

SENIOR GOLFERS SOCIETY OF GAUTENG NORTH

Report of the President at the 9th Annual General Meeting held on 15th March, 2017 at the Pretoria Country Club

This last year has been a particularly busy one for our society and I am pleased to report that much has been achieved.

Membership

We currently have 80 Active Members and, in terms of the Mancom decision in 2015, have the potential to increase to a maximum of 90 Active Members. We now have eight Non-Playing Members.

To ensure that our society is as representative as possible of our Gauteng North golfing community in particular and society in general, we developed and published our "New Member Guiding Principles" during the year. We are under no pressure to fill our quota and it is the hope of the committee that, over time, our representation objective will be achieved.

To this end, the committee, at its most recent meeting, decided that until further notice, no further nominations for white players would be accepted and that in 2017, the new committee will make it a focus issue to attract non-white players to our society.

During the year ended December, 2016, nine new members were inducted, three moved from Active to Non-Playing status and we had one resignation. Sadly, Chris Smith passed away on 2nd June 2016, and he is certainly missed by all his Senior friends.

Playing Statistics and golf events

During the year we had 20 golf matches, including two Across the Border matches against our friends in the Senior Golfers Society of Gauteng. In addition, we participated in a quadrangular match in Parys with 3 other Senior societies, Free State, Gauteng and Northern Cape. All told, excluding the quadrangular match, a total of 922 rounds of golf were played, which is very much in line with our turnout in 2015 and our average participation was 60%, a very satisfactory result.

In April, 2016 we fielded a team of 28 players at the Nationals in Port Elizabeth and whilst we did not bring home any silverware, we had some very good performances. The social interactions between our members, particularly on the evening when we all met for a dinner at a local restaurant, were tremendous. The camaraderie and friendships amongst our members was palpable – a tremendous experience.

As our society is represented by eight members in the inter provincial team competition, the committee decided that for the 2017 Nationals in Cape Town, a slightly modified formula for selection of these eight players would be used and hopefully we will be more successful this year. We will have 30 players in total competing this year and we wish them all good luck, good golf and lots of enjoyment.

Congratulations once again to Joachim Mennen, who was a member of a 4-man South African team that participated at Deauville, France and won the overall team competition for South Africa, beating Germany in the finals.

In 2017 we will be testing a new format which we have called "The Iron Man Competition" – somewhat reminiscent of our younger days! In this competition format, no club "longer" than a 3- iron or its equivalent hybrid club will be used. If the format is considered by members to be a success, we hope to have another trophy to compete for during the course of 2017.

Championship and Annual Dinner

We had a tremendous turnout of 59 players for our Championship match at Pretoria Country Club in October, 2016 which was followed that evening by our annual dinner in the Ballroom. Both events were a great success and our Champion for the year was Rinus Van Niekerk, with a gross score of 78.

In the individual Stableford competition, the winner was Paul Laesecke (39 points), runner-up was Paul Van Rooyen (39 points), 3rd and 4th were Steph Ferreira (37 points) and Jan Van der Merwe (37 points) respectively.

The Eclectic competition was won by Brian Richter (58 points), runner-up was Pauli Jenkinson (55 points) and 3rd was Johan Coetzee (54 points).

Congratulations to everyone who received a prize.

Host Club

Our sincere thanks to the Pretoria Country Club for hosting so many of our golf events during the year, our regular committee meetings and our Annual Dinner. We are indeed privileged to be able to play on this fine golf course and use the clubhouse facilities as we do.

Constitution

During the year, having been agreed to by an earlier Special Resolution of the members, the Constitution of our society was amended to make the Pretoria Country Club our permanent home club. In addition, the Constitution was also amended, in terms of a Special Resolution, to reflect the maximum age at the time of acceptance as a member to our society as 70 years (previously 67 years), thus bringing our constitution into line with the national body's constitution.

Summer Dress Code

The issue of a summer dress code had often been discussed informally amongst members and the committee decided to determine, by way of a questionnaire, whether members would be in favour of such a development. The response of 84% of the 75 members who participated in the survey was in favour of a summer dress code, which was duly implemented for the first time in October, 2016. Being extremely conscious of the fact that the Senior's dress code is one of our distinguishing features, the committee decided on a very conservative dress code change, by merely dropping the requirement for a jacket in the designated summer months.

Trophy Cabinet

This project took a little longer than anticipated due to the fact that the Pretoria Country Club very generously offered us the use of one of the cabinets in the Vodacom Room. I am sure that the incoming committee will make it a priority to stock the cabinet in the very near future.

Website

The website was launched on 2nd December, 2016 and it is truly gratifying to see how easily our members have taken to using it. I am sure you will agree that, not only is it very user friendly, it is also full of information, available to all members at the push of a button on either desktop, tablet or smartphone. Thanks and congratulations to all our members.

I would like once again to thank Carine for the huge amount of time and energy that she invested in this project – one that she has every right to be extremely proud of.

At the same time, I would like to thank David Milton, an Active Veteran Senior member of the Southern Cape society for his contribution. Not only was David an immense source of advice, having previously set up websites for seven other Senior societies, he did all the programming for our website at no cost at all to us. We are truly indebted to David for his patience and generosity.

According to David, our website is the “Rolls Royce” of Senior websites, particularly because of the manner in which Carine embraced the undertaking.

Financials

The financial situation of the society is well under control, thanks to Peet du Toit. A fairly significant increase in annual subscriptions was approved by the committee for 2017, as provisions have been made to pay a far more market orientated honorarium to our new administrative secretary who will take over from Carine Oldridge on 1st April, 2017.

Administrative Secretary

Whilst every member of the committee played an important role in the smooth running of our society this past year, I must single out Carine Oldridge for her tireless involvement behind the scenes, thus ensuring that all our golf matches and events have always run like clockwork.

I am sure that you will all agree that when Carine eventually leaves our shores to join the rest of her family in Australia, our loss will be Australia’s gain.

Carine has done an amazing job for our society over many years and words really cannot express the thanks that we all feel for everything that she has so willingly done for us.

I am delighted that Derek Ackermann’s wife, Petra, has agreed to take over from Carine and I know that we all wish her every success in her new role.

Committee

I would like to express my sincere thanks to every member of our committee this last year, namely, Bruce Edwards, Sydney Mpipi, Johann Ströh, Johan Willemse, Harold Teague, Peet du Toit and Jan Van der Merwe. Everyone has given willingly of their time and expertise and it has, in my opinion, made the work of the committee both rewarding and effective.

Your new office bearers for 2017 are:

President: Bruce Edwards

Captain: Johann Ströh

Secretary: Jan Van der Merwe

Treasurer: Peet du Toit

Additional Members:

- Johan Willemse
- Harold Teague

It has been a great privilege and an honour to serve as your President this last year and I would like to thank the committee and all the members for the generous support that I have experienced.

It is indeed a wonderful society of golfing gentlemen that we belong to and every time that I step out onto a golf course with fellow Seniors, I am reminded of this.

Graham Damp

President