

18 May 2023

## **INTRODUCTION**

While we were able to host a full calendar of events in 2022, but re-scheduling, the restrictions posed by our strict, but necessary, risk mitigation protocols, and the financial implications thereof put our staff, unions, host venues and budget under huge pressure. There was a collective sigh of relief countrywide when the golf industry could return to business as normal in 2022, having battled through two challenging years due to the difficulties brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Returning to the normal scheduling was especially welcome news to the participating unions and schools in our seven SA Inter-Provincials, the Nomads SA U-13 Championship, the SA High Schools and Ernie Els Primary Schools Championships and the women's 72-Hole Team Championship.

In lieu of the former Challenge Cup, which was last held in 2018, GolfRSA launched the Challenge Inter-Provincial Tournament. The competing teams were Central Gauteng, Western Province, Boland and Ekurhuleni and it was contested at Ceres Golf Club. The event proved hugely successful and will be co-hosted by North West and Central Gauteng at Mooinooi Golf Club in 2023.

We were also once again able to send Senior and Juniors Protea teams abroad to represent the country on the international stage and reinstate the annual GolfRSA National Squad trip to the United Kingdom, which had to be cancelled for two years due to the changing nature of travel restrictions. Our members did South Africa very proud in the global arena, returning home with eight trophies and very good results overall.

We were delighted to secure The Courier Guy as a sponsor for the GolfRSA Champion of Champions Club event, and we hosted the sixth edition of the in October at Kyalami Country Club. The tournament continues to grow in popularity and 2022 edition was once again very well supported, including the successful introduction of a Caddie Division, which was won by Thabiso Dijo from Bryanston Country Club.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

On the membership front, we saw an increase of 3% in the number of affiliated golfers and a 2% growth in the number of rounds registered on the HNA system in 2022. Last year the total number dropped by 2 544 (1.38%), but on a positive note, our female golfer membership increased by 7.2% and the number of juniors grew by 8.8%.

We saw a respectable 4 272 560 rounds registered in 2022, which was 4.85% lower than the record year of 4 490 275 rounds in 2021. The decline in registered rounds was chiefly down to the return to normality post COVID and an unusually high number of course closures due to flooding in several provinces, including KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Gauteng North and North West.

## **FINANCIALS**

For the GolfRSA financial year from 1 January to 31 December 2022, we achieved a surplus of R 1.8-million, compared to a surplus budget of R 169 000.

A good recovery in the last quarter of 2022 on the GolfRSA reserve investments, as well as an increase in the annual contribution from HNA for Management fees and tournament sponsorships, contributed to GolfRSA's overall revenue exceeding budget by 2%. The largest source of revenue for GolfRSA, being affiliation fees, was on budget, which is encouraging as it means that no affiliated members were lost to the game during this period.

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**CEO** G. Hepburn  
**NON-PROFIT COMPANY – REG NO** 2016/185236/08

Operational expenses were 4% below budget and although tournament expenses exceed budget by 1%, an increase in tournament income largely due to increased entries (increased participation) resulted in tournament income also exceeding budget by 5%.

The above factors collectively attributed to a positive financial outcome for GolfRSA for 2022.

### **GOLFRSA SA SWING**

While travel restrictions still limited our international participation in early 2022, we welcomed participants from 14 countries participate across our three premier events.

Kiera Floyd lifted the SA Women's Stroke Play Championship title, Marine Legentil won the 36-hole Championship final to lift the SA Amateur title, and mom Liesel Smith defeated her daughter Annika to win the Flight Division title at Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club.

Reece McKain won the Proudfoot Trophy at his home course, and Kyle de Beer edged Scotland's Rory Franssen 4&2 to win the SA Amateur Championship. Floyd and De Beer were both members of the GolfRSA National Squad at the time.

Jono Broomhead produced a superb final round six-under-par 66 to win the SA Stroke Play Championship by two shots from Christiaan Maas at Randpark Golf Club. Broomhead was inducted into the National Squad in May.

Casey Jarvis became the first back-to-back winner of the African Amateur Stroke Play Championship, defending the title he won at Glendower Golf Club in 2021 successfully at Leopard Creek in 2022.

### **NOMADS EVENTS**

The Nomads Golf Club of South Africa, through their Furtherance of Golf programme, once again sponsored 12 events on our national calendar in 2022.

Gauteng North's Keagan Crosbie made two trips to the winner's circle, while National Squad members Janko van der Merwe and Jaden Deltel, as well as Joshua Koekemoer, Ivan Verster, Bryan Newman and Dian Kruger all celebrated maiden Nomads wins.

Chad Stanton defeated Lubanzi Tselane from North West in a two-hole play-off to lift the Nomads SA Under-13 Championship title and help Central Gauteng to the team win at Maccauvlei.

The junior circuit was also where 2022 Amateur champion Aldrich Potgieter began his successful run. Two weeks after winning the Nomads SA Junior International by four strokes at Rondebosch Golf Club, the GolfRSA National Squad member rewrote the record books with a stunning 20-shot victory on 22-under-par in the Nomads South African Boys Under-19 Stroke Play Championship.

He continued his dominance at Royal Cape Golf Club with an 8 & 7 victory to lift the Match Play title, becoming only the fifth player to achieve the rare double after Richard Sterne (1999), Dylan Frittelli (2008), Zander Gous (2013) and Jayden Schaper (2015) since the event launched in 1963.

The Nomads SA Girls Rose Bowl and SA Girls Championships, presented by Sun International, were both hosted at Sun City for the first time.

In March, National Squad member Stephanie Barbaglia won the Championship Division, Lea van der Merwe the Silver Division and 12-year-old Zoey Rhoda the Bronze Division.

Big-hitting Gabbi Venter eagled the par-five ninth to beat fellow National Squad member in a play-off for the SA Girls Championship title and yet another National Squad player, Phenyo Sebata, lifted the Silver Division title.

The 110-strong field featured 45 first-time entries, many of whom got their first taste of national level competition in the C and D Divisions. Nine-year-old Danielle Chong took Bronze, and South African Golf Development Board member Lwazi Goba won the Copper Division on debut.

For all six winners this marked a first national victory, and we salute the Nomads Golf Club of South Africa for creating opportunities for our rising stars through their continued support and investment in junior golf in South Africa.

## **SUNSHINE TOUR JUNIOR SERIES**

We were privileged once again to run five events in partnership with the Sunshine Tour.

Randpark's Schalk Naude won the second edition of the Nedbank Junior Challenge and Michael Ferreira also had a maiden national win in the Tshwane Junior Open.

Aldrich Potgieter picked up his fourth national junior title in the Dimension Data Junior Open in George, where 13-year-old Benjamin Weber broke through for his first national success in the U-15 division of the tournament.

GolfRSA National Squad member Daniel Bennett triumphed in the Cape Town Junior Open, while Bryan Newman successfully defended his Joburg Junior Under-15 Open title in wire-to-wire style, winning by nine shots at Kyalami Country Club.

## **GOLFRSA NATIONAL SQUAD**

The seventh year of the GolfRSA National Squad was arguably its most successful year. In addition to Casey Jarvis and Kyle de Beer winning on the GolfRSA South African Swing, the squad members performed brilliantly in Africa and abroad.

Aldrich Potgieter followed Bobbi Cole (1966) and Jovan Rebula (2018) into the winner's circle in The Amateur Championship title, defeating Englishman Sam Bairstow 3 & 2 to lift the title in the 127th edition at Royal Lytham and St Annes.

Christiaan Maas became South Africa's fifth Brabazon Trophy winner with his five-shot victory at Saunton Golf Club in England. Previous South African winners of the English Men's Stroke Play Championship include Neville Sundelson (1974), Richard Kaplan (1986), Craig Rivett (1989), Charl Schwartzel (2002) and Kyle McClatchie (2017).

Jono Broomhead, who was inducted into the squad in May, won the 36-hole qualifier for The Amateur, becoming the second South African to accomplish this feat following Wilco Nienaber in 2018.

Gabbi Venter became the first South African winner of the St Andrews Links Girls Championship and Yurav Premlall won the MCB Indian Ocean Open.

The two teams (seven players) that won the Boys and Girls Divisions in the All Africa Junior Golf Championship were members of the national squad, as was the GolfRSA Protea men's team and women's team that successfully defended in the Africa Region 5 Tournament and All Africa Regional Challenge titles respectively. Pascal Gunther and Bobbi Brown were the respective winners in the Boys and Girls Competitions at the All Africa Junior Golf Championship, Casey Jarvis was the top finisher in the Africa Region 5 Tournament and Brown won the junior title in the All Africa Regional Challenge. Broomhead won the Individual Competition winner in the 2022 All Africa Golf Team Championship, where South Africa finished as the runners-up.

For a seventh straight year, our National Squad members dominated the Open Amateur and Junior events, winning 80% of the tournaments across the men's and women's schedules. The squad members also performed admirably in the men's and women's provincial events, with the male members winning 15 events and female members winning all but one tournament.

### **Since the inception of the National Squad in 2015 we have had the following significant results:**

- **39 international victories**, including the GolfRSA SA Swing events, but excluding wins in the African national team events, which South Africa has dominated for more than two decades.
- From 2017 – 2019 the squad recorded **15 wins** on international soil, including the 2019 Toyota Junior Golf World Cup (no international travel in 2020 | 2021)
- **11** South African juniors have made the International Teams on world amateur golf ranking in the three Junior President Cups played since
- Five of the six amateurs – all members of the GolfRSA National Squad – who teed it up in the 2022 South African Open Championship. Christiaan Maas lifted the Freddie Cup Trophy with a tie for 35th finish, while Yurav Premlall (T43), Aldrich Potgieter (T59), Kyle de Beer (T70) and Jono Broomhead (T75) all made the 36-hole cut. Janko van der Merwe missed the weekend by two strokes.

Through our partnership with the Sunshine Tour, GolfRSA receives invitations to play in the Big Easy Tour and in selected Sunshine Tour events. These are valuable platforms for our top amateurs to learn about the rigours of the professional game.

Christiaan Maas made the most of his invitation to win the season-opening Altron Big Easy at Blue Valley, and Casey Jarvis won the sixth event held at Kyalami Country Club. Maas and De Beer both made the cut in the Alfred Dunhill Championship, where Maas finished joint 17th and De Beer tied for 68th.

GolfRSA hosted a squad camp in January at the National Junior Development Centre (NJDC) at Leopard Creek for the Junior members, and assisted camps were held during the Nomads National Order of Merit at St Francis Links with coach Graeme Whale and Nomads SA Boys Under-17 Boys Championship with coach Wayne Bradley. Fitness and dietary expert Gavin Groves and sport psychologist Theo Bezuidenhout continue to work with our members, both at camps and on an individual level.

Our members competing on the US Collegiate circuit fared just as well, with Caitlyn Macnab cracking an invitation to the prestigious Augusta National Women's Amateur, Christo Lamprecht making his mark on the victorious International Team in the Arnold Palmer Cup, and both players joining Christiaan Maas, Kajal Mistry, Kieron van Wyk and Kaleigh Telfer in the action at the 2022 NCAA Championships.

Mistry, Lamprecht, Van Wyk, Kaiyuree Moodley and Cole Stevens also had individual victories in 2022. Christiaan Maas finished sixth in the U.S. Amateur Stroke Play Qualifying, while Christo Lamprecht qualified by virtue of his college ranking. He was knocked out in the third round.

#### *GRADUATE WATCH*

Tristen Strydom (Tour Championship), Herman Loubser (Lombard insurance Classic), Albert Venter (FBC Zim Open and SunBet Challenge), Deon Germishuys (Sishen Classic), Dylan Mostert (the Kit Kat Pro-Am and Nelson Mandela Bay Championship), Dylan Naidoo (SunBet Challenge) and Ryan van Velzen (Limpopo Championship) added to the graduate victories in the pro ranks during the 2022 / 2023 Sunshine Tour.

Jayden Schaper followed in the footsteps of fellow graduate Garrick Higgo in winning the 2021/2022 season's Rookie of the Year Race (March 2021 to May 2022).

#### **INTER-PROVINCIAL & OTHER TEAM TOURNAMENTS**

Western Province successfully defended the SA Premier IPT title at Koro Creek, while Central Gauteng finished in the winner's circle in the SA Senior, the Challenge and the SA Under-19 IPTs, as well as in the Women's 72-Hole Team Championship.

Gauteng North won the SA Women's Premier and SA Mid-Amateur IPT events, and Free State earned four unprecedented promotions in the SA Premier, SA Country Districts and the SA Senior IPTs, and the Women's 72-Hole Team Championship.

Border was promoted in the SA Women's Premier IPT, while Eastern Province gained A-Section status with an unbeaten performance in the SA Under-19 IPT.

The SA Women's Mid-Amateur IPT was hosted for the first time at Parys Golf and Country Estate, with Southern Cape winning the A-Section and Ekurhuleni the B-Section.

Fourteen teams participated in the 2022 Ernie Els Primary School Championship, with brothers Ben and Jake Weber, Black Horsley and Thomas Lyon from Selborne Primary in East London taking the Team honours. Schalk van Ettinger from Laerskool Muldersdrif won the Individual Competition at Oubaai.

A record total of 23 schools competed in the SA High School Championship at Humewood Golf Links. Twin brothers Andries and Nicolas van der Vyver, Gerhard Hartman and Jack Brugman sealed a five-stroke victory for Paul Roos Gymnasium, while Andries van der Vyver and SAGDB member Devon Valentine shared the Individual honours on five-under 139.

#### **MID-AMATEUR AND SENIOR**

Two-time Champion of Champions winner Bertie Steenkamp from Upington captured the SA Mid-Amateur Championship title on debut with a three-shot wire-to-wire victory at Royal Johannesburg & Kensington in April.

The senior circuit celebrated two first-time winners in their premier events, with Doug McCabe from North West lifting the Players Championship title by five strokes at Maccauvlei in February and Western Province's Greg Woodbridge winning the SA Senior Amateur Championship by four strokes at East London Golf Club in November.

Southern Cape standout Sandra Winter strolled into the records books once again in the 2022 South African Women's Mid-Amateur Championship, becoming the first player to win the event a record five times. Hermien Jones from Eastern Province held her nerve to win the Silver Division & Boland's Louise Olivier went wire-to-wire to defend her Bronze Division title at Mossel Bay Golf Club in November. The 2022 edition confirmed the incredible growth in this sector of the women's golf space. Nearly 150 women teed it up in the Southern Cape, with an astounding 54 first-timers making their debut across the three divisions.

### **TRANSFORMATION**

The resumption of the normal scheduling of the GolfRSA events in 2022 was also welcome news for the South African Golf Development Board (SAGDB) as its members were once again able to participate in the events that form part of GolfRSA's agreements with Nomads, Nedbank and Sun International.

The SAGDB receives spots in the GolfRSA Nomads Junior National Order of Merit tournaments, including the Nomads SA Boys U-19 (5), Nomads SA Boys U-17 (5), Nomads SA U-15 (5) and Nomads SA U-13 (3) Championships, as well as the Nomads Gowrie Farm U-15 Challenge and the 4 Nomads National Order of Merit Inland and Coastal events. The costs for the SAGDB learners are financed by GolfRSA.

The SAGDB also receives up to 20 spots in the limited field of 78 players in the Nedbank Junior Challenge.

Selection for the Nomads events, and the group for the Sun City event, is first and foremost based on the SAGDB Performance Ranking. The balance of the spots for the unique opportunity to compete at national level against the top ranked juniors in South Africa and gain experience is then extended to players who have shown promise across the 14 unions. In 2022, the SAGDB achieved three top 20 finishes, including Timothy Daniels from Boland (6th), Lyle Pedro from Northern Cape (8th) and Vuyisani Makama (T-16th) from the group of 20 that teed it up at the Gary Player Country Club.

*Other outstanding performers in 2022 included:*

Timothy Daniels from Boland (T-3 Nomads SA Junior International; T-5 SA High Schools Championship Individual Competition; T-9 in the Nomads SA Boys U-19 Championship)  
Devon Valentine from Eastern Province (T-1 SA High Schools Championship Individual Competition)  
Johndre Ludick from Eastern Province (T-4 Nomads SA U-15 Championship)  
Astin Wade from KwaZulu-Natal (T-3 Nomads Pawpa Sewgolum Cup)  
Jaydon Galant from Western Province (T-6 Nomads Gowrie Farm U-15 Challenge)  
Tristan Galant from Western Province (T-6 Nomads Gowrie Farm U-15 Challenge)

Seven SAGDB members represented Boland, Border, Eastern Province, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga in the 2022 SA Country Districts IPT, while Hilmi Mallick from Western Province and Ekurhuleni's Sean Tsipa also competed in the 2022 Challenge IPT.

Incidentally, three SAGDB coaches also competed in the SA Country Districts, namely Ben Jonas (Border), Andries Kori (Northern Cape) and Johnny Ludick (Eastern Province).

The SAGDB enjoyed a record representation in the SA Premier and SA Under-19 Inter-Provincial tournaments.

A total of 10 learners competed in the SA Premier IPT (3 in the A-Section and seven in the B-Section), and 21 competed in the SA U-19 IPT (9 in the A-Section and 12 in the B-Section).

Border's team featured four SAGDB members who all contributed the team's promotion, with Devon Valentine sharing in the MVP honours on 9.5 points with 5 players. Team-mate Johndre Ludick tied for eighth on 8 points. GolfRSA and the unions split the costs incurred by SAGDB learners selected for provincial teams.

Through an agreement negotiated by GolfRSA, the SAGDB used the National Junior Development Centre in Malelane to conduct a national squad camp. This is the same facility used by GolfRSA for its national squad camps.

Vuyisani Makama and Johndre Ludick was inducted into the GolfRSA National Squad Class of 2022, following in the footsteps of Cole Stevens, Kieron van Wyk, Rory Nkosi, Keelan van Wyk, Franklin Manchest, Steven le Roux, Carl Mwale and Banele Mavuso.

### **GOLFRSA CLUB STAFF TRAINING PROGRAMME**

The GolfRSA Training Programme, funded by the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, was launched in July 2021 in partnership with the Club Management Association of South Africa (CMASA).

These learning programmes are specifically aimed at upskilling golf industry members. CMASA conducted the courses over the last six months of 2021, with the sessions continuing in 2022.

<b>2022</b>		
<b>Webinar - Focused at Management</b>	<b>Total Attendees</b>	<b>Total Clubs</b>
<b>MID Online Bursaries</b>	<b>8</b>	-
Supervisory Training	82	<b>31</b>
Emotional Intelligence	49	<b>14</b>
Golf R&A Level 1	34	<b>19</b>
Business Principles	41	<b>28</b>
The Indispensable Employee	26	<b>18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>110</b>

### **PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT**

In 2021, GolfRSA undertook a dynamic process to ensure Protection of Personal Information Act ("POPIA") compliance across amateur golf within South Africa.

Having performed an in-depth risk review and having vigorously tested the IT systems of HNA and its technology partner Azapi to ensure that the golf industry is in solid compliance position with the act, GolfRSA rolled out the necessary compliance processes for all unions and golf clubs to follow to meet the deadline of 1 July 2021, the date of full implementation of POPIA. All clubs met the deadline and are operating in accordance with our compliance procedures.

### **COURSE RATINGS AND HANDICAP REVIEW (2022/01/01 - 2022/12/31)**

#### **WORLD HANDICAP SYSTEM (WHS)**

GolfRSA implemented the WHS on the 1 January 2020. The major changes are listed below:

- Course Rating & Slope Rating System
- Handicap Index (HI) is based on the average of the best 8 of the last 20 scores
- Maximum Score Rule (Net Double Bogey)
- A players Low HI is recorded for the previous rolling 12 months
  - Soft Cap: A players HI is restricted from moving up by 50% of the increase over 3 strokes
  - Hard Cap: A players HI is capped at no more than 5 strokes higher than their Low HI over the last 12 months
- Differential Calculation (Adjusted Gross Score – CR) x 113/SR
- Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) - Calculated overnight and may adjust the Course Rating (CR) off the Tee by -1 to +3 strokes, depending on adverse weather conditions and course setup
- Exceptional Score:
  - If a players score differential is between 7 shots and 9.9 shots lower than their HI, then their HI will be reduced by 1 shot
  - If their score differential is 10 shots or more below their HI, then their HI will be reduced by 2 shots

## **COURSE RE-RATING PROCESS IN 2022**

All courses implemented Course Ratings & Slope Ratings on 3 September 2018.

We are currently in re-rating phase 1 and have re-rated 49% of the 439 active golf courses in South Africa. Goal is to have the remaining golf courses re-rated by the end of 2024.

- Courses re-rated in 2022: **90**
- Courses that implemented updated Course Ratings and Slope Ratings in 2022: **67**
- Par 3 Courses rated in 2022: **12**

## **ADJUSTMENT TO THE PCC ALGORITHM**

*Implemented – 1 November 2022*

A review was completed by the WHS operations committee and an adjustment to the Playing Conditions Calculation (PCC) was approved. The decision was based on an analysis of scoring data provided from 24 countries around the world, which indicated that the current PCC algorithm is too conservative.

In conclusion, the PCC was not being triggered enough during adverse weather conditions and daily course setup and the adjustment resulted in the PCC being more sensitive.

## **MEDIA FEEDBACK**

With the traditional print landscape shifting its focus heavily to the ‘big sports’ including football, rugby and cricket, with tennis and Formula 1 getting secondary coverage in the last three years, it has become increasingly difficult for sports at amateur level to secure unsolicited coverage.

Social media platforms have become a dominant form of digital marketing for these sports - a fantastic lifeline to leverage the power of popular social media networks to achieve their marketing and branding goals.

Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, GolfRSA consciously challenged more resources and time to use social media as a marketing tool to increase our footprint and build our brand.

Social media is fluid; things are always evolving, and trends change. You must constantly adapt your strategy, and content to keep existing followers engaged and attract new followers. The marketing and public relations industry uses followers and engagement to gauge the success of social media accounts and we are proud that we are maintaining an upward trajectory on all our platforms.

In 2022, our following increased, our engagement was constantly in the excellent zone, and we received just 2% negative comments, which was due to live scoring going down during the SA Amateur Championship and SA Premier Inter-Provincial as a result of loadshedding.

### ***Below is a short breakdown of our growth and engagement.***

*(Note - fewer than 1% of followers engaging is considered a low engagement rate, average is between 1% - 3.5%, high engagement between 3.5% - 6% and over 6% followers engaging is excellent.)*

#### **FACEBOOK**

The SAGA and WGSA accounts were amalgamated under @Golf RSA banner in 2016 with an initial following of 1 970. In December 2021 we broke the 5 500 barrier. At the end of 2022 we broke the 13 000 mark.

Our average post engagement is 6.9% and page engagement is 8.9%.

#### **TWITTER**

Launched in 2016, Twitter was a tough nut to crack as the audience on this channel is very different to those on Facebook and Instagram. After a very slow take off period, @GolfRSA showed impressive growth in the period 1 January to 31 December 2022, growing from 371 to 3899.

Our engagement on this channel averages 9.8%.

#### **INSTAGRAM**

Launched November 2018, our youngest account has blossomed.

After a slow start, @golfrsa broke the 2000 mark at the end of 2021 and by adapting our strategy, we reached 5 500 followers a year later.

Our engagement averages 7.52%, and moreover it is very encouraging that our posts elicit an average of 1.5k messages or comments per month, which underlines the engagement potential of this channel.

## **R&A RELATIONSHIP**

We have always had a good relationship with the R&A and this has grown and strengthened over the last two years. The use of video conference technology during Covid-19 has made this form of

communication an accepted and recognised tool. As a result, we have represented South Africa on a number of R&A hosted video panel discussions with various countries. These sessions allow us to share our knowledge and practices as well as giving us the opportunity to learn from what other countries are doing.

In addition to this, the R&A has generously given funding to GolfRSA for various projects to grow the game in South Africa. Examples of these projects are GolfSixes, Women in Golf programmes, a national booking platform and a program to bring social golfers under the umbrella of GolfRSA. Now that we have exited the restrictions of the pandemic, we look forward to developing and implementing these projects. We are grateful for the support and guidance of the R&A.

### **CONCLUSION**

We remain indebted to all of our partners and sponsors throughout the golf industry in South Africa and we are grateful for the positive working relationships with golfers, clubs, unions, academies, coaches and fellow golfing organisations that assist us to perform our role as the governing body for amateur golf in South Africa to a high standard. We greatly appreciate the role that our GolfRSA Board plays, as well as the National Executive of the SAGA and WGS, all of whom are volunteers. We thank all of you for your time and dedication to golf.

Yours Sincerely



Grant Hepburn  
**Chief Executive Officer**