

OZ PITCH & PUTT



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A BELATED NEWSLETTER

The Australian Pitch and Putt Association, or APPA, has been in existence for about 2 years. It's been a busy time for those on the inside, but you may not have heard much about us. So we want to fix that, and apologise for the delay in doing so. In this first issue of *Oz Pitch and Putt* we'll tell you a bit about us and what we have been doing, and about where we are heading. Later issues will be aimed at keeping you up to date with where we stand on the issues that face us all in our world of P&P, and what we are doing about them, and aim to do.

We plan to publish quarterly, with the seasons, and will appear in our website <www.australianpitchandputt.com/> and by email to those for whom we have email addresses. A few hard copies will be available for those who need them, but at this stage, we can't afford to mail out copies. Our contact details are shown at the foot of the page.

Interesting you, our readers, is our main objective, so please let us have your views and ideas. We'll include all letters that come in, space and the laws of libel permitting, so please don't be shy about writing to us.

Tim Terrell

SO WHAT IS APPA?

APPA is the body that manages the sport of Pitch and Putt in Australia. It is one of more than a dozen national associations that make up the Federation of International Pitch and Putt Associations (FIPPA), based in Europe, which controls pitch and putt around the world. As befits a unique sport, it is independent of Golf governance.

APPA is run by a Board of 8 members.

Four of these came to office when the Association's present constitution came into effect at the beginning of 2008 and make up the Executive Committee - the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Two other members represent the two State Associations that have so far been formed within APPA, covering South Australia and the ACT. As further State Associations are established, each will be entitled to nominate an additional Board member to represent them. The general membership of APPA is represented by 2 more Board members - one for Accredited Players and the other for Registered Members.

Following recent changes to APPA's constitution, its general membership falls into 2 categories. First are the Accredited Players. These are the members of the clubs and entities that are recognised as such by APPA and the State Associations as being primarily involved with pitch and putt. There are 8 of them at the present time. The Associations or, where there is no Association, the entities themselves, pay an annual recognition fee to APPA for each entity, which entitles all their members to APPA Accredited Player status, and to a range of services provided by APPA. Then there are the Registered Members. These are Accredited Members who have elected to pay an additional fee to APPA, in return for which they become entitled to additional benefits.

The range of benefits and entitlements of Accredited and Registered Members are currently being reviewed and are proposed to be enhanced in 2009. They can expect to have a greater direct involvement in future APPA general meetings.

CONTACT THE EDITOR

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WHAT DOES APPA DO?

But had there been no APPA, there would have been no Australian team.

Someone has to set the rules of the game.....

Without APPA, neither of these significant competitions would have taken place.

APPA started 2008 in significant debt.

Its activities this year have enabled it to eliminate that debt

.....there are probably no organisations controlling a sport nationally in Australia that operates at smaller cost to their individual members than APPA.

Good question. People keep asking what APPA does to add value to the pitch and putt experience of the average player. It's not an easy question to answer. The average player can enjoy their game without caring much about where the rules of pitch and putt differ from those of golf or about where and when the next State or National Championship will be played or who is the best player in Australia. But if they have worked at their game and got their handicap down, and want to test themselves against other players, these things become important.

It is here that having an organisation like APPA comes in. Someone has to set the rules of the game; someone has to decide when National and State Championships are to be played; someone has to set the format for National Championships; someone should keep tabs on how everyone is going in the Championships and how they rank against each other. And especially someone should be doing something to grow the sport.

APPA spends most of its time wrestling with issues such as these. A program of genuinely national events has been developed and a calendar fitting them into place beside "State" level championships is now in place.

At just about every Championship event, arguments arise over what the rules of the game in particular situations are. One ACT Club tried to get this sorted by producing its own rules before FIPPA or APPA existed—but they didn't extend beyond its own course. Here too, APPA has been busy. FIPPA has produced its own rules book, and then revised it. In the last few months APPA took part in a review of all the rules aimed at removing the anomalies and discrepancies that had developed. While this review has been referred to, and was well received by FIPPA, it is not the end of the story and trying to apply and maintain a uniform set of rules will be an ongoing task for APPA.

How do pitch and putt players rank against each other? Their handicaps might give some indication but because there is no uniformity in the way handicaps are calculated and so far, no way has been found by which the relative difficulty of different courses can be assessed, handicaps have limitations as a measure of playing skill. What counts is how people rate when they compete directly against each other on the same course. But there are many ways in which this can be done. So we need an APPA to decide how to do it, then to maintain the necessary records and finally to provide awards to those who earn them.

Increasingly, the international pitch and putt community is opening opportunities for players to compete against each other in international competitions. Australia entered a team in the 3rd World Cup last October organised by FIPPA in Holland. The team did very well, missing the final by a whisker. Players had to meet most of their costs themselves, because APPA did not have the resources to assist them financially. In time, and as its access to resources grows, hopefully APPA will be able to support such teams more completely, but in the meantime APPA needs to be there to get our players included.

This experience confirms that Australia has a place in the international world of pitch and putt. Any doubt about this was put at rest by APPA's very successful sponsorship of the Australian Triple Crown in 2007. With some of the best European players taking part, it was acknowledged to be a unique feature on the international calendar. The second Triple Crown will be played in Adelaide in November 2009, and will hopefully again draw international participation. Without APPA, neither of these significant competitions would have taken place.

So APPA is not just another layer in a newly created pitch and putt bureaucracy. Without it, Australia would remain outside a rapidly developing international sporting environment, which would limit its avowed objective of promoting pitch and putt nationally and internationally. But to do what it must do, APPA needs some funds. It has to meet the costs of its membership of FIPPA; it has to pay the dues deriving from the support FIPPA gives to the promotion of APPA's major events; it has to meet the full costs of the events it sponsors; and it has to meet its administrative costs.

APPA started 2008 in significant debt. Its activities this year have enabled it to eliminate that debt and leave a small surplus. Hopefully, as efforts at raising income from sponsors succeed, APPA's financial situation will improve to the extent that it can subsidise more of the activities it supports, including providing assistance to players in high level events. But the bottom line is—there are probably no organisations controlling a sport nationally in Australia that operate at smaller cost to their individual members than APPA. APPA does not want that to change but hopes that its efforts to grow the game without leaving out the social players, who have long been the game's mainstay, will be recognised.

2009 AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2009 program of Australian high level competitions generally follows the pattern of previous years, although there are some differences. Because the Adelaide courses will be hosting the Triple Crown in November, the Pitch and Putt Association of SA (PPASA) decided there will be no SA Championships in 2009.

We also expect that all the National and State Championships will be included in the 2009 Australian Pitch and Putt Rankings. This is subject to confirmations by the relevant As-

sociations and entities that they want these to be APPA recognised events.

In drawing up the annual programs, APPA recognises that the cost of participating affects people's decisions on whether or not they attend. This leads to a limit on the number of events that should be recognised.

Events other than strokeplay championships have therefore been excluded. It is hoped this will facilitate maximum attendance at each event that are included.. These are shown in the program below.

2009 PROGRAM

ACT Championships—Canberra International—14-15 February
 NSW Championships—Wagga Wagga—21-22 March
 Queensland Championships—Corinda—tba September
 Australian Triple Crown—Adelaide—9-21 November
 Victorian Championships—Waverley—tba November

....there will be no SA Championships in 2009.

THE AUSTRALIAN TRIPLE CROWN 2009

This trophy will again be contested in November. This time, it will be played in Adelaide, on the Valley View and Glanville Hall courses.

The two main components of the triple event competition will be the Australian Matchplay Championship and the Australian Open Championship. Both of these will be played on the Valley View course. The third leg will be a new 9 hole Championship, to be played at Glanville Hall.

The whole competition is being managed under agreement with APPA by the Pitch and Putt Association of South Australia (PPASA).

To win the Triple Crown, a player will need to win all three legs of the event with the best gross scores. However, so that players of all skill levels can take part, each leg will be played in Divisions based on player handicaps. Men and women will play in separate Divisions and awards will be presented for Divisional place getters.

Players may enter either for the whole competition or for individual legs.

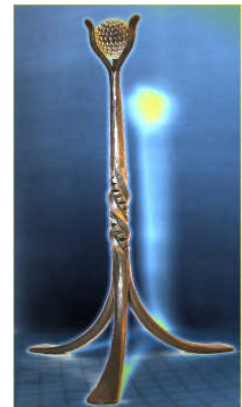
Entry forms may be obtained by email from:

<pnfpp@virginbroadband.com.au>

or by download from:

www.fippa.net or

www.australianpitchandputt.com.



Adelaide
9-21 November, 2009

PITCH AND PUTT RANKING SYSTEM

APPA introduced a ranking system shortly after it was founded, and separate men's and women's ranking have been compiled for 2007 and 2008. Rankings were also compiled to form the basis for selecting the Australian team for the FIPPA World Cup, played in Holland in September, 2008.

The system as applied this year used a simple decreasing allocation of points that depended on the gross scores of players in designated high level competitions.

It was recognised by APPA in 2008 that this system had a number of shortcomings. It did

not recognise the number of competitors in different events, and the events themselves were not sufficiently well defined.

APPA is therefore undertaking a review of the system, and a new system will be introduced from the beginning of 2009. It will be applied only to national events—ie. those sponsored by APPA— and to events recognised as State strokeplay championships.

The new ranking system will provide rankings in a number of different categories of players—men, women, juniors etc. and enable annual awards to be made accordingly.

APPA is therefore undertaking a review of the system.....

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We're on the web—www.australianpitchandputt.com

WANT TO BE A REGISTERED MEMBER?

Get an Application Form from:

- The Web-Site. or
- Contact's email, or
- A Board Member.

APPA will be applying these rules to all its sponsored and recognised competitions.

It was agreed therefore that Registered Members should be entitled to participate fully in APPA General Meetings.

RULES OF PLAY

The ACT Pitch and Putt Association (PPACT) and APPA have spent a lot of time reviewing the rules of play for pitch and putt during 2008. The results have included:

- The Southern Cross Pitch and Putt Club (ACT) has discarded the rules it developed in 2004 and adopted instead the rules APPA has now adopted, together with some Local Rules covering particular situations that apply only to its course;
- APPA has adopted a set of rules that largely correspond with the rules FIPPA has published, and has proposed to FIPPA that it amend its rules to correspond with APPA's in a few areas where FIPPA's rules appear to need revision;
- FIPPA has acknowledged APPA's proposals and submitted them to its own rules review process.

The rules APPA has adopted vary in some respects from those that it adopted in 2007. The changes are mostly to bring them into line with the changes FIPPA has made since then to its rules.

The current APPA rules are set out in full on the APPA website, and all players are encouraged to download them and keep them handy when competing.

Some highlights of the rules are set out below.

APPA RULES HIGHLIGHTS

Practice: The definition has been changed to include chipping or putting onto a green after it has been played, which may be permissible in golf but isn't in P&P;

Stymie: When so requested, a player must mark or play out if their ball is between the other player's ball and the hole (Rule 9i);

Ball identification: Players are encouraged to identify their ball to their marker, but it is not mandatory (Rule 13b);

Ball change: The player's ball may be changed between holes if so desired (Rule 13d);

Ball Cleaning: The situations where a player's ball may be cleaned are now clearly defined (Rule 13i);

Ball Interfering: If one player's ball interferes anywhere on the course with another player's "stance, swing or line" it must be marked but not cleaned (Rule 13j)

PROPOSED FIPPA RULE CHANGES.

The rules it has been proposed FIPPA should change and which are now different from APPA's include:

Practice as described above;

Avoidance of damage to green: If a green is damaged eg. by vandals, animals etc. players should be allowed to move their ball to avoid the damage, which they currently may not do.

Stymie: The present FIPPA rule does not permit the avoidance of a stymie as described above.

Order of play: The FIPPA rule requires at pain of penalty that the ball furthest from the pin be played first. The APPA rule says this is desirable, but is not mandatory. APPA proposes FIPPA's rule should be the same.

Ball Cleaning: FIPPA's rule is difficult to understand and appears internally inconsistent. APPA proposes FIPPA adopt its revision.

APPA now awaits the outcome of FIPPA's rules review, but in the meantime has adopted the rules now available from its website and will be applying these rules to all its sponsored and recognised competitions.

APPA MEMBERSHIP

Membership of APPA has been the subject of much debate. The original Rules of Association specified two categories of general membership, both of which required individual membership applications and the payment of fees. The categories were Registered and Associate Members.

In an effort to increase take-up of membership, it was decided in April to replace Associate membership with a new category of Accredited Player. This would be accorded without application to all members of recognised pitch and putt clubs and entities. There would be no individual fees, but State Associations (or where there were none, the entities themselves) would pay APPA an annual

fee. The members of 8 clubs and entities have now become Accredited Players in this way and entitled to specified benefits.

These changes were formalised at a recent special General Meeting but no changes were made to the status of Registered Members.

The Board recognised, however, that the benefits these members received for their membership were not sufficiently attractive and should be enhanced. It was agreed, therefore, that Registered Members should be entitled to participate fully in APPA General Meetings—a right they do not currently have. It is proposed changes to this effect will be formalised at a Special General Meeting to be held next February.