



Developing Golf.

Sharing best practice for the benefit of the sport

VOL 3, ISSUE
Five



GolfRSA is championing female leaders and creating opportunities

“This spirit of collaboration is helping to accelerate progress globally”

– Jackie Davidson,
The R&A's Director of Golf Education

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About Developing Golf magazine

Developing Golf magazine is a key element of the golf development alliance we are creating with affiliates globally to share best practice. This alliance also includes a new R&A Portal, increased funding support and consulting with affiliates on the ground across the year to develop the strongest activation plans, supported by R&A-created global assets.

Promoting golf's health and wellbeing benefits at the AIG Women's Open.

From step count challenges to community activations, the Championship demonstrated how golf can inspire healthier lifestyles

The AIG Women's Open provided a showcase for how major events can be used as a platform to promote the many health and wellbeing benefits of golf.

Wales, which piloted the Golf is Good campaign in 2022, played host for the first time as Royal Porthcawl set the stage for the largest women's sporting event in the nation's history.

While the world-class field provided the entertainment on the course, there were a number of targeted initiatives off it that highlighted the established link between golf and health.

Dr Andrew Murray, University of Edinburgh

researcher and Medical and Scientific Advisor for The R&A, was thrilled to see how the event helped to amplify such an important message.

"What was fantastic about the AIG Women's Open is that the Welsh Government, Wales Golf, The R&A and others pulled together best practice regarding maximising health through golf events and put it in place at the event," he said. "This included sharing key messages about the health benefits of golf on site, in social media and through players, providing opportunities for all on site to try golf, having step count challenges in the local community and much more.



'A lasting legacy'

"Wales Golf was determined to ensure there is a lasting legacy from hosting the AIG Women's Open, with almost a billion steps taken by golfers on courses around Wales in the month leading up to it," said Wales Golf CEO Hannah McAllister.

"Wales Golf launched the 2025 Steps Challenge, with the support of The R&A, to drive grassroots engagement in the sport.

"It meant logging the steps taken by golfers in Wales in July building up to the AIG Women's Open - the biggest female sporting event ever held in Wales - and the results were fantastic.

"There were a total of 92,370 rounds of golf played at participating clubs, an 8% increase from the same period in the previous year.

"Cottrell Park, outside Cardiff, was the club with the most steps, including a thriving junior section and women's beginner programme.

"On average, golfers playing nine holes will walk 5,000 steps and 10,000 steps over 18 holes, meaning a staggering 876,235,000 steps taken by Welsh golfers in July.

"There was also a 22% increase in the rounds played by girls in Wales, along with a 9% increase in the number of rounds played by women."



"The evidence is consistent and growing that playing golf helps wellbeing, physical health and even length of life.

"Our research from the University of Edinburgh also shows that golf spectators not only get to watch world-class sport but also gain health benefits through an average of 11,500 steps, green space and social connections, meaning there are many reasons to attend golf events as well as play the sport."

Spectators at Royal Porthcawl were reminded of the benefits of walking the course, children and families had the chance to try golf and the wider Welsh public became involved through community step challenges and club-based programmes.

During the month of the Championship, more than 92,000 rounds of golf were played at participating clubs in Wales, an 8% increase on the previous year. Notably, participation among girls rose by 22%.

At the same time, The R&A and partners delivered practical on-site measures. CPR training was offered to staff and contractors, skin screening and education was made available to players and caddies and best-in-class performance and recovery facilities were provided for competitors, ensuring the championship lived up to its reputation as a leader in player welfare.

This joined-up vision has also been recognised by global health leaders.

Professor Fiona Bull, head of physical activity and programme manager for non-communicable disease prevention at the World Health Organization (WHO), experienced first-

- **Health promotion through players** – clips featuring Georgia Hall, Charley Hull and Darcey Harry shared via Welsh Government channels
- **Ministerial support** – First Minister of Wales and Mental Health Minister Sarah Murphy highlighted golf's health role during official visits
- **Key messages on site** – 'Did you know?' collateral across social media, message boards and briefings
- **Spectator benefits** – average 11,000+ steps per day recorded while watching golf
- **Community step challenge** – participants logged over 876 million steps, equivalent to circling the globe 17 times
- **Participation boost** – 92,370 rounds played in July (+8% year-on-year); girls' participation up 22%, women's up 9%
- **On-site wellbeing** – CPR training, skin screening and performance facilities for players and staff
- **Youth engagement** – schools and community groups invited to attend and try golf
- **Ongoing resources** – continued promotion of Golf and Health research via Golf Wales and The R&A



hand how golf can provide accessible pathways into physical activity.

"Golf is a popular sport for men and women and it's great to see golf's global leadership recognising health priorities and identifying ways golf can be more accessible to more people," she said.

"Thankfully, a six-week come-and-try course showed me how easy it was to enjoy golf as a beginner and how active playing nine holes can be.

"I'm looking forward to seeing how golf can attract many more girls and women to enjoy the sport and be more active and healthier."

Research has shown golf can deliver health-enhancing levels of physical activity, meet WHO guidelines across multiple domains – including aerobic fitness, strength, balance and mobility – and contribute to longer, healthier lives.

Crucially, these benefits are accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. ●



SUNSCREEN

PROTECT YOUR SKIN AGAINST SKIN CANCER

- APPLY SUNSCREEN EVERY 2 HOURS
- APPLY SUNSCREEN TO EXPOSED AREA: FACE, NECK, YOUR NOSE, EARS, LIPS, HEAD, BACK OF LEGS AND FEET
- USE SUNSCREEN SPF 30 OR GREATER

EARLY DETECTION

- EXAMINE YOUR SKIN REGULARLY AND GET ANY NEW OR CHANGING SKIN BLEMISHES CHECKED OUT
- BE AWARE OF DARKENING COLOUR, IRREGULARITY, BLEEDING OR BLEMISHES NOT HEALING
- IF IN DOUBT - GET IT CHECKED OUT



“The evidence is consistent and growing that playing golf helps wellbeing, physical health and even length of life”

- On average, golfers live five years longer than non-golfers
- Golf can help prevent and treat 40 major chronic diseases
- Golf can help strength and balance, improve quality of life and provide aerobic exercise
- On a regular 18-hole course, most players will walk between four and five miles, burning up to 2,000 calories
- If you play golf for at least 150 minutes per week you are meeting WHO global exercise guidelines
- Spectators walk between 5-6 miles on average and burn more than 1,000 extra calories per day

Facilities and formats in the spotlight at Best Practice Exchange.

The event brought together a host of tier one federations to highlight initiatives that have proven successful

Innovative approaches to facilities and formats were at the heart of discussions during the Best Practice Exchange at this year's Open.

Held each year during golf's original championship, the initiative brings together national federation leaders, including CEOs, general secretaries and board members, for discussions and sharing of ideas on a key theme.

At Royal Portrush, a host of tier one federations gathered to discuss projects designed to broaden the spectrum of ways to engage with the sport and the locations it can be played.

Examples included England Golf's pioneering decision to affiliate off-course venues such as simulator centres and driving ranges, building stronger connections between these facilities and traditional clubs.

France showcased its Urban Golf initiative, which has delivered nine-hole par-3 courses in city locations and proved particularly attractive to young people and beginners. Canada outlined a simple nine-hole league structure, which has been effective in encouraging regular play.

The exchange also looked beyond golf for

inspiration, with The England and Wales Cricket Board presenting on the success of T20 cricket and how innovative formats can engage new audiences while still respecting tradition.

For Jackie Davidson, The R&A's director of golf education, the value of providing this platform lies in creating a culture of collaboration.

"The purpose of the Best Practice Exchange is to bring federations together, give them the space to share what they are doing, and create opportunities to collaborate," she explained.

"By doing so, federations can avoid working in

isolation and instead achieve shared objectives by learning from and building on the best practice of others.

"Having these conversations, sharing what works well and what does not, empowers all involved to contribute to the common goal of ensuring golf continues to thrive."

While the in-person exchange is primarily designed for tier one federations, smaller federations from tiers two to five benefit through online workshops and webinars held throughout the year.





Case Study

England Golf

England Golf showcased its initiative to affiliate alternative facilities, from adventure golf venues to driving ranges and simulator centres, as part of its wider drive to make the game more inclusive.

The move was made possible by a change to the organisation's constitution, enabling off-course venues to connect formally with the governing body.

Affiliation brings practical benefits, including safeguarding and EDI support, listing on the Find and Play platform, access to national participation programmes and the option of course-rating services for short courses.

Year one saw 70 facilities sign up, including 31 simulator sites, 13 golf complexes and seven adventure golf venues. With 464 such venues identified across England, the aim is to more than double the number of affiliates by the end of year two.

However, success will not just be measured in numbers but in the strengthening of the broader golf ecosystem, of which all facilities are now being made to feel a part.

Richard Flint, England Golf's chief operating officer, said, "We want to make the game more inclusive. Wherever you play your golf, we want you to be able to call yourself a golfer. Whether it's crazy golf, a driving range or a simulator, the growth in those areas has been significant. This is about broadening our reach and creating pathways into the game."

For more traditional venues, the programme is framed as a complement, not a competitor, providing practice options, introducing under-represented groups and ensuring golf remains sustainable by widening the availability of entry points into the sport.

“This spirit of collaboration is helping to accelerate progress globally”

Case Study

Golf Canada

Golf Canada launched the National Golf League (NGL) in 2022 to connect the many independent club leagues across the country into a unified structure.

Leagues designate a small number of weekly matches as NGL fixtures, with scores feeding into regional playoffs and culminating in a national championship staged at the RBC Canadian Open.

Garrett Ball, Golf Canada's chief operating officer, explained, "We recognised there were groups of golfers playing in leagues that we had no connection to. By providing a national league product, we've been able to engage those unaffiliated players while also adding value for existing members. In essence, we've created a national league that anyone can compete in, regardless of whether you're a plus one or a 31 handicap."

The format has clear appeal. In year one, Golf Canada exceeded its target of 100 leagues, signing up 107. By year three, that number had grown to nearly 140, representing around 10% of Canada's 1,500 member clubs. Regional qualifiers compete at the NGL National Championship at the following year's RBC Canadian Open. Winners from small and remote provinces have advanced to the finals, enjoying an experience on a par with the pros, complete with caddies.

Ball added, "It's created an additional layer for the recreational golfer to engage with our organisation, and the feedback from players has been phenomenal."

The initiative is part of a broader push to drive participation, and it is clearly working – Canada now boasts 5.8 million players, including 168,000 new participants in 2024 alone, and over 70 million rounds played.

The NGL not only connects golfers nationally but also contributes to charitable causes such as First Tee Canada, helping open accessible and inclusive pathways for young people.

For other federations, the model demonstrates how a simple league framework can transform casual play into connected competition on a national scale.



The session at The Open serves as a catalyst for these discussions, with relationships formed in the room continuing long after the Championship, and Davidson believes that peer-to-peer learning is crucial to the sport's growth.

"What is powerful about the exchange is not just the presentations themselves, but the connections that follow," she said. "If a federation sees an idea that could work in their country, they can pick up the phone and speak directly to the person who has already tested it. This spirit of collaboration is helping to accelerate progress globally."

By combining golf-specific insights with lessons from other sports, the Best Practice Exchange is strengthening the game's development framework, ensuring federations can learn from one another and respond to the evolving needs of golfers worldwide. ●



Building a sustainable development pathway in Mauritius.

“Equipment is expensive in Mauritius, but without it, many children cannot take the next step”

Golf4All Project 2.0 is breaking barriers in Mauritius, bringing golf to schools and communities while creating pathways from grassroots to national representation

Golf in Mauritius has long been seen as a sport reserved for tourists and the wealthy, with nearly all courses privately owned and inaccessible to ordinary citizens.

But through the Golf4All programme, led by coordinator Balah Chinnaya, that perception is beginning to change.

“Golf is not that widespread in Mauritius,” Chinnaya explained. “Most courses are private, aimed at tourists, and beyond the reach of ordinary Mauritians, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds.”

The original Golf4All initiative successfully introduced golf to children using football fields, hard surfaces and portable putting mats but lacked a long-term pathway for progression. Recognising this, the Mauritius Golf Federation, with support from The R&A, has evolved the programme into Golf4All 2.0: Pathway to Team Mauritius – a structured grassroots-to-elite framework that aims not only to democratise the game but also to nurture talent for national representation.



The revamped model includes:

- A Train the Trainers programme (2023), where 20 volunteers received PGA-certified instruction to deliver higher-quality coaching
- The launch of the first Mauritius Golf Federation Academy in 2024 in partnership with TIGA, offering subsidised coaching for children from the age of six
- Plans for a second academy to expand access
- Stronger collaboration with affiliated clubs, schools, sponsors and ministries to create sustainable development pathways

The numbers are encouraging. The programme began in 2022 with 333 children introduced to the sport. In 2023, 338 more followed, while in 2024 over 360 youngsters – with a 60-40 split between boys and girls – discovered golf through schools and vacation camps. In just three years, over 700 Mauritian children have been introduced to the sport, many of them from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Some of these children have already progressed to established golf academies, begun competing and are chasing handicaps. Others are laying the foundations for what could one day be a Mauritian national golf team.

“It’s a long process, but we are patient,” Chinnayya said. “If one day we can produce a Tiger Woods of Mauritius, it will be a great feat.”

For Chinnayya and his team, success lies as much in creating pathways to career opportunities as in developing top-level golfers.

“If kids can learn what golf is, that’s one more sport, one more skill,” he said. “It can open doors in the tourist industry – as caddies, caddie masters or even coaches. Right now, Mauritius has practically no professional or experienced caddies.”

While a handful of PGA-qualified players, such as Pierre Pellegrin and Dil Thomas, have emerged, they have not come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Golf4All 2.0 is determined to change that by creating chances for children from communities that have traditionally been excluded.

The challenges remain significant, notably the lack of public facilities and the high cost of equipment. But Golf4All 2.0 is tackling these barriers head-on by supplying free equipment, defraying volunteer expenses to encourage retention and keeping academy fees subsidised to ensure accessibility.

“We need plenty of equipment, especially junior golf sets,” Chinnayya stressed. “Even used sets would be most welcome. Equipment is expensive, but without it, many children cannot take the next step from introduction to real training.”

With continued support from The R&A, the Mauritius Golf Federation and its committed pool of volunteers, Golf4All 2.0 is laying the groundwork for a lasting legacy.

Chinnayya concluded, “Our primary aim is to democratise and promote golf in Mauritius, and we are very happy with the progress so far.” ●



Driving women's leadership in South African golf.

GolfRSA is championing female leaders, opening doors and creating opportunities across the sport

L-R - Roxanne Reeves (SA facilitator),
 Anne Vermaak (SA facilitator),
 Alice Rwigema (Africa facilitator),
 Thoko Malaba (SA facilitator),
 Jordan De La Harpe (SA facilitator),
 Alison Townson (R&A facilitator),

The Women in Golf Leadership Foundation Programme is equipping South African women with the skills and confidence to excel in key roles within the sport.

GolfRSA, working in partnership with the Club Management Association of Southern Africa (CMASA) and with the support of The R&A, launched the initiative in June as part of a wider drive to increase diversity and inclusion.

The six-month programme offers guided learning via the Hemsley Fraser Digital Hub, seven virtual three-hour workshops, and five one-hour coaching sessions. Core modules include Growth Mindset, Leader vs Manager, Emotional Intelligence, Resilience and Effective Communication, matching The R&A's international version while being adapted to the South African context.

"As a Women in Golf Charter signatory, we've always had the opportunity to send women to The R&A's central Women in Golf Leadership Foundation Programme," explained GolfRSA's Operations Manager, Anne Vermaak. "But places are limited each year as they have to cover the whole world. About two years ago, Jackie Davidson approached us about hosting our own programme in South Africa and we jumped at the chance.

"We've partnered with CMASA to help deliver

'A strong and supportive network'

"As part of the first alumni group, we hope this programme creates a clear and inspiring pathway for other women in the industry to aspire to join our vision that it becomes a recognised platform for leadership development – one that continues to grow and evolve with each intake and then beyond the programme itself. We hope to build a strong and supportive network of women and girls, a space where they can connect, share experiences and feel empowered by fostering ongoing engagements and collaboration. We believe this initiative can help share a more inclusive and dynamic future for the industry."

– Roxanne Reeves, CEO of CMASA

Janyne Marais on driving the Women in Golf Charter

GolfRSA's Women in Golf Charter work is gaining fresh momentum under the leadership of Janyne Marais, who took on the role of Ambassador for the initiative in May 2025. Building on a foundation of seven original signatories, including GolfRSA, the Sunshine Ladies Tour and the PGA of South Africa, Marais – a former general manager – is driving a nationwide effort to engage unions, clubs and associations in golf, to sign up and live the Charter's principles.

"My role is to gather resources, with support from The R&A, then approach unions, who in turn will encourage their clubs to become signatories and come on the journey with us," she explained. "I'll also engage directly with clubs. We have invited Bryanston Country Club to be the pioneering case study, as the first club in South Africa to sign the Charter, and lead by example, and meetings are planned with other clubs and business associations.

"The first port of call are the clubs and associations that have participants on the programme, as they have already shown their commitment to the Charter by investing in their employees and being part of the cultural change.

"The aim is to benchmark current activity, highlight the great work already happening and build from there with continuous communication and engagement. My conversations with unions and clubs have been very positive.

"An important part of the Charter is the Charter Champion – someone within the club to lead on it. They don't have to be female; in fact, having male champions can be powerful in showing support and advocacy."



the programme. They also see the opportunity to empower women across the industry, build leadership potential, develop networks and provide tools. Investing in women is investing in the future of our industry.

"It is already a proven programme internationally, and now we can adapt it to our own context and make it accessible to those who might not otherwise have been able to take part."

Participants across two cohorts work with trained local facilitators, senior women within the golf and tertiary education industry, including Vermaak herself.

"Because we have our own facilitators, if we want to run one cohort or two cohorts in the year, we could offer it to more people," Vermaak explained. "It's in our control, which is so great. We've been able to make it ours without losing the high standards The R&A set."

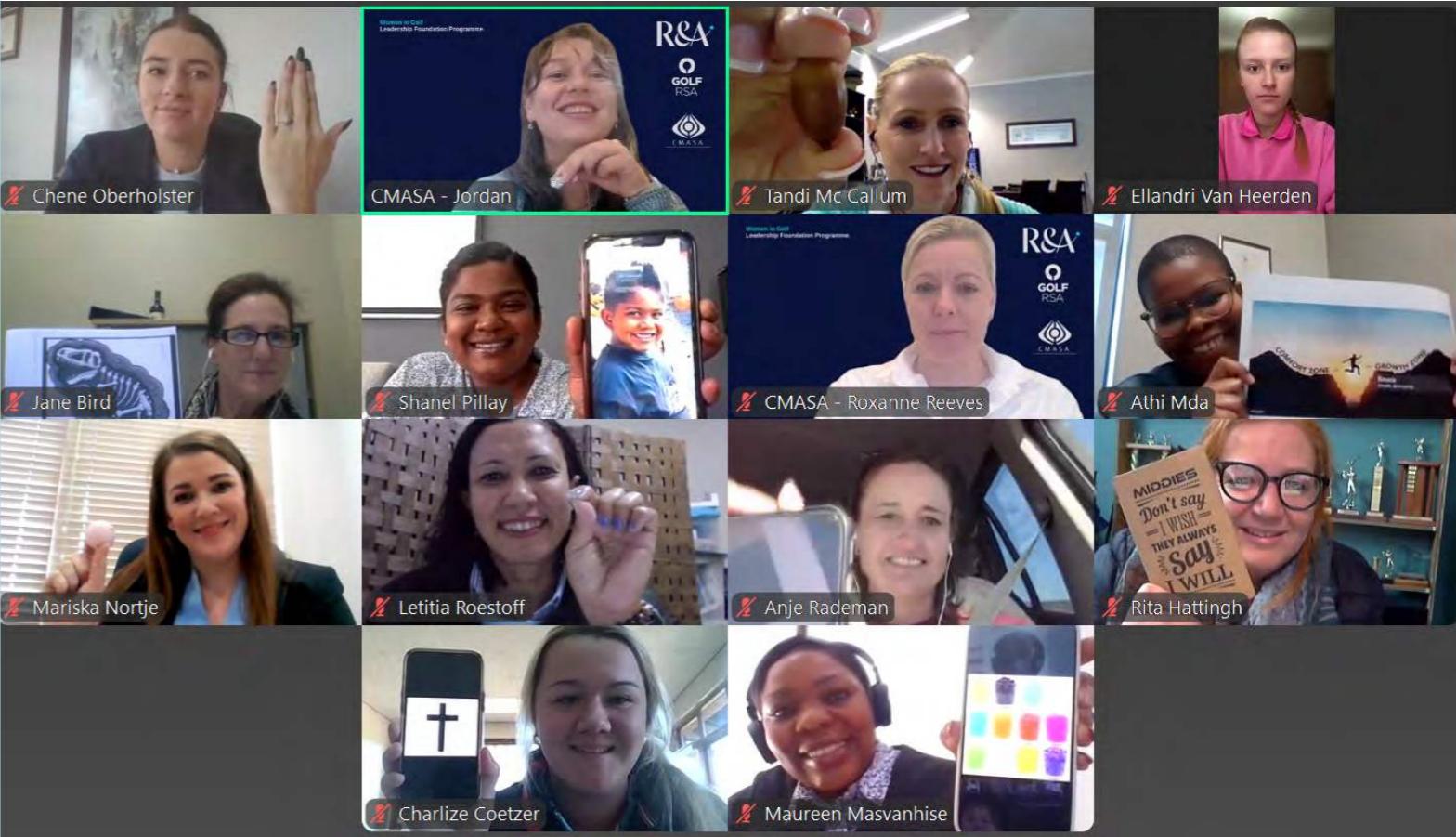
Graduates of the global programme have reported impressive outcomes. More than 300 women have completed it to date, with over 75% securing promotions afterwards. Vermaak hopes to replicate that success, with added benefits to be gained from the networking opportunities.

"It's not just about the content," she said. "It's





“Investing in women is investing in the future of our industry”



about the conversations, the shared challenges, and the sense of belonging to something bigger. The women learn from each other as much as from the facilitators."

Commitment from clubs and organisations

Entry requirements also encourage commitment from participants' organisations, ensuring the programme is not just an individual journey but a shared investment in leadership development. Applicants must secure a letter of support from their line manager and governing body, guaranteeing they will have the necessary time and flexibility to complete the course.

This requirement, Vermaak explained, is vital in creating an environment where participants can apply what they learn in real time.

"That means their club or organisation is invested in their development from day one," she said. "It also fosters accountability as managers know what their staff are working on and can actively help them put it into practice."

It is a safeguard against one of the most common barriers for women in sport leadership: being given training opportunities without the structural backing to implement change. By embedding organisational commitment from

the outset, GolfRSA hopes to create a culture where the programme's lessons take root in club operations, committee rooms and governance structures.

Ambition with a long-term vision

GolfRSA's ambitions for the programme are clear, but they go beyond just numbers. Vermaak wants to see at least 50 to 60% of participants taking on more responsibility within 24 months of graduating, whether through promotions, expanded portfolios or leadership roles on committees and boards.

The programme is also designed as a stepping stone into the more intensive, year-long Women in Golf Leadership Programme offered internationally.

"We see this as a pipeline," Vermaak said. "If we can prepare women through the Foundation Programme, we'll have candidates who are ready to thrive at the next level. And ultimately, we'd like to bring that full programme to South Africa too."

This vision is underpinned by a wider shift in women's participation in the game. Female affiliated golfers have risen from roughly 13,500 in 2021 to nearly 16,500 in 2024. Representation



is growing in governance too, with female presidents and vice-presidents now in place at union and club level, and two of GolfRSA's three C-suite positions will be held by women.

A model attracting outside interest

Interest is coming from outside the sport as well, showing the programme's appeal as a model for leadership development beyond golf. Other sports federations have approached GolfRSA to learn how it is being delivered and whether the structure could be replicated in their own environments.

The combination of internationally recognised content, locally trained facilitators and embedded organisational support is proving attractive to those seeking sustainable, inclusive leadership pathways.

"We've already had enquiries from other sports about how we're delivering this," Vermaak said. "It shows that what we're doing here can have a ripple effect well beyond our own industry."

Ultimately, it is hoped the programme will strengthen the leadership ecosystem in South Africa as more women acquire the skills to help drive the sport forward. ●

Testimonials

“ This programme has opened my eyes to new ways of thinking, helping me grow both personally and professionally as I work towards becoming a stronger, more confident leader in the golf industry. Learning from other inspiring female professionals in the industry has been an amazing and invaluable experience. ”

- **Kelly Burger, The Sunshine Tour**

“ I've had the privilege of participating in the Women in Golf Leadership Foundation Programme, which has been a transformative experience. The programme has reinforced the importance of my voice, the value of my contributions and the strength that comes from knowledge. Through this journey, I have experienced both personal and professional growth, and I am grateful for the positive impact it has had on me. The network of women I have connected with is truly inspiring. This programme has highlighted the reality that many women in the golf industry often feel undervalued, yet it has also empowered us to recognise our worth, trust our decisions and believe in our abilities. ”

- **Xanthe Gibson, Helderberg Village Golf Club**

“ The programme made me realise that only I can change. I firmly believe and know that I will/am growing from the Women in Golf Leadership Foundation Programme, am better equipped to use the skills I have discovered, and I am confident this will lead to a more rewarding career path – not only for myself, but for others I can inspire out there. ”

- **Nekisha Johnson, Clovelly Country Club**

“ As I continue my journey in the Women in Golf Leadership Foundation Programme, each session deepens my understanding of leadership. I'm learning to embrace challenges as opportunities for growth. ”

- **Elnari Lategan, Paarl Golf Club**

“ Through the Women in Golf Leadership Foundation Programme, I aimed to explore new knowledge and discover how to leverage it in the workplace. The programme has inspired me to take initiative beyond my work scope, contributing to the organisation's financial reporting. I've learned to distinguish when to lead and when to manage, and I've grown more confident in sharing my thoughts in formal settings. This experience has highlighted the importance of continuously refining emotional intelligence, both professionally and personally. Most importantly, engaging with diverse women on the platform has encouraged me to set bold, ambitious goals without fear. ”

- **Zimasa Nyangule, The River Club**

The Young Audience Programme.

Engaging young people through smarter digital storytelling



Reaching younger audiences online can feel like a daunting task, with an array of platforms and content formats to navigate.

The Young Audience Programme aims to change that, offering an affordable, practical way for affiliates to build expertise, confidence and long-term strategies for digital engagement.

Delivered in partnership with Lucky Socks Media, the initiative provides participating federations with structured learning and tailored consultancy. Over six to eight months, they attend a series of webinars covering topics such as audience understanding, content strategy, storytelling and safeguarding.

By the end, participants will have a comprehensive youth engagement plan, with measurable KPIs focussed on growing reach, social media presence and creating a strategic framework for future youth-focussed efforts.

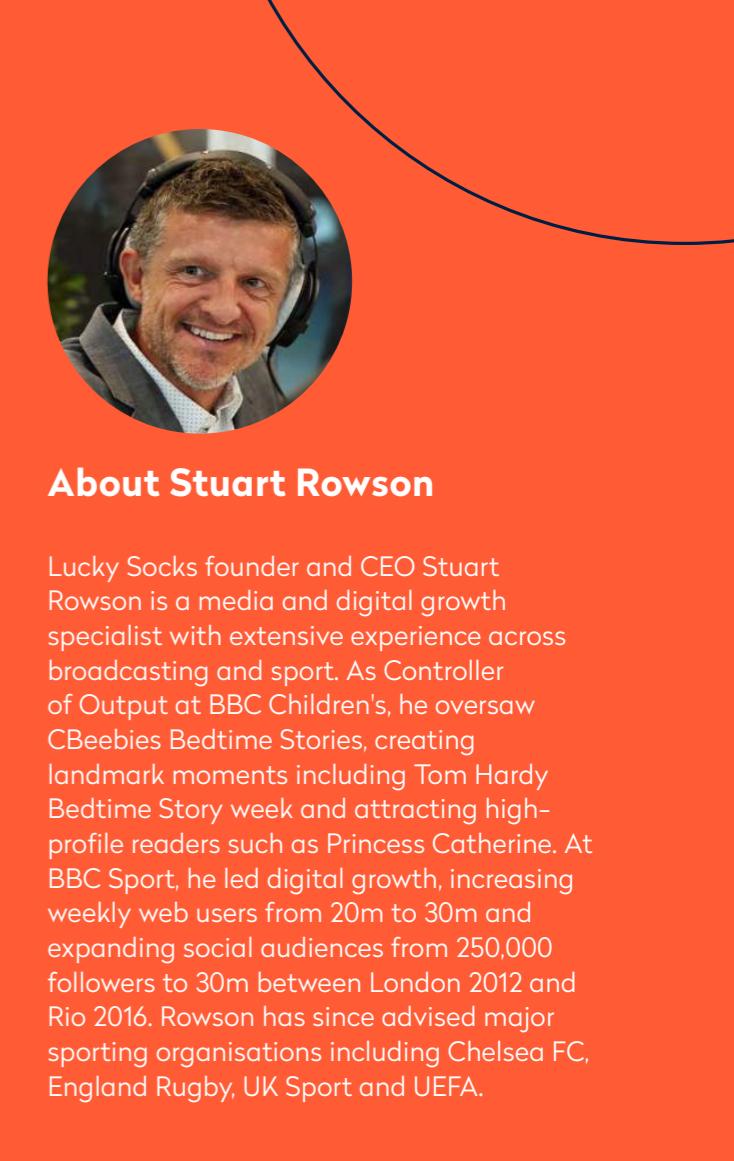
Lucky Socks CEO Stuart Rowson says the programme addresses a common knowledge gap, helping organisations get their online offering for youngsters right.

"Across sport, there just isn't enough knowledge about why younger audiences are different and exactly what they need," he said. "A lot of what's produced is still aimed at adults. The Young Audience Programme gives federations the insight and tools to change that."

Each organisation sets its own objectives, supported by ongoing consultancy time with Rowson and his team.

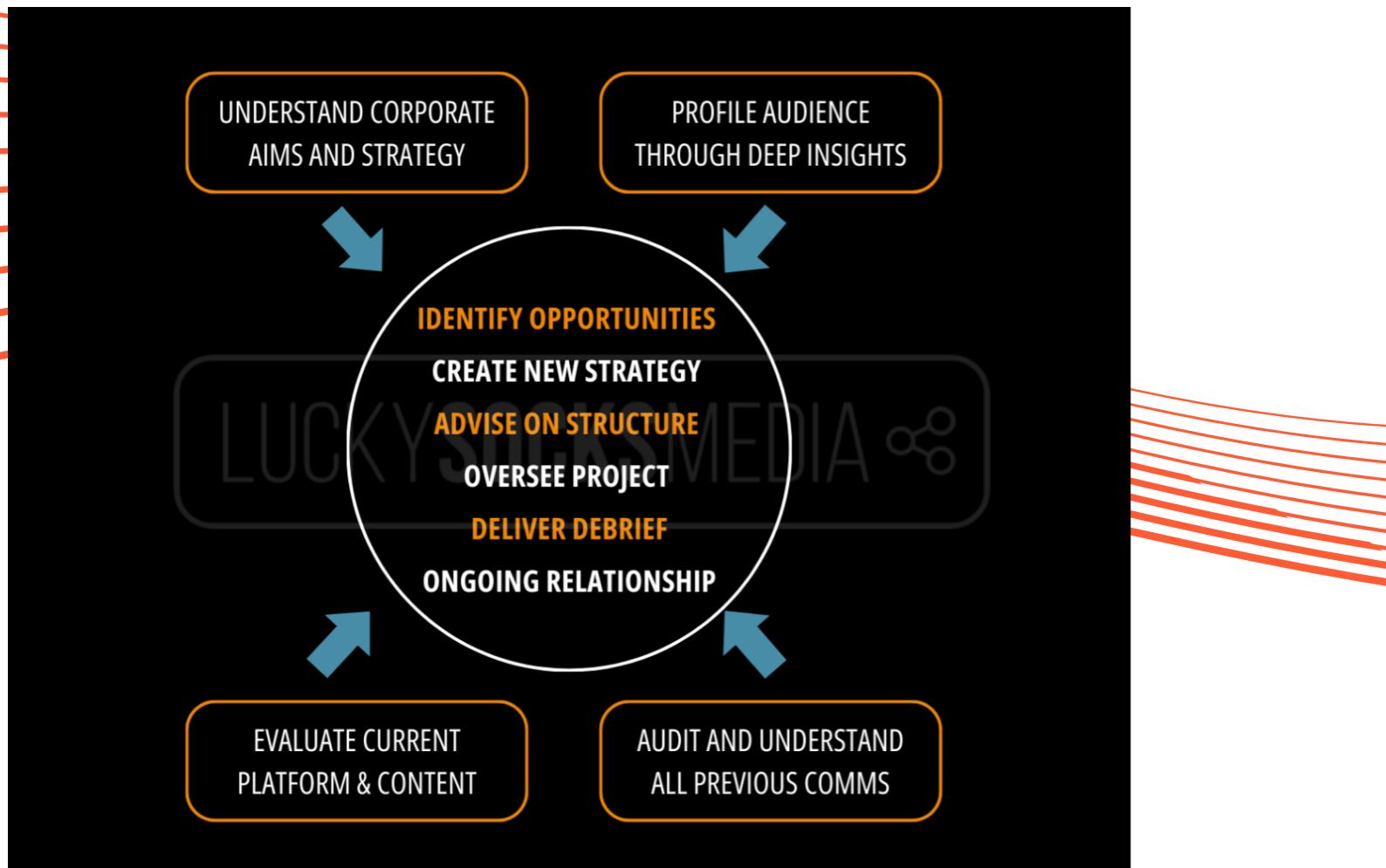
"Some might be looking to grow reach on TikTok or run campaigns around specific events,"

“It's about setting achievable goals and a framework that lasts beyond the programme”



About Stuart Rowson

Lucky Socks founder and CEO Stuart Rowson is a media and digital growth specialist with extensive experience across broadcasting and sport. As Controller of Output at BBC Children's, he oversaw CBeebies Bedtime Stories, creating landmark moments including Tom Hardy Bedtime Story week and attracting high-profile readers such as Princess Catherine. At BBC Sport, he led digital growth, increasing weekly web users from 20m to 30m and expanding social audiences from 250,000 followers to 30m between London 2012 and Rio 2016. Rowson has since advised major sporting organisations including Chelsea FC, England Rugby, UK Sport and UEFA.



he explained. "Others are starting from scratch and need help setting up their whole youth strategy. It's about setting achievable goals and a framework that lasts beyond the programme."

Rowson, who previously led BBC Sport's digital output and oversaw BBC Children's content, has seen first-hand how quickly media habits shift.

"Even large organisations can struggle to keep up," he conceded. "TikTok's only really been a factor for the last few years, and YouTube Shorts is newer still. Smaller federations can't be expected to have that expertise in-house."

That's where the programme comes in. With one fixed fee covering up to four delegates, it offers what Rowson calls "an affordable way of accessing consultancy and expertise that might otherwise be out of reach".

Beyond the practicalities of platform management, Rowson believes the key lies in rethinking how golf presents itself to younger audiences.

"For me, it's about deconstructing the sport," he explained. "Yes, golf is a game, but it's also about wellbeing, focus, connection with nature and sustainability. Those are themes that really resonate with young people today."

He also encouraged federations to see the value in personalities as well as platforms.

"Young people don't connect with organisations – they connect with people," he said. "Building up young players as authentic, relatable personalities can make the sport far more accessible."

The first pilot cohort has already generated positive feedback, and discussions are under way about a second wave and a potential entry-level programme for smaller federations.

For Rowson, the goal is clear – to give each of the programme's participants the tools to tell their story in a way that resonates with the next generation.

"We're helping organisations move from just being on social media to really understanding how to engage," he concluded. "It's not about chasing trends but building long-term capability and confidence."

Affiliates interested in joining future cohorts of the Young Audience Programme can contact Gavin Forrester or their R&A regional representative for details.

Testimonials

“

Lucky Socks helped the RFU senior team understand and examine exactly why a new approach to youth audiences was so fundamental to the future of the organisation – and as a result we're delivering a new focus to our strategy for the next few years."

Rory Price, Executive Director of Strategy & Transformation, England Rugby

“

Lucky Socks provided exactly what we needed at World Sailing – clarity of thought, strategic expertise and practical advice. All of that came with a straightforward and collaborative approach which felt like they were determined to really understand the needs of the business rather than sell us something off the peg."

Scott Dougal, Director of Marketing and Communications, World Sailing

“

Our work with Lucky Socks Media has given us an amazing amount of knowledge and confidence in developing a strategy that helps us better understand and talk to our younger audiences. Stu Rowson brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record that will help to create a lasting impact across our cycling disciplines."

Anthony Gill, Head of Sport, British Cycling





Contents 

