges and I am sure that we will successfully manage an implementation process as we take this major step forward.

WGSA

I am grateful to Erica Lefson's participation in our various meetings and forums, she has been most constructive, and her support and contribution is valued. The incorporation of WGSA is still ongoing and I am hopeful that we will jointly resolve this.

International participation

We are well recognised internationally and participated in a number of events. Despite the annual loss of our leading amateurs to the pro ranks, we are blessed with great depth as shown in the various performances by our teams in international competition. I am hopeful that our squad system will assist us in the preparation of our golfers.

We improved our performance at the WATC held in Australia, where we narrowly missed out on a top ten finish by a stroke. Our team of Dylan Fritelli, Jacques Blaauw and Cameron Johnston performed well in difficult course conditions.

We successfully defended our recent home record against a young French team at Euphoria Golf Estate. We look forward to the return match which to be staged in France next year, which will be on a reciprocal basis.

We maintained our form at Zone VI held in Zimbabwe, where the 8 man team led by Colin Burger and Neil Homann represented us with distinction. JG Claassen was the stand out player as he added the Zimbabwe Strokeplay title to his list of achievements.

The Southern Cross was held in New Zealand, where again we came close to winning and fished a credible second, the competition was tough and any one of the participating teams could have won, but for a putt here and there that either went in or didn't. We will host the event in 2011. Nicol van Wyk performed admirably, being runner up in the New Zealand Strokeplay and the New Zealand Amateur.

We have continued to support a number of players on their annual tour to play in the British Amateur and wish to commend Ryan Dreyer on being the leading South African Player in this years Championship.

SASCOC

We continue to grow in stature in our association with SASCOC and we will be looking at improved funding through Lotto in the not too distant future.. We are hopeful that Golf will become an Olympic sport and there are considerable efforts world wide through the IGF to have golf included. We have also drafted a colours policy in line with SASCOC requirements and request all parties to respect this protocol. We do have one challenge remaining, that is to ensure compliance with SASCOC and that is to ensure that all associations dealing with Amateur golf are firmly incorporated into the SAGA. We will also receive funding from the Department of Sport and Recreation.

COSAG

There has been one meeting so far, during the SA Open and I wish to extend my thanks to Johann Rupert, my co-chair for his hospitality. The meeting discussed the vision of SA Golf, with a focus on development and the implementation of the levy to fund the operational activities of the SAGDB. It was accepted that the SAGA needs to drive the vision for a sustainable development programme with a focus on the emerging middle class.

THE R&A

The SAGA hosted the International Final Qualifier for the 2009 Open Championship. Bruce Younge, Colin Burger and Andre Pieterse assisted with Rules at Royal Durban Golf Club. Our relationship with the R&A continues to strengthen. Bruce was once again invited to be a referee at the Open at Turnberry, a great honour for him personally and for the SAGA.

Bruce and I attended the “Working for Golf Conference” at St Andrews, we were joined by Erica Lefson and found the conference to be very informative.

Sponsorship

Our association with our leading sponsors, Glacier, Tempest and Titleist has been strengthened and their contribution to amateur golf is acknowledged.

Fancourt Summit

I was invited to address the summit and had an opportunity to share the SAGA's broad vision and proposed business plan. I also presented the Transformation Charter. The SAGA's role in the golf industry was acknowledged, as such we have been invited to serve on a newly launched forum called the Business of Golf South Africa.

Professional Golf

We hosted a successful SA Open at Pearl Valley, it was a real showcase well presented by Maru and Leisure Corp. It was widely regarded as one of the best. We had a good representation of the cream of South African golf and a noteworthy contingent of overseas professionals. Our own Richard Sterne claimed the title for the first time.

SAGDB

2010 will see the implementation of a R35 levy to raise funds for the operational requirements for golf development. I would like to see unions and clubs proactively involved in developing and growing the game and working in tandem with the SAGDB. To this end I envisage a plan that will be accepted by all our stakeholders. I also wish to thank Johan Rupert for his generous contribution to the SAGDB.

Domestic Competition

We undoubtedly have a world class platform for our amateurs to develop to world class golfers, as can be seen by the number of local golfers on the various professional circuits around the world. We held successful Stroke Play Championship at Pearl Valley where the young JG Claasen tamed the difficult conditions to emerge victorious. At the Amateur Championship held at Benoni Country Club, Ryan Dreyer made a successful return to amateur ranks by defeating Adrian Ford in the Final. WP outclassed all at a blustery Hermanus to once again win the Premier IPT. I wish to acknowledge the contribution of the various Provincial Unions and clubs who also by virtue of their events allow golfers to cut their teeth and become competitive amateurs.

Media and Website

I wish to acknowledge the contribution in this area by Nic Lanham as coverage of amateur golf grows in the various media. Our website has shown improvement over the last year and is confirmed by the increased number of page impressions. My Thanks also to Neil Homann for ensuring an updated service.

I thank members of the media for their coverage of amateur golf and keeping the golfing public informed about SAGA and amateur golf.

Thanks

I wish to thank my two Vice Presidents, Colin Burger and Andre Pieterse for their ongoing support during the past nine months. I also wish to extend my thanks for the goodwill and support of the various president's and representatives of the provincial unions for their contributions to the administration of Amateur golf.

I would also like to thank Nic Lanham, Jan Chrobok and Bill Elsworth for all their dedicated work in ensuring the tender process was so effectively and efficiently addressed and concluded.

Bruce Younge has very ably led the office in providing the necessary administration, my thanks to Neil Homann and Samantha Jackson for their contributions as well.

ENVER HASSEN