

THE BRASSIE

ISSUE 1 2025

JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN
GOLF HERITAGE SOCIETY





About Us

The **Australian Golf Collectors' Society** was founded in 1995 and became the **Australian Golf Heritage Society (AGHS)** in 2008 to give a more representative description of the Society's interests and scope.

The Australian Golf Heritage Society aims to:

Encourage the collection, recording, and preservation of information that is connected to the history of golf in Australia;

Verify the authenticity of physical items associated with the history of golf in Australia and provide a means of storing, restoring and displaying these physical items;

Inform golfers, golf clubs and the wider community of this information and display these physical items in a manner which tells their story;

Promote hickory events as a celebration of the origins of the game.

The Brassie is the journal of the Australian Golf Heritage Society and is published at least quarterly. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written consent of the *Editor*. The views and opinions expressed are those of the individual contributors unless expressly stated to the contrary.

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(under renovation)

On the Front Cover

Golfing legend Norman von Nida wearing his trademark black beret

On the Back Cover

AGHS Captain Les Browne teeing off on the first hole at Sawtell Golf Club during the 2024 NSW Hickory Championship

Issue 1 2025

President's Message

Dear Fellow Members,

Our relaunched issue of *The Brassie* received good feedback from many sources, including governing bodies, golfing societies, clubs and members.

The electronic copy was well-received, with positive feedback on the flipbook magazine's quality and ease of use. The magazine received a significant number of views thanks to the link being shared by organisations and clubs on their websites and in their newsletters. In this regard, we thank Golf Australia, Golf NSW, PGA NSW and the clubs for their support.

The feedback on the printed copy was also positive, with people commenting on the content and high quality.

In line with our policy of alternating the venue of the NSW Hickory Championship between Sydney and country New South Wales, the 2024 championship was held at the picturesque Sawtell Golf Club. The course confirmed our view that we have many outstanding country courses and allowed participants to spend time in the lovely town of Sawtell.

The 2024 Australian Hickory Championship, held at Warringah GC, Manly GC and Cromer GC, was a resounding success. The courses provided an excellent challenge and required outstanding golf from the winners. We were also pleased to welcome a large contingent of golfers from Japan and entrants from China, Canada and New Zealand.

Concord Golf Club celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2024, and Pymble its centenary. We were pleased they decided to hold hickory golf events as part of their celebrations. These events are a perfect way to celebrate historic occasions.

As previously advised, the society's collection is now in storage at Ryde-Parramatta Golf Club. A sub-committee has been formed to review the long-term museum options, and feedback will be provided to members in due course.

John Buckley

Membership

The Australian Golf Heritage Society is funded by donations from a few generous donors, and membership subscriptions from individuals and golf clubs.

If you are passionate about the history of the wonderful game of golf and would like to share your interest with other people with the same passion, why not become a member of the society? There is no joining fee, only an annual subscription of \$65 for individuals.

If your club is not yet a member, please encourage your leadership team to take out a golf club membership and join a number of clubs that support the society.

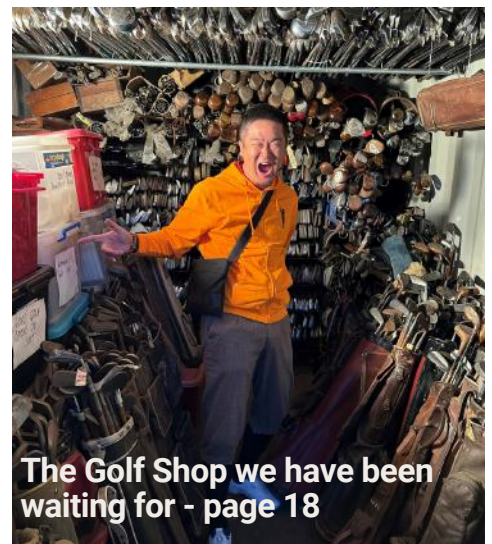
Details of how to join and a Membership Application form can be found on page 38.

We look forward to welcoming you into the fold.

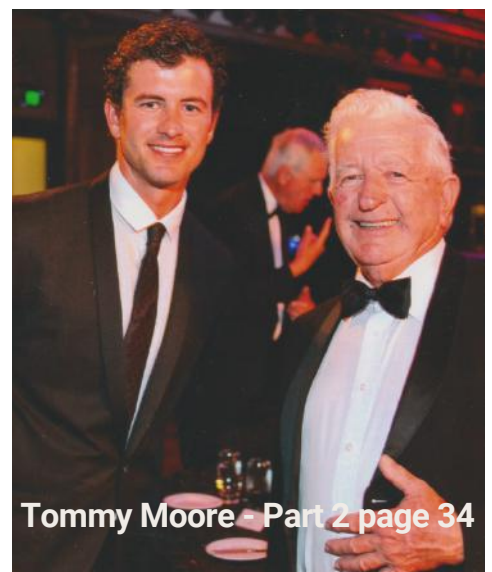
Contents

President's Message	2
Golf in the Early Olympics - A Presentation at The Lakes GC - <i>Michael Sheret</i>	4
Edwina Kennedy - Our First and Only. The second in our series of 'Legendary Australian Professionals and Amateurs' - <i>Sandra Mellowes</i>	6
The Golf Shop We Have Been Waiting for - ATT Golf - Ross Baker's and Henry Cussell's 'Golf Lovers' Heaven'	18
Early Years of the Australian Golf Club - <i>Michael Dysart and Michael Sheret</i>	28
Meet our Hickory Golfers - <i>Suz Brown</i>	32
Heroes of the Game - <i>Tommy Moore (Part 2)</i> - The first in our series of 'Heroes of the Game' features the Patron of the Australian Golf Heritage Society	34
125 Years of Concord Golf Club - From the Pastures of Yaralla to Par Excellence - The second in our series of 'Golf Club Histories' - <i>Brian Dolan</i>	40
Norman von Nida - The third in our series of 'Legendary Australian Professionals and Amateurs'	57
Captain's Report - <i>Les Browne</i>	69
Advertisers	

We welcome advertising of products or services that are of interest to our members. Please support our advertisers and if you do, please do not forget to mention *The Brassie*.



The Golf Shop we have been waiting for - page 18



Tommy Moore - Part 2 page 34

From the Editor

Welcome to Issue 1 2025 of *The Brassie*.

In this issue, we feature articles on two great Australian golfers: Edwina Kennedy and Norman von Nida.

Edwina, one of our greatest amateur golfers, was the first Australian to win the British Women's Amateur Championship in 1978 and remains our only winner in 130 years.

Norman 'The Von' von Nida is one of Australia's greatest-ever golfers and sporting heroes. Robbed of some of his best years by The Depression and World War II, we can only guess how much more he could have achieved. Norman was one of the most complex and colourful characters ever to play the game, and his contribution to Australian golf was immense.

In this issue, we also feature articles on two of our best-known golf clubs with long and interesting histories.

The first examines the early history of the Australian Golf Club. Using an evidence-based approach, the authors, in summing up, state that 'the Australian Golf Club has strong

evidence to be the oldest in Australia'.

The second shares the history of Concord Golf Club, one of our oldest golf clubs, which has a magnificent clubhouse and a course designed by Dan Soutar and recently renovated by Tom Doak. Concord GC was founded in 1899 and recently celebrated its 125th anniversary.

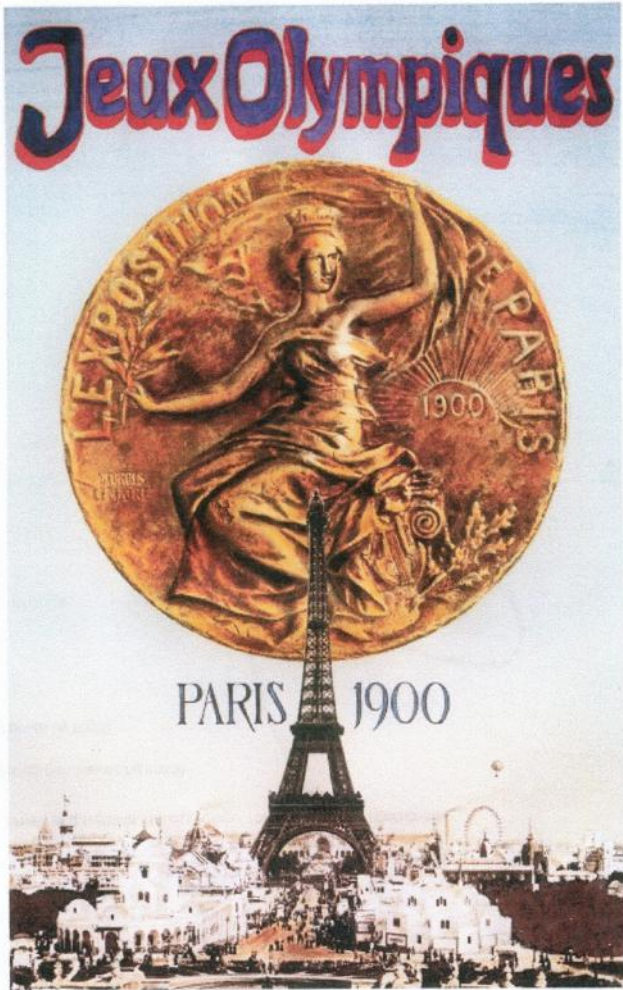
With Olympic Golf looking like it's here to stay, we feature a presentation on 'Golf in the Early Olympics' at The Lakes GC.

If you are interested in collectable golf clubs, memorabilia or history, on page 18, we feature an amazing golf shop in Melbourne owned by Ross Baker, one of Australia's leading traditional clubmakers, and well-known professional Henry Cussell.

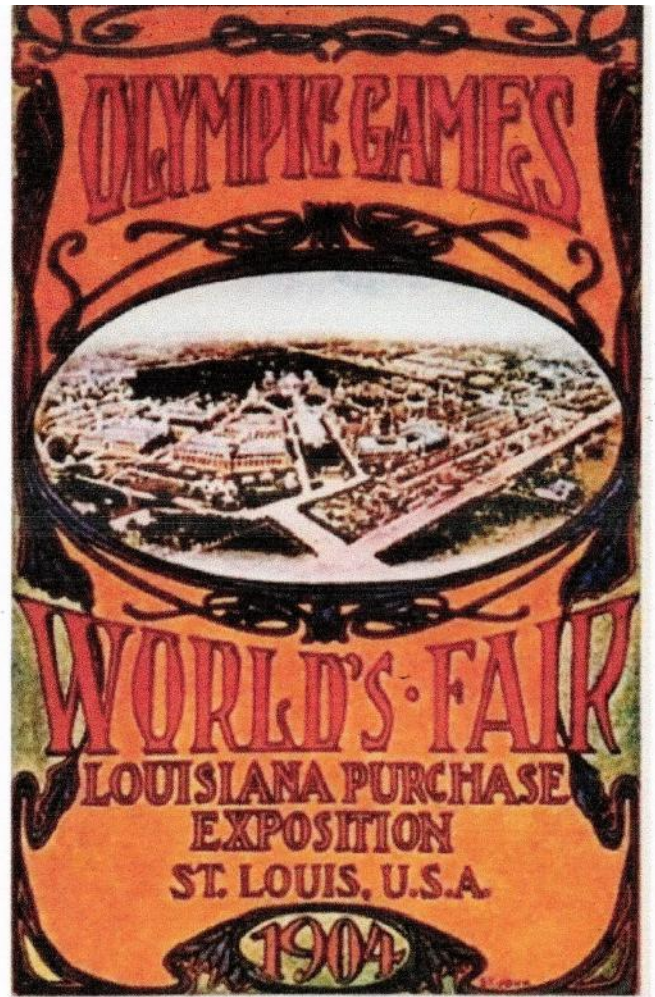
Finally, 2024 was a very successful year for hickory golf, and this has been covered in detail in this issue.

AGHS Sponsors





1900 poster



1904 poster



Colin Kaye 1972 Australian Amateur Champion and Lakes member (left), Brian Dolan AGHS member (right)

Golf in the Early Olympics

A Presentation at The Lakes Golf Club - Michael Sheret July 2024

AGHS members joined members of the Club and members of the Society for Australian Sports History (ASSH) for an excellent lunch followed by the presentation. It was given by Michael Sheret, a member of ASSH, as part of the 2024 lecture programme of the ASSH NSW Chapter. In 1900 and 1904 golf was played as an Olympic sport. In 1908, 1916 and 1936 it was almost played as an Olympic sport.

The 1900 Olympics were held in Paris in conjunction with the Exposition de Paris, a grand affair celebrating the achievements of France. This combination led to much confusion, as Olympic sports were mixed with other sports, for example pigeon racing, that the Exposition considered, wrongly, to be suitable for the Olympics. There were two golf events that were recognised as Olympic events by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). They were low key events held at Compiègne, about 80 kilometres north of Paris, individual stroke play, one for men and one for women. The way the Exposition promoted the two events would surprise modern Olympians.

The 1904 Olympics were held in St Louis, Missouri, in conjunction with the St Louis World's Fair. Once again the IOC was sidelined and the games were organised by the World's Fair. There were two Olympic golf events, both for men. They were organised by and held at the Glen Echo Country Club. The stroke play team event was played by three teams of ten players. All the players were American, representing American golf associations. The individual event was stroke play qualifying, followed by match play knock out. Of the 75 entries only three were not American, and they were from nearby Canada. The situation of the Olympic golf medals was an intriguing part of the presentation.



Michael in action




1904 golf gold medal

The 1908 Olympics were held in London. The British Olympic Committee (BOC), supported by the Royal St George's Golf Club, was keen to have golf included. There were entries from seven countries for individual stroke play over three magnificent golf courses. Sadly, what might be called the British golf establishment did not approve of golf as an Olympic event, particularly John Low, chairman of the R&A Rules of Golf Committee. An acrimonious dispute arose. Two days before the golf event was due to start, it was cancelled.

The 1916 Olympics were scheduled to be held in Berlin. They were, of course, never played because of World War I. The German Olympic Committee (GOC) was keen to include golf. The R&A was invited to play a part in the organisation of the event. By unanimous vote the invitation was declined. Reminiscent of 1908?

The 1936 Olympics were awarded to Berlin and, once again, the GOC was keen to include golf. Unfortunately, golf did not meet all the IOC criteria for a sport to be included in the Olympics. However, the GOC arranged for golf to be included in games complementary to the Olympics. These were played in Baden-Baden immediately after the Olympics. Teams of two golfers from seven countries played in a well organised event.

What you have just read is a report of a well researched and lively presentation on an important part of golf history. Much interesting detail has been omitted from this report. In forthcoming issues of *The Brassie*, the plan is to convert the content of the presentation into series of articles.

A color photograph of Edwina Kennedy, a woman with short reddish-brown hair, smiling and holding a large, ornate silver trophy. She is wearing a dark blue jacket over a green turtleneck. The trophy is multi-tiered with a wide, flared top. In the background, there is a golf course with rolling hills under a clear sky. To the right, another silver trophy is visible on a table covered with a blue cloth.

Edwina Kennedy, one of our greatest ever amateur golfers, was the first Australian to win the British Women's Amateur Championship in 1978 and remains our only winner in 130 years.

The second in our series of 'Legendary Australian Professionals and Amateurs' by Sandra Mellowes

Edwina Kennedy - Our First and Only

In 1978, on Saturday 10th of June, from the Nottingham Evening Post to The Age newspaper in Melbourne on the other side of the world, the headlines announced -

'EDWINA WINS BRITISH AMATEUR.'

Edwina Kennedy was the first Australian to win the British Women's Amateur Championship, and it was on her 19th birthday, and she was one of the youngest ever to do so. She was also the first Australian to reach the final in this championship, which had been inaugurated in 1893. Queenslanders Judith Percy and Joan Fletcher, as well as Sandra McCaw from Victoria, had previously reached the semi-finals. There had been two other nineteen-year-old winners over the years, Pam Barton and Canadian Marlene Streit (nee Stewart). To that date, the very youngest was English girl Michelle Walker, who was 18 and won it back-to-back in 1971 and 1972.

It was something of an unexpected result for Edwina. This was the day Edwina became widely known as a gifted amateur, but her 'career' had started years before. From the beginning, she was described as a child prodigy, and since then, her success reflects a lifetime love of the game.

Between 1977 and 1991, as an amateur, Edwina represented Australia more than 30 times all over the world, in 5 continents and over 20 countries. So much was achieved, at the same time as her school, university and working years, throughout Australia and as an Australian representative.

Edwina Jane Kennedy is her name for golf purposes. She was named after her maternal grandfather, Edwin, who she never met. Her married name is Edwina Jane Kirkby, having married in 1988. Edwina always had the support and interest of her family, but the initial spark and passion for the game were all hers, almost like destiny.

Both sets of Edwina's grandparents were from the country. On her mother's side, her grandparents lived in the Singleton district where her mother was born. Here, her grandmother, Elizabeth Joan Spencer Decent, played golf in her younger years at the 9-hole Singleton Golf Club as a single-figure handicap golfer. The family moved to the Capertee Valley and then to Kellyville after her mother's father died. Soon after, her mother met and married her father in 1957, and they moved to Epping, where Edwina was born on June 10th 1959. This is where she and her brother Ian grew up.



Above: 1978 World Team Championships – Pacific Harbour Golf Club Fiji. L-R Jane Lock, Edwina Kennedy, Lindy Goggin, non-playing Captain Patricia Bridges. First time win for Australia.

Opposite: 1978 British Women's Amateur Champion Edwina Kennedy with the trophy

Edwina Kennedy - Our First and Only

When Edwina was very young, she used to visit her grandmother, who lived in Collaroy on the Northern Beaches of Sydney, close to the Long Reef Golf Club. She remembers being 'fascinated' by it all, but now not sure why. She remembers seeing people play as they walked around the headland, and she loved playing on the reef and beach. Noticing her interest in the game, it was her grandmother who taught her how to swing a club in the garden using a branch from a tree before she was two. Edwina still recalls and uses her grandmother's swing advice to this day – 1... 2... wait ... 3. In 1971, Edwina's mother was quoted describing Edwina hitting around the garden with a cut-down hickory stick jigger around 23 months of age. Edwina describes the club as being rusty and ancient. By the time Edwina was 5 years of age, her grandmother had moved to Wentworth Falls in the Blue Mountains. The house had a garden that backed onto the 13th fairway of the golf course, and her grandmother started playing again. Edwina visited at weekends and during school holidays. A month before her 7th birthday in 1966, Edwina was accepted as a junior member of the Golf Club.

Edwina describes the continuing encouragement of her grandmother and how amazingly supportive the members and staff were of such a young but very keen girl at the Wentworth Falls Country Club. She does not know if her interest would have waned at this stage and age if she had not been given the opportunity. Of course, the greater number of players in the field were much older than her. It appeared an unusual game for someone so young and a girl at that, but Edwina learnt how to relate to adults very early and loved it. Her parents were not golfers, but everyone in the family realised she was very keen. Her father was a pharmacist and, from 1964, had his own pharmacy. Her parents didn't have time for much golf, but they did start playing at Wentworth Falls when possible. Edwina helped in the pharmacy in her school and university holidays. At Wentworth Falls she was able to play competitions on weekends on both Saturdays and Sundays and in the school holidays.

Starting on a 36 handicap (the maximum at that time), it took a year to get off it. Then, in just a week, it came down to 29. By 13, she had reduced her handicap to 7. Edwina continued to play at Wentworth Falls with her small selection of mixed clubs, which taught her to improvise. She was enrolled as a boarder at the New England Girls School at Armidale for her high school education for 6 years. (Her mother had also attended NEGS.) This, of course, limited her playing time at Wentworth Falls.

The school had a nine-hole golf course, but it was incredibly rough with uneven sand greens, fences around them and grazing cattle, but it was somewhere to practise. Many balls were lost in the long rough! The school held a small golf Championship once a year. The school encouraged team sports, and games were played on Saturdays, but Edwina was allowed to join Armidale Golf Club and play there on Sundays. She was helped a great deal by Judy Reece and her husband, who would pick her up from school, take her to the course and deliver her back to school afterwards. She played there until she left school in 1976. Edwina speaks of the great benefits of team sport for everyone especially at school age. It develops team spirit and comradeship, and she tried everything. She enjoyed netball at Primary school but changed to hockey at Armidale, as well as softball, tennis, athletics, swimming, and, for a while, the Equestrian programme. The Cross County route was part of the school's golf area. Edwina was a good student and became the Dux of the school.

Knowing that Edwina had a membership at two 'country' clubs but nothing in Sydney, at the age of 13, requests were made to see if it was possible to find a club for her in Sydney closer to Epping. Pennant Hills and Killara Golf Clubs were approached, but they were both taken aback by the idea and did not take Juniors until they were 16. (She did, however, join Pennant Hills GC for a while when she was at university.) Edwina was both shocked and disappointed to be too young, but with the help of Marion Elder, who was a member of both Wentworth Falls Golf Club and The Australian Golf Club and members Thelma Kerr and Leo Wray, a legend in the NSW and Australian LGU, The Australian accepted Edwina into their Junior membership. This was in May 1973. Edwina is still there over 50 years later.

In 1967, when still only a member of Wentworth Falls, Edwina remembers the enjoyment of her first official NSWLGU School Girls competition very well, which was held at Palm Beach Golf Club, Sydney. She played there several times. She remembers the 9-hole course with its sandy beach on the Pittwater side and having to hit over a stand of trees! It was a novelty because you went around twice! This was followed by other Junior events in the Blue Mountains competitions, for example, and the State Junior and Schoolgirl Championships were to come.

Edwina describes these as the years of her natural, relaxed swing, uncomplicated and not overthought as she played with that small bag of odd and old clubs she had gradually acquired for birthday and Christmas presents. Her first set of matched clubs in a blue kangaroo skin bag was kindly donated to her by John Higson at the P.G.F. Company in 1972. She remembers many of the changes to equipment over the years. Starting with those very old cut-down hickory sticks, persimmon wood heads and blade-shaped irons. Edwina still had a blade putter in her bag for many years, but it was retired a couple of years ago. Balls were quite expensive. This was a time before cavity back styled irons, metal woods and putters that are long or resemble branding irons! Bags have become bigger, buggies motorised and carts even influence course design.

As she was away at school, she largely played under the radar of NSW selectors at this time, but in 1973, at the age of 14, Edwina had the opportunity to play in the Australian Junior Championships in Melbourne, which presented a new learning curve. She travelled with junior teams, gaining experience and improving her golf.

1975 brought an unexpected win in the Australian Foursomes Championship with Sue Goldsmith at Indooroopilly in Brisbane. Edwina had certainly been noticed! In 1976, at the age of 17, Edwina was to win the first of four Australian Junior Amateur titles over the next 4 years. These 1976 Australian Junior Championships were held at home at The Australian Golf Club. This was her first individual national title and an exciting win. 1979 was the last year of eligibility for the Juniors, which was limited to 21 years of age.

After winning the 1977 Victorian Open women's event at Yarra Yarra, Peter Thomson was quoted in The Melbourne Age as saying and describing 'the young Sydney girl as the most exciting golf prospect in Australia when she beat Jane Lock, then the Australian title holder, over 72 holes.'



Edwina aged 8, at Palm Beach Golf Club



Edwina in 1979



Edwina with the British Amateur Trophy, with caddie Paul Appleby (14) in hat behind



Edwina at the Victoria Open in 1977

Edwina Kennedy - Our First and Only

Her first State and Australian Team selection was in 1977. With 'runs on the board', a selection into her first interstate team match saw Edwina travelling to Perth to play at Royal Perth for NSW, and from that result, she was selected to play for the Australian team a few days later in the Tasman Cup versus New Zealand, which they won convincingly. So, she played her first game for her state and her country in the same week. After this, experience was gained, not only by competing all over Australia but also through trips to New Zealand. She had also already competed in the Far East Open in Manila in 1976.

In June 1978 it was decided to send a team of young players to England to compete in the Women's British Amateur Championship in Nottingham. Edwina, Louise Briers, Jane Crafter and more experienced player Lindy Goggin, the captain, made up the team. Two lead-up events had been played beforehand in Surrey and Berkshire. The British Amateur was held at the Notts Golf Club, Hollinwell course, in poor weather. It was cold and windy, and the rough was long. In spite of the conditions, three of the four Australians made it through to the final eight, but all three were on the same side of the draw, and Edwina was drawn against Jane, winning the match 1-up.

Edwina progressed from this round to play and win the semi-final against French Champion Cecilia Mourgue D'Algue. She then played in the final against England's Julia Greenhalgh, the 37-year-old champion player from Lancashire. Julia had defeated long-hitting American Beth Daniel in her semi-final, an outstanding result given that Daniel won the US Women's Amateur in 1975 and 1977 and was also the 1977 US college women's player of the year. (Beth turned professional in 1979 and went on to have a stellar pro career and become a member of the World Golf Hall of Fame). Fans may have thought that Julia was due a win but it was not to be! As mentioned above, Edwina qualified for the final as an 18-year-old but played the final on her 19th birthday. She won the British Amateur Championship over 18 holes, 1-up. Edwina had taken the lead on the first hole and was never behind in a tight match. She was 1-up with one to play and squared the last. She felt a certain disbelief at this unexpected win. After all, they were only there for the experience, to learn to play in different conditions and meet other types of players!

This victory was one of the greatest days in Australian golf history. Edwina's name appears on a prestigious trophy that contains the names of many legends of the game: May Hezlet (three-times Women's Amateur Champion), Cecil Leitch (four-times Women's Amateur Champion), Joyce Wethered (four-times Women's Amateur Champion), Enid Wilson (three-times Women's Amateur Champion), Pam Barton (two-time Women's Amateur Champion and 1936 US Women's Amateur Champion), Babe Zaharias (10-times major champion) and Louise Suggs (11-times major champion). More modern winners have included Catherine Lacoste (1967 US Women's Open Champion), Anna Nordqvist (3-times major champion), and Georgia Hall (2018 Women's Open Champion).

This win and exposure really kicked off her Australian representative career. It was then off to Fiji three months later with Lindy Goggin and Jane Lock for the World Amateur Team Championships, the Espirito Santo Trophy, held every two years. Edwina shot a one-under-par 71 in this world trophy at Pacific's Harbour to share the course record with Beth Daniel. This was another first-time big win for the Australian Team. 1978 was a big year for Edwina and Australian women's golf. Women's golf in Australia was growing and developing rapidly.

At the same time, Edwina was attending Macquarie University, following taking her HSC at Armidale. Her parents stressed the importance of having a Plan B outside golf. She studied Accounting, although she had been accepted into Actuarial Studies, but this course proved to be too heavy to fit around her playing schedule. She studied and completed her degree over 4 years, a combination of full and then part-time. A position at CSR (Colonial Sugar Refining Company) was waiting, and she started in August 1981.

In 1980, Edwina met GM Gordon Jackson after one of the matches in the CSR-sponsored Japan versus Australia series, which led to an offer to come to CSR as an accountant after finishing university. This was arranged by 2IC Jack Campbell. An agreement was made, and generous support was given to her by allowing her to take 3 months unpaid leave to play tournaments or team events. So, weekdays were for tournaments as they arose, and the weekends for practice. Although qualified in accountancy, it was felt that the busiest time for an accountant would clash with her golf commitments, so instead of working as an accountant, she followed a path in Industrial Relations, Personnel and then onto a role in Workers' Compensation, which she enjoyed. She became a Claims Manager.

Following the successes of 1978, the LGU then decided they wanted to send more women's teams away to compete, so it meant many tours and overseas championships. So many countries but with few opportunities to be a tourist in them! In 1979, it was off to Colombia in South America to play in an international tournament in Cali. This included playing on the West Coast of the US on the way home. She also endeavoured to defend her title at the British Amateur Championships.

Edwina first won the NSW Women's Amateur Championship in 1979 before adding back-to-back wins from 1984 to 1986. There were overseas wins for Edwina in the Canadian Amateur in 1980 and then later in the New Zealand Amateur Championship in 1985. Playing at home in Australia also meant a lot of inter-state travelling. There was a tyranny of distance both home and away. She loved going to Victoria to compete and get to play on the sand-belt courses, her favourites, which she considers the best courses in the world.

There was a weight of expectation both personally and externally. One of these expectations was successfully reached in 1986 because it finally brought Edwina's first Australian Championship win after several runner-up years, and it was very satisfying for her to win the home title. Edwina mentions how hard it was to maintain your game for the two weeks of the back-to-back interstate series and Australian Championships. Golf was the real focus in life over these years, but she managed to fit it around work. Unfortunately, she didn't get to play at her home club, The Australian, in those State and National representing years as much as she would have liked, but continued to represent the club in Pennants.

In 1988, Edwina married her husband, Vaughan Kirkby, and the focus changed a little. 1991 was the final year of representing Australia, and this was at the Commonwealth Trophy played in England. She continued to play for NSW until 1993 and then, in 1994, had her first child. Some part-time work followed until 2000, and Edwina volunteered at the children's school. As the two children grew older, gradually she was able to become more and more involved with her club, The Australian Golf Club, entering championships and becoming the Associate's Club Captain in 2016 after two years on the Associate's committee.



1986 - Edwina with the Australian Amateur Trophy

Key Individual Achievements

Junior (under 21 at the time):

- NSW Schoolgirls' Champion 1973, 1974, 1976
- NSW Junior Champion 1976, 1978
- Competed for NSW against New Zealand in annual junior matches over a number of years
- Australian Junior Champion 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979

Australia:

- 1986 Australian Champion, Runner-up 1979, 1984, 1991
- NSW Champion 1979, 1984, 1985, 1986
- NSW Strokeplay Champion 1979, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1987
- Victorian Strokeplay Champion 1985, 1986, 1992
- South Australian Strokeplay Champion 1987
- Western Australian Strokeplay Champion 1981, 1982, 1983, 1985
- Victorian Matchplay Champion 1978
- Australian Foursomes Champion 1975, 1990, 1994

International:

- 1978 British Champion
- 1980 Canadian Champion
- Runner-up French Championship 1981
- 1985 New Zealand Strokeplay and Matchplay Champion

Representative Teams

NSW sub-junior (then under 18) representative in 1973 and a junior representative in 1973, 1974, 1975 and 1976

NSW representative in the Interstate Series from 1977 to 1980 and 1982 to 1993, the team winning on 10 occasions

Represented Australia more than 30 times in over 20 countries between 1977 and 1991, including the following official team events:

•Member of the winning Australian team for the 1978 Women's World Amateur Team Championship, the first time Australia had won the event. I also represented Australia in this event in 1980, where we finished runner-up to the USA, and in 1984 and 1986.

•The Commonwealth Tournament in 1979, 1983, when Australia won for the first time, and in 1987 and 1991 (now The Astor Trophy)

•The Queen Sirikit Cup Asian Women's Team Championship in 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986 and 1987, Australia winning on three occasions

•The Tasman Cup in 1977, 1983, 1985, and 1987, winning the first three and drawing the last

•The Australia – Japan Match in 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981 and 1982, winning on each occasion

•The World 'Pairs' Championship in Cali, Colombia, in 1979, 1981, 1983, and 1987

•The International 'Doubles' (Fourball) Championship in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1986

She was also selected for a number of 'touring teams' to the UK and Europe in 1978, 1979, 1981, and 1986, and to Canada in 1980.

Chosen as Playing Captain of the 1983 and 1984 Queen Sirikit Cup and as Player-in-Charge of the Touring Team to England and France in 1986.

Manager of the winning Australian team for the Commonwealth Tournament played in New Zealand in Nov 2003.

Manager of the Australian team for the Women's World Amateur Team Championships played in Puerto Rico in Oct 2004.

Competed for The Australian GC in the Sydney Metropolitan No. 1 Grade competition from 1975 to 2018 and has been Manager of the Metropolitan Major Pennant team since 2015.

Photographic Credits:

Photo page 6: Courtesy of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews

All other photos: courtesy of Edwina Kennedy



AGHS Patron Tommy Moore (left) with Edwina (right) at the Strathfield Golf Museum



1979 Women's International
Moss Creek Invitational

Edwina Kennedy - Our First and Only

Naturally, there were ups and downs in her game over the years, and she received help from many sources. Her grandmother had been her first coach/teacher, and help was also to come from Professionals, starting with Rob Kimberley at Wentworth Falls, who later moved to Asquith. There were NSW training squads along the way where she met Bernie Oakman and formed a close student relationship with Professional Billy Holder at The Lakes in the mid-70s, who always seemed to be available at the end of the phone. He was quite controversial as far as the swing was concerned, but it worked for her. Sadly, Billy died suddenly in 1976. Later, there were attempts to change her swing and be rather more technical, but she has fond memories of those uncomplicated, free-swinging early days. By the late 70s and beyond, there were several influences and coaches: Alex Mercer from Royal Sydney, Norman von Nida, Billy Smith (Melbourne), Charlie Earp at Royal Queensland (Greg Norman's coach), an inspiring teacher. There were also Darrel Welsh, Ron Luxton at The Australian, and David Mercer at Killara. Alan Bull coached her later at The Australian, but by then, she was not practising, and they were looking for band-aid solutions. Edwina mentions her well-used mantras – 'one day, one hole, one shot at a time.' and 'don't get ahead of yourself.'

There had been no hours in the gym or special diets, but she seemed to stay fit mainly at first with the help of playing other sports at school. She grew to be tall and strong naturally. There was freedom then to stay around after a match and celebrate with team members who became great friends. Not as many girls moved on to try to become professionals then; in fact, any mention of turning professional had to be discussed in hushed tones. Always supportive, her mother had busily made the skirts she wore as a child and drove her miles and miles for individual events. Her parents were happy to buy her a car when she got her licence! Edwina remembers dressing quite comfortably in her skirts and happily moving on to pants and shorts later, including a plus-four look for a time! When she joined The Australian Golf Club, pants could only be worn on 'inclement weather' days.

In the same way as being a member of teams at school in other sports, golfing team events were thoroughly enjoyed as she represented both NSW and Australia. The list compiled by Edwina on page 13 itemises the golf results of these appearances.

Edwina describes herself as a competitive golfer who loves to play and doesn't see herself as a teacher. She says that the best wins are the unexpected ones. Winning can be very gratifying when the game delivers after all the work you put into it. After two years at university, Edwina visited Stanford University on the way home from playing in South America. She was offered a scholarship, but her credits already gained at Macquarie would not be recognised and transferred so it would mean starting again. She may well have made a different decision if the offer had been made two years earlier.

When asked about why she did not become a Professional Golfer, Edwina said it was something she considered seriously and mentioned how good it is that today, both male and female young players have a variety of pathways to follow to a career in golf, but it is not for everyone and a very small percentage make it. Juniors are now under 18, not 21, so these ambitions are followed at quite a young age.

After completing her degree in 1980, she had a good look at the life of a professional in the USA, playing three LPGA tournaments, including the US Open and three amateur tournaments during their summer.

She also played in Europe. She loved the tournaments but not the travelling lifestyle. She made all the cuts, but there

was no downtime, and she felt it was life-limiting with a narrow perspective. She didn't turn pro because she wanted a 'rounded sort of life'.

Edwina feels she was a 'player for her time, not for now.' The amateur played for the joy of winning. She started working with CSR later that year and was able to focus on her amateur career. What an amateur career it was! She made wonderful friends through golf both in Australia and overseas. In many ways, she had the best of both worlds as she played this 'funny, unpredictable game'. This is where she wanted to be, and couldn't imagine doing anything else.

Over the years, Edwina has received formal recognition for her contribution to golf in Australia. In 1978, it was the Caltex-Daily Mirror NSW Sports Star of the Year award. In 1985, Edwina was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her services to golf. In 1993, she was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame, and then in 2000, she received the Australian Sports Medal at the time of the Sydney Olympics. As a very experienced, decorated and successful amateur golfer, it is easy to say that she has been a huge part of Australia's golfing world, especially in NSW.

Since 2016, Edwina has been able to become fully engaged in The Australian Golf Club. She completed three years as Women's Captain and has been on the Board of the Junior Foundation at the club since 2011. She is now the Chair and thoroughly enjoys this challenging role, supporting talented young players to join the Club and benefit from coaching and other programs, encouraging young golfers as indeed she was encouraged. The hope is that many of these young players will remain long-term Members of the Club. She supports the Women's Major Pennant team as the Manager and continues to play regularly, now with a battery buggy and she is threatening to bring her old putter out of retirement! When there is time, she loves to walk and body surf. That chance exposure to the game of golf at Long Reef as a nearly two-year-old started an amazing career, and that has led to a very commendable 'full and rounded life'.

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Sandra Mellowes

Long Reef Golf Club
Archivist, Women's
Committee President
2006 - 2008, Life Member



2025 New South Wales Hickory Shaft Open Championship

The 2025 New South Wales Hickory Championship is scheduled for the beautiful seaside towns of Forster Tuncurry from 6th to 8th April 2025.

The event is open to Amateurs and Professionals

Day 1 – Foursomes at Tuncurry GC (ranked 77th in Golf Australia's Top-100 Public Access Courses), followed by Presentation Dinner.

Day 2 – Round 1 Singles at Tuncurry GC.

Day 3 – Round 2 Singles at Forster GC, followed by a Presentation Luncheon.

There will be an opportunity to see the AGHS Golf Museum housed at Tuncurry GC.

Entries will open shortly

Enquiries - Les Browne lesnkate@bigpond.net.au



Tuncurry GC and AGHS Museum

The Australian Golf Heritage Society Museum at Forster Tuncurry GC



Visit The Australian Golf Heritage Society Museum at the Forster Tuncurry Golf Club - named one of the Fifteen Best Golf Museums in the World

The Tuncurry Golf Club's new clubhouse, which includes a golf museum, was officially opened in July 2022 by Deputy Premier Paul Toole. The Tuncurry Golf Museum is the only one of its type on Mainland Australia.

The artifacts were sourced from donations and The Australian Golf Heritage Society, whose expertise was also used in setting up the historical content and the displays.

The museum covers the development of golf in the local area where it was first played at Port Macquarie in 1910 and includes details of many North Coast Clubs.

The main area tracks the game from its early beginnings in Scotland and in Australia at Grose Farm (roughly where Sydney Uni is today) in 1839 to the present day. There are features on Jim Ferrier, Peter Thomson, Kel Nagle, Jack Newton and many others.

One wall is dedicated to the greats of Australian Golf from our first Australian-born Major Champion, Walter Travis, to the most recent, Minjee Lee and Cam Smith.

One interesting display is a set of clubs made in 1948 for Don Spence, the Concord Professional, which were refurbished in 1998 and used by Greg Norman in promoting the 50th anniversary of the Holden Car. Greg can be seen using the clubs.

A recent display was recognising 'Women in Golf', highlighting some of Australia's best women golfers.

It is recognised by the prestigious US publication *Links – The Best of Golf* as being in their 15 Top Golf Museums worldwide.

Entry is free, and visitors can make use of the club facilities.

The Museum is open every day at Tuncurry Golf Course which is on The Northern Parkway, off The Lakes Way, Tuncurry, 2428, Tel 02 6554 6799



Wollongong Golf Club

EST. 1897

P R E S E N T S

The Alex Lowe Trophy

A Hickory Golf Championship

Celebrating early Australian seaside golf

Wollongong Golf Club
Sunday 23 February, 2025
Time: 12:00 noon
Shotgun Start
18 holes Single Stableford

Tee times available from
pro shop: 02 4222 3111.
Cost: \$30

Hickory club hire
available on the day. \$15

Presentation to follow
golf - prizes for gross &
nett winners/runners up



The Golf Shop We Have



Ross Baker (left) and Henry Cussell (right)
in their beloved ATT Golf shop

Been Waiting for - ATT Golf





Excited to visit ATT Golf - Scott Nakase from Japan

The Golf Shop We Have Been Waiting for

This is the type of shop you would expect to find in St Andrews, Scotland, or Pinehurst, North Carolina, not in Ormond, Melbourne.

I first visited the ATT Golf shop during the Australian Hickory Championship (held in conjunction with the Asia Pacific Championship) in Melbourne in September 2023 based on a recommendation from some of the organisers.

The shop is hidden among the shops you would expect on the main street of a suburb in a large Australian city. You walk past fast-food places, a pharmacy, a bakery, Australia Post, and a grocery store before reaching 497 North Road. The entrance is pretty nondescript and belies the treasures you find inside, not least of which are the proprietors Ross Baker and Henry Cussell.

Henry and Ross recently estimated they have a collective ninety-seven years of experience in the golf industry.

Ross has accumulated one of Australia's largest and most diverse collections of golf clubs. He is also recognised as one of the foremost clubmakers, restorers, and repairers of golf clubs in Australia, not to mention an expert on Australian golf club manufacturing and history.

Henry was the youngest pro ever appointed to the Head Pro position at a major Melbourne club when he was appointed at Yarra Yarra at the age of twenty. He then went into a marketing role at the Cape Schanck Golf Resort before spending sixteen years as the Director of Golf at The National Golf Club. As a result of extensive experience in the golf industry, Henry moved into consulting before partnering with Ross in ATT Golf. Henry brings extensive retailing skills, teaching skills, club fitting experience, and consulting experience to the partnership.

When I walked into the ATT Golf shop, it felt like I had walked into 'Golf Lovers' Heaven.'

I passed the golfing apparel and other goods you would expect in a golf retail store to the books on the side walls and the golf memorabilia. There were many interesting items, including 'The Australian Golfer' by Dan Soutar, first published in 1906, making it the earliest book written on Australian golf and the putter used by the great Norman von Nida to win the 1950 Australian Open.

I then moved on to the clubs. Wow!

I had recently become addicted to hickory golf, and I was amazed by the selection of hickory clubs of all varieties available. What was most noticeable was the condition of the clubs. Unlike the condition you often find at collectables stores, flea markets, and garage sales, these clubs were in excellent condition. It was obvious that an expert had lovingly restored them.

The selection was not limited to hickory clubs, and interesting clubs were available from all eras, showing the evolution of technology. I particularly liked the variety of the putters. There are many PING putters, including the very first PING putter model, the 1-A.

At the back of the shop lies Ross' workshop. I found him surrounded by five or six people (some of whom I had seen at the Hickory Championship) bombarding him with questions and listening intently to his answers.

While waiting to chat with Ross, I spoke with Henry and was fascinated to hear about his and Ross' experience and ATT Golf's unique services.

The name ATT Golf stands for 'All Things Traded Golf'. On the landing page of their website, it states, 'Welcome to ATT Golf. We buy, sell & exchange golf equipment'. The name and this description do not do justice to the activities of ATT Golf, which does far more than that.



Above - Ecstatic visitors from Japan visit the ATT shop. From L to R: Chance Tokuyama, Les Browne, Scott Nakase, Henry Hashimoto, Brad Wakamatsu, Yoshi Okubo, James Nakahata, Ross Baker, Ross Howard, Kuni Takazawa, Joe Sakae, Mayumi Nishimura

The Golf Shop We Have Been Waiting for

What makes ATT Golf unique?

Because ATT Golf is unique, describing what Ross and Henry offer at their shop isn't easy. The business has many facets, but it can broadly be divided into three areas: Collectable Clubs, Equipment, and Memorabilia; General Retail; and Services.

Collectable Clubs, Equipment, and Memorabilia

The ATT Golf store in Ormond is primarily a retail and services business, but it also has the feel of a museum and, in reality, is part museum.

Ross has around 8000 golf clubs in his collection, many of which are on display in the store, including many unique ones and ones of historical interest. He also has many other golf-related items of memorabilia on display.

For a lover of golf and particularly its history, it gives one great pleasure to browse the collection of hickory clubs, early steel-shafted clubs, classic Persimmon woods, early Metal woods, and putters from all eras. It is fascinating to see some odd clubs, such as the Lard Whistler iron, or some banned clubs, such as the Schenectady putter. Each club has an interesting story that Ross or Henry will gladly share.

During a recent visit to the store, Ross encouraged me to try out the very first PING putter model, the 1-A. I was amazed to hear the distinct 'ping' sound as I hit the ball, which gave rise to the company's name.

Other than a few items that are very dear to Ross and Henry, the remaining items on display are available for sale. The display is renewed regularly as Ross and Henry always look for new items, and customers bring items to trade in or sell

Anyone interested in the history of golf or golf equipment can easily browse the store for hours – at no charge.

At the back of the shop lies Ross's workshop. Watching him in action working on a club repair is fascinating; it makes you appreciate his skill. It is very seldom these days that we get the opportunity to watch a master artisan in any discipline display their skills.

Hickory golf continues to grow in popularity around the globe, and ATT Golf is the place to go for the serious hickory enthusiast. Ross will sell individual clubs or make up a set that matches your swing. This is no easy task, as there were few matched sets in the hickory days, and Ross will use his knowledge and experience to assemble a suitable set for you.

As mentioned in the introduction, during the Australian Hickory Championship (held in conjunction with the Asia Pacific Championship) in Melbourne in September 2023, many of the participants visited the ATT Store, including our visitors from Japan and New Zealand.

As you can see from some of the images, there were very excited and happy visitors and customers. They were very impressed by what they saw, and I am pleased to report they made a welcome contribution to the Australian economy.



Ross in the workshop with his beloved clubs



Henry in the front of the shop



Norman von Nida fluorescent headed driver



Arthur LeFevre (1921 Australian Open Champion) logo club



(1)



(2)



(4)



(3)

Photos (1), (2) and (3) Ross with his Ping by Karsten Model 1 A Redwood City California putter - Ping's first revolutionary putter. Photos (4) and (5) - The putter used by Norman von Nida to win the 1950 Australian Open, the first of his three Australian Open wins.



(5)

**You've been
to many
golf shops
haven't
you?**

**but not one
like this!**



ATTGolf is a golf shop alongside a vast collection of golf memorabilia from Ross Baker, Australia's Leading Traditional Clubmaker.

In addition, it's a golf shop where you can buy, sell, or exchange golf equipment, all while gaining a great insight into the history and traditions of the game.



**ATTGolf, 497 North Rd, Ormond, Vic.
0418 591 528 | sagegolf@yahoo.com**

www.attgolf.com.au

Mon to Fri: 8am to 6pm, Sat: 9.30am to 3pm

The Golf Shop We Have Been Waiting for

General Retail

There are new and second-hand clubs for sale. A key benefit of dealing with ATT Golf is their Club-fitting service. They pride themselves on providing unbiased advice on brands and products not related to supplier rebates and incentives.

With Henry's many years of experience in golf retail and fitting systems and Ross's expertise in club-making and repair, they will ensure you leave with the right set of clubs for you. They consider every detail, including grip size, which Henry believes is often overlooked. He likens it to buying a tennis racquet, where grip size is vital.

Finding decent second-hand equipment at golf shops has become difficult in the past few years. Second-hand clubs are a great way to get into golf or for someone looking to upgrade from an old set without spending a fortune.

Another advantage of dealing with ATT Golf is that they accept trade-ins on clubs, bags, and buggies, which has become rarer these days. How many of us have our old sets gathering dust in our garages?

They have a good selection of clothing and shoes, some from popular and well-known brands and some from lesser-known brands that are trendy and tasteful.

ATT Golf is a great place for golfers looking for an interesting item to display in their study, den, Man Cave, She Shed, or whatever you call your place of refuge from the world or family.

In addition to many items of memorabilia, there are novelty items and some interesting artwork. I was sharing my admiration of a Royal County Down print with Henry when he told me that his dad had started his career in golf there.

As a lover of golf books, I find the advent of the internet to be a double-edged sword. It has been great to access books from all over the world. The downside has been the decline of bookshops and second-hand bookshops in particular, although there seems to be a revival of late. Finding golf books in bookshops has been challenging for the past few years. It was exciting to see many golf books, including some rare ones, in one location in Ormond.

You will find trophies at ATT Golf if you hold a competition or tournament.

Services

Ross repairs, refurbishes, and restores clubs. He does the repairs himself rather than just returning them to the suppliers.

Ross conducts classes and forums on regripping, refinishing, re-shafting, and inserting new inlays.

They provide valuations on equipment.

Henry provides teaching services and game advice. He has been doing this for over forty years, and many have benefitted from his guidance and advice.

With Henry's extensive experience in the golf industry, from being a golf professional to running one of golf's most complex operations to dealing with developers, it is little surprise that he is sought out for advice. He provides consulting services for golf clubs and resorts, including staff training, Human Resources advice, Operations Management, and golf event staging.

He works on feasibility studies for new and existing golf projects and insolvency and rescue strategies, a requirement that, unfortunately, is becoming more frequent.

Finally, they provide advice on golf travel destinations.

The Golf Shop We Have Been Waiting for

Henry describes ATT Golf as a shop that is an interpretation of what he likes in a golf shop and what would entice him.

I can only agree with the interpretation. ATT Golf is the type of golf shop I have been waiting for, and I am sure I am not alone. If only it were in Sydney.

If you miss traditional customer service like I do, I recommend going to the ATT Golf shop. It will make you feel again how it is to be valued as a customer.

Ross and Henry are planning to start selling online during 2025, but in the interim, if you are searching for something, their contact details are below. They would be happy to hear from you.

www.attgolf.com.au

Ross Baker +61 411 202 061
rossgolfaus@gmail.com

Henry Cussell +61 418 591 528
sagegolf@yahoo.com

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Check out the full range of awesome golf wear at royalandawesome.com.au.
If you have any questions, want to share a pic of you rocking our pants, or just want
to say hi, email us at marketing@royalandawesome.com

Early Years of the Australian Golf Club

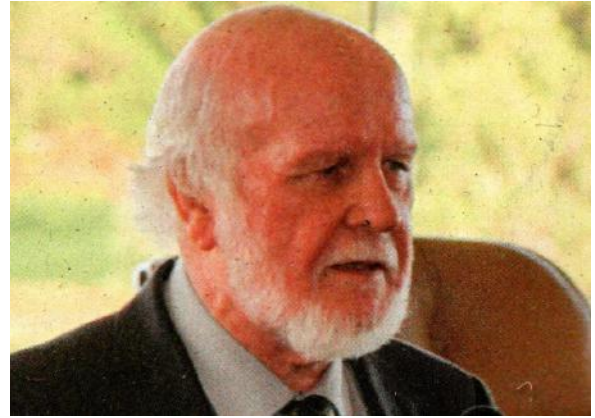
Michael Dysart and Michael Sheret

examine the genesis of an important club in the history of golf in Australia.

This article was first published in *Through the Green* December 2023. It is republished in *The Brassie* with some minor amendments, courtesy of the British Golf Collectors' Society



Michael Dysart



Michael Sheret

The Australian Golf Club is one of the most prestigious clubs in Sydney. It has a fine clubhouse and a freehold on a fine golf course, often used for important events in the Australian golfing calendar, particularly the Australian Open. Indeed, members of the Club took on most of the responsibility for financing and organising the first Australian Open, won in 1904 by Michael Scott. {1}

The Club makes a strong, and generally acknowledged, claim to be the oldest golf club in Australia. This article examines the Club's history from 1882 to 1896 to see how strongly this claim stacks up.

Definitions

When writing about the oldest golf club, historians seldom define what they mean by the word 'oldest'. This matter of definition has been discussed at length in a previous issue of *Through the Green*. {2}

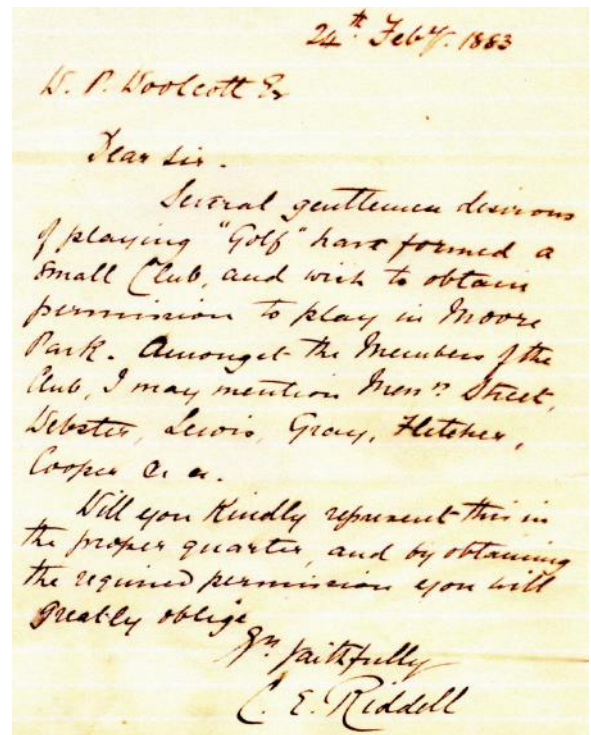
Briefly, three criteria make up the definition:

- The golf club must be currently operating as such.
- It is dated from the earliest reliable evidence of its existence.
- If there has been a significant period of inactivity, there must be evidence of continuity between the two stages of activity.

The third criterion is important because it is not uncommon for golf clubs to have significant periods of inactivity because of, for example, economic downturn, war or temporary loss of golf course.

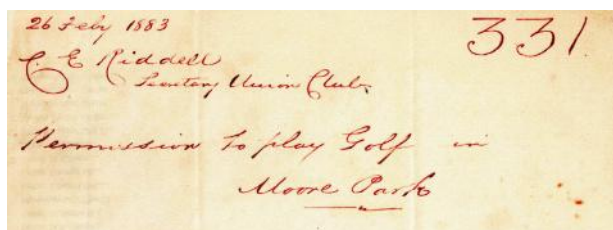
Foundation of the Australian Golf Club

Charles Edward Riddell was a member and Secretary of the Union Club in Sydney. {3} In February 1883 he wrote to the City Council of Sydney for permission to play golf at Moore Park, a public facility owned by the council. {4}



Request for permission to play golf at Moore Park, from the City Council of Sydney archives

As indicated by the 'et al' at the end of the first paragraph, the letter above does not give the names of all the members of the golf club. The members listed in the letter are: Charles Edward Riddell (Honorary Secretary), John W Street, Alexander Webster, George J Lewis, Alexander Gray, John W Fletcher and William Cooper. All, with the exception of Gray, were members of the Union Club. {5}



Permission granted, from the City Council of Sydney archives.

It will become clear, as this article proceeds, that Riddell was the most important person in the foundation and early consolidation of the Golf Club. He was no stranger to the game of golf. Before coming to Australia, he was a founding member in 1869 of Alnmouth Golf Club in Northumberland in the United Kingdom. {6}



Charles Edward Riddell

Following on from the request to play golf in Moore Park in 1883, a newspaper article in 1884 stated, 'we understand a select few have during the last year indulged in it [golf] from time to time on a portion of Moore Park.' The article then goes on to describe problems of protecting the putting greens from vandalism. {7}

In Riddell's letter to the City Council dated 24th February 1883 he used the past tense and stated that 'Several gentlemen desirous of playing "Golf" have formed a small Club ...'. The question arises as to when, before 24th February 1883, was the club formed.

Evidence that the Club was formed in 1882 is in a letter written in 1906 by John Walter Fletcher to the Club Captain, A. E. D'Arcy, giving him his recollections of the early years of the Club. Fletcher was a founding member of the Club and became its second secretary in 1895. The original letter has been lost, but transcriptions of the letter were published in a later newspaper article. {8} Fletcher stated: 'Some time about the winter of 1882 Mr C. E. Riddell, the secretary of the Union Club, contemplated the formation of a golf club, and certain men joined him in providing the necessary funds.'

Expansion of the Club

In February 1884 Riddell and Alexander Gray signed a newspaper advertisement inviting gentlemen interested in playing golf to join the Club. {9} On this occasion, for the first known time, they used the title the Australian Golf Club.



John Walter Fletcher

As a result of the advertisement, a meeting was held on 13th June 1884. {10} Thirty three gentlemen attended. A provisional committee of eleven was formed. Of the eleven, four (Fletcher, Gray, Lewis and Riddell) were original members from 1882. Riddell continued as Honorary Secretary. The membership in 1884 was recorded as thirty seven. {11}

The first game of the expanded club took place at Moore Park on 20th June 1884. {12} Due to rainy conditions, only nine members competed over the six-hole course, intended to be played twice for a competition round of twelve holes.

Loss of Course

By 1886 playing on common land, which was used for golf and other games, was becoming problematic. This was discussed at a meeting of the City Council on the 2nd of September. {13} Football and Cricket were to be played on specifically allocated areas in separate allocated seasons. For other games the Mayor was given the following authority: 'The playing of lacrosse, golf, and other games upon Moore Park, shall be subject to such regulations as the Mayor may from time to time approve'. The Mayor was enjoined to 'confer with the city solicitor as to the question of a satisfactory allotment of the ground.'

Golf at Moore Park became even more difficult for the fledgling club with the construction in 1887 of Lang Road running through the course. {14} The last golf played by the Club at Moore Park would appear to be for the Cadogan Cup won by E Fairfax Ross in 1888. {15} Faced with the task of finding a new golf site, the Club lost momentum. Losing the course was not the only cause of lost momentum. John Walter Fletcher, founding member and the second Honorary Secretary, in his recollections of the early years stated: '... the real cause why the club was dormant for a time was the departure of Mr Riddell for England – I think in 1889. He did not return, and there was no one at the time energetic enough to keep the game going'. {16} Despite a great deal of research, no evidence has been found that the members played elsewhere until 1895.

The Club Reactivates

In 1895 J W Fletcher, founding member from 1882, began to inquire about getting the Club going again. {17} He was directed to G S Yuill, a member of the Club who 'had control of everything'. Fletcher and several other members met with Yuill, who informed them of the Club's situation. The Cadogan Cup was in the custody of E Fairfax Ross. Playing clubs etc for the

members were held at the Union Club. The sum of £40 was held in the Union Bank in credit for the Club. {18} Fletcher considered that as a result of that meeting the Australian Club had been resuscitated and he stressed that it was the continuation of the club founded in 1882.

The press in 1895 acknowledged the revival of the Club, as these newspaper excerpts show. 'The original Australian Golf Club, started 14 years ago, has been resuscitated. The club has obtained permission to play on what is known as Queen's Park lying to the east of the Centennial Park. An excellent course has been laid out, in the opinion of many capable of being made the best links in Australia. A clubhouse has been secured close to the ground. Mr J. W. Fletcher is the hon. secretary.' {19} 'The Governor [of New South Wales, Lord Hampden] has consented to become the patron of the Australian Golf Club.' {20}

By September 1896 the Club was thriving. The press named the officers of the Club, gave the programme of competitions and some background to the Cadogan Cup. {21} The officers were: President, G S Yuill; Vice-Presidents, D Anderson & the Hon. John Hughes; Captain, Dr E Fairfax Ross; Hon. Secretary, J W Fletcher; Hon. Treasurer, R S Collum; Committee, C C Griffith, C R Burnside, F Aronson, J W Street & B Macarthur. The Cadogan Cup was to be played on 26th September, medal competitions monthly and bogey competitions every three months. C H Cadogan was, along with Charles Riddell, a founding member of the Alnmouth Golf Club. {22} He visited Australia in 1884, played golf at Moore Park and donated the challenge cup with his name (see Endnote 8). The Cadogan Cup is still played for today. It is one of the Australian Golf Club's most important trophies and is prominently displayed in the clubhouse.

Continuity of Membership: Moore Park Phase to Queen's Park Phase.

The most obvious and important carryover of membership from the two phases are in the persons of J W Fletcher, G S Yuill and Dr E Fairfax Ross (see Endnote 8). Fletcher, a founding member in 1882, initiated the revival of the Club in 1895 and became the Hon. Secretary. Yuill was the person who 'controlled everything' during the period of inactivity and was able to give Fletcher 'full information', presumably regarding Club records. Fairfax Ross, as the winner of the Cadogan Cup in 1888, had the Cup in his possession. The 'clubs etc' were held in safekeeping at the Union Club.

The memberships in 1882 and after expansion in 1884 are discussed in the text and referenced in Endnotes 5, 10 and 11. The only surviving list of members for 1895 is held at the Australian Golf Club. {23} In addition to Fletcher, Yuill and Fairfax Ross, another six carryover members can be identified. J W Street (1882 & 1884 member); W R Campbell (1884 committee); D Finlayson (1884 committee); Hamilton Osborne (1884 committee); D McIntyre (1884 member); H W Dangar (1884 member).

Conclusions

It will be obvious to readers that the authors have gone to some lengths to establish continuity between the Moore Park phase, ending in 1888, and the Queen's Park phase, beginning in 1895. This has been necessary because the media often cite other clubs, which started later than the Australian Golf Club, to be the oldest in Australia.

To sum up, the Australian Golf Club has strong evidence to be the oldest in Australia.

It began in 1882 dominated by members of the Union Club. In 1884 it expanded its membership and became more formal with a committee of eleven. After losing its course at Moore Park in 1888, it became dormant with regard to playing activity. In 1895 the Club was resuscitated and secured Queen's Park for their course. There is abundant evidence of continuity between the Moore Park phase and the Queen's Park phase:

- The carryover of membership.
- The carryover of the Cadogan Cup.
- The carryover of the Club's bank account in credit.
- The carryover of the name, Australian Golf Club.
- The carryover of the Club's possessions, namely the 'clubs etc' held in safekeeping at the Union Club.
- The fact that when Fletcher et al met to get golf going again, they did not regard themselves as starting a new club. They were simply resuscitating a club that had been dormant for a few years.

Endnotes

{1} Sydney Morning Herald, 3rd September 1904 p4 5th September 1904 p12. *Sydney Mail & New South Wales Advertiser*, 7th September 1904 p632, 14th September 1904, p668. Programme for Australian Open 1904 reproduced in *Open Fever* p118 by Colin Strachan, printed by Rightway, Sydney 2018.

{2} *Thoughts on Historical Evidence and Golf Myths* by Michael Sheret, *Through the Green*, June 2020, pp14-15.

{3} The Union Club was founded as a city club for gentlemen in 1857. It still operates today, with a more inclusive membership, as the Union, University & Schools Club. <Club History – Union, University & Schools Club (uusc.com.au)> accessed 10th July 2023.

{4} There is a Moore Park Golf Course operating today under the authority of the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust. The modern course is located to the southwest not far from where golf was played in the 1880s. *The History of Moore Park, Sydney*, pp 36 & 45, by John W Ross, online only <Moore_Park_History.pdf (shazbeige.com)> accessed 10th July 2023. Sydney Morning Herald, 18th July 1884, p7.

{5} Archives of the Union Club.

{6} *Golf at Alnmouth* by D P Walton, 1992, p6.

{7} Sydney Morning Herald, 23rd February 1884, p13. Note that this event took place before the expansion of the Club in June later that year.

{8} Sydney Morning Herald, 1st November 1921, p7.

{9} Sydney Morning Herald, 23rd February 1884, p2.

{10} Sydney Morning Herald, 21st June 1884, p8.

{11} Archived minutes of the Municipal Council of Sydney, dated as between 23rd June and 17th July 1884. <<https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/943479> > accessed 10th July 2023.

{12} Daily Telegraph, 24th June 1884, p6.

{13} Evening News, 18th September 1886, p3.

{14} *The History of Moore Park, Sydney*, p 45, by John W Ross, online only <Moore_Park_History.pdf (shazbeige.com)> accessed 10th July 2023.

{15} Sydney Mail & New South Wales Advertiser, 22nd May 1897, p1104.

{16} Sydney Morning Herald, 1st November 1921, p7.

{17} Ibid.

{18} The credit balance was also acknowledged in contemporaneous newspaper reports. Sydney Morning Herald, 7th September 1895, p12. Sydney Mail & New South Wales Advertiser, 19th September 1896, p617.

{19} Sydney Morning Herald, 7th September 1895, p12.

{20} Sydney Morning Herald, 29th November 1895, p3.

{21} Sydney Mail & New South Wales Advertiser, 19th September 1896, p617.

{22} *Golf at Alnmouth* by D P Walton, 1992, p6.

{23} *History of the Australian Golf Club and Golfing Information* by J. P. Hardy, 1947. The author was the Club Captain from 1937 to 1944. His book was never published, possibly because of the inclusion of 'Golfing Information', much of which has no bearing on the history of the Club. A great amount of the Club's archives were destroyed in the clubhouse fire of 1931. The minute books from 1895 survived (page 29) and Hardy was able to list the sixty-three 1895 members of the Club (page 19). The 1895 members as listed follows. G S Yuill, J W Fletcher, C C Griffith, W I Gollin, T Hughes, G Turnbull, Currie Ellis, W C Willis, Fletcher Dickson, D Anderson, C R Burnside, E Fairfax Ross, R N Richards, John Bell, E Reading, the Hon. John Hughes, H C Dangar, The Hon. W R Campbell, D Finlayson, D McIntyre, Hamilton Osborne, Senator J T Walker, R R Garran, H S Collum, F Aronson, Gillies Moreton, F G McRae, N Shiels, I T Cohen, M C Cowlshaw, W McMillen, H S Littlejohn, Dr Quaife,

I I Weston, Colin Caird, H Miskin, Adrian Knox (later Sir Adrian), Colin Stephen, E S Cape, E D Blomfield, J B Macarthur, W Franks, F W Learoyd, A E Tooth, T Russell French, J W Street, W B Mitchell, A T Cape, R G Burnside, A H McArthur, Garvin Scott, Capt. H W Dangar, Dr Watson Munro, His Excellency the Governor, Lord Hampden, Dr T H Hughes, N McLaurin, W F Lawson, Professor Anderson Stuart, David Reid, C L Cowper, G McRae, Hugh Tyser and the Hon. Mr Justice Backhouse.

Additional Notes

Michael Dysart is a member of the Australian Golf Club and the architect of its splendid clubhouse. He has been researching the Club's history for several years.

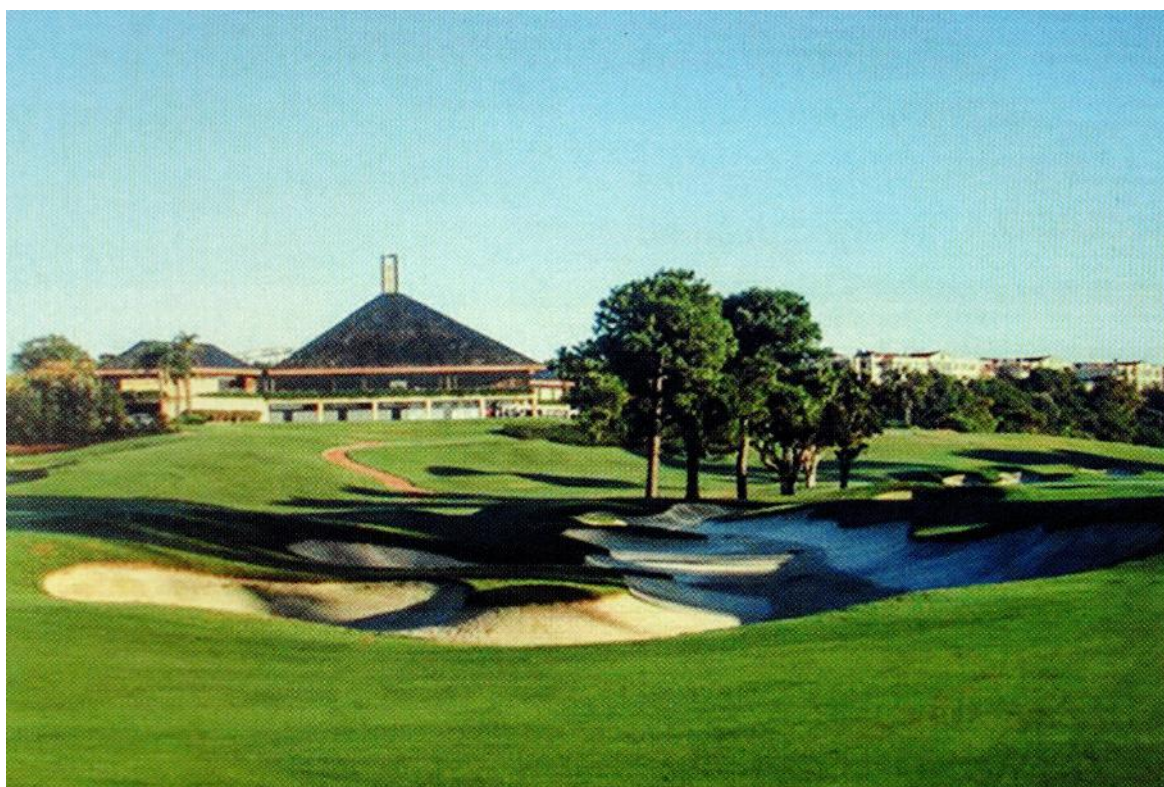
The Australian Golf Club played at Queen's Park until it moved to Botany in 1899. Securing their present site in Kensington, which opened for play in 1905, is described in *Open Fever* Chapters 13 & 15 by Colin Strachan, printed by Rightway, Sydney 2018.

Acknowledgements

The late BGCS member Don Dunne was Hon. Historian for the Australian Golf Club. In addition to his own original research, he was responsible for archiving unpublished research papers on the history of the Club. In particular these archives include the Hardy history of the Club, the link to the 1869 Alnmouth Golf Club and the Cadogan connection, all of which were used for this article.

Don would have been delighted to see this article published in *Through the Green*.

Over the years Erwin Huber, Peter Larkin and Norman Richardson have also contributed to the research. Robert Whitelaw, Hon. Historian for the Union Club, provided much archival information on the ties to the Union Club.



The Australian Golf Club as it is today

Meet our Hickory Golfers



Please tell us a bit about yourself.

Thank you so much for asking. My name is Suzanne (Suz) Brown, a Leo, born on August 8th in Bundaberg, Queensland.

I have been really into sports since I was very young. As a junior, I competed at the Qld Country Title in cross-country & various athletic championships. Like many Australian kids, I joined young Nippers in Bundaberg. I also played Softball and Vigoro. I moved to Sydney at 19 years old and worked first in retail and then went into Foreign Exchange and Travel. During the course of my work, I met a client named David Brown. We got married and have four daughters.

Which golf club(s) do you belong to?

Elanora Country Club and Manly Golf Club, both in Sydney

How did you get into golf?

In 2017, I tore a hamstring, which put me out of sports for three months. When I had recovered from my injury, David organised for me to attend an introductory golf clinic for ladies at Manly Golf Club. David has been a member of Manly for 40 years and The Australian Golf Club for 20.

As a late starter, I realised I had a lot to learn; if I wanted to be the best I could be at a sport, I took up begrudgingly. After the clinic, I moved on to the rules and officiating. I also joined the Barrenjoey and Social committees for three years. I did everything I could to learn about golf, including caddying for Ladies' Grade and Men's Pennants.

What is your handicap?

When I joined, my quest was to understand how to get my handicap down from 45 to start with, as low as possible. By the time COVID hit, I had got my GA down to 10.1, and it has remained around that level since then.

During COVID, it was hard to get games due to full fields or not getting to places due to the restrictions put in place. At this stage, I joined Elanora Country Club, which gave me variation and more possibilities to get more games. I was selected in both the Grade and Silver teams for Elanora CC.

Have you had any success with the steel shafts?

I won the Wilkinson Shield at Manly with David. At Elanora, I won the Ladies' Foursomes in 2020/21 and 2021/22, as well as the Mixed Foursomes and the Mixed Fourball in 2023. Trying my hand further afield, I won the Pymble Cup, the Canberra Cup, and The Australian House Cup last year.

How did you get into hickory golf?

I have enjoyed collecting items from bygone eras since my teenage years. In particular, I love everything from the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne. Unsurprisingly, my interest in hickory golf was love at first sight. I was keen straight away. I loved the option to dress in clothes from that era.

What do you enjoy about hickory golf?

The excitement I get when I know I'm going to play with hickory sticks is a sense of the unknown. How well can I play today? Will I have the rhythm? I feel hickory golf gives me a better understanding of the game from a different angle. It's a game of finesse and grace. A slow, controlled takeaway and follow-through. Do I look the part? Can I master a good round? I find it thrilling, and I love

the unusual connection we, as hickory club players, have. We come together with a common interest, and it's fun. I haven't played at a tournament where I haven't enjoyed it, regardless of the outcome.

Hickory offers so much in the way of upgrading your clubs and trying different clubs to suit you. I personally look forward to trying out more clubs to benefit my game. Playing courses out of the area and places we haven't played yet also adds to the adventure.

What are your best results in hickory golf?

In 2019, I was runner-up in the Ladies to Isabelle Mansfield at the Australian Hickory Championship at Warringah. Last year, we headed to Bowral for the NSW Hickory Championship, and I won the Ladies. I recently repeated this win at the 2024 NSW Hickory Championship at Sawtell and followed this up with a win at the 2024 Australian Championship at Manly/Cromer.

Any other sports, hobbies or activities?

Since I was a youngster, I have been involved in Athletics and Lifesaving. I competed at local, state, national and international levels. I trained hard, and my commitment allowed me to enjoy travelling here and abroad. Along the way, I have won some titles and set some records (some of which still stand).

Personal highlights include the Great Wall of China Marathon in 2005 and the Sydney Marathon. I competed in the World Masters Lifesaving Relay Team in France, where we had a Silver podium finish. My resume includes 32 Sydney City to Surfs, MS Ride from Heath to Wollongong, the Tough Mudder and the Oxfam 100km.

Training, competing and friendships along the way have been a huge part of my life. I still play Softball, Croquet, Snooker and Lawn Bowls. I also volunteer at Dalwood Spilstead, a charity that helps children with medical issues, and garden clubs at Manly & Elanora.

Please share details of your recent trip.

I travelled to the US Masters last year, and to say I was on cloud 9 is an understatement. This tour also had me playing at Pinehurst 2, 4 and 8, National Country Club, Palmetto, Reserve, Sage Valley (my favourite course ever!!!), and TPC Sawgrass (Dye Valley and the Stadium Course). I loved everything about my trip. The Masters is something else. Huge thanks to David, who is the biggest supporter of all my crazy adventures.

What has been your most memorable shot?

During my recent trip to the US Masters, while playing the famous 17th hole at Sawgrass, I got a birdie – I got the bag tag, and they engraved it with a 2.

Most significant influence on your golf?

David. After each game, he asks me two questions. Were the fairways green? Yes! Were the people you played with nice? Yes!!!

Any final messages?

If I could inspire one person to give golf or, in particular, hickory golf a go, then I've done my job. Every sport needs participants; without them, there is no event.

Suz Brown



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)

Photos (1) Hole in one 11th hole at Manly GC 2021 (2) At the 2024 Masters (3) At the Australian 2024 Hickory Championship at Warringah GC Suz (right) with Alice Mitsuhashi (left), (4) With new friends from overseas at Manly GC during the Australian 2024 Hickory Championship, (5) Birdie on the infamous 17th hole at TPC Sawgrass, (6) With the NSW Women's Hickory Championship trophy at Bowral

First in our Series 'Heroes of the Game' features Tommy Moore - Patron of the Australian Golf Heritage Society (Part 2)



Peter Thomson (left) and Tommy Moore PGA Centenary Dinner 2011

Part 1 of this article appeared in Issue 1 2024 July of The Brassie

Part 2

Tournament Golf

Tommy's main focus was on his career as a club professional, but he did play some tournament golf.

His earliest notable win was while he was at the Spence and Spring School. He participated in an apprentice assistants' tournament over two rounds at St. Michael's in 1952. He won the handicap event over two rounds with good scores despite a strong southerly wind that blew.

His next significant victory was the Royal Sydney Cup in 1957. This was a prestigious event played over a long weekend, with one round on Saturday and two on the holiday Monday.

His most notable victory was the NSW PGA Foursomes Championship at Killara with Frank Phillips in 1963. Phillips was one of the longest hitters of his time and won the 1957 and 1961 Australian Opens.

In the 1965 Australian Open, Phillips tied second with Jack Nicklaus, behind winner Gary Player, but ahead of Peter Thomson, Bruce Devlin, and Bob Charles. Not bad company. In the majors, Phillips finished a creditable twelfth in the 1964 Open Championship won by Tony Lema at St Andrews.

Tommy first met Phillips in 1948 at Moss Vale, where he was the assistant pro. In 1961, shortly before the NSW PGA Foursomes Championship, when Phillips returned from overseas, he required a partner and contacted Tommy. They made a late entry. They came third at Cromer. In 1962, they played together again at Oatlands without success.

In 1963, it was a different story. The Championship was played at Killara, where Tommy had been a caddie. This time, they played well and won, beating Bruce Devlin and Ted Ball. Tommy believes they won because he and Phillips had complementary games – Phillips was long, and Tommy had a good short game.

Foursomes is a game of trust. Tommy was obviously a good player if Phillips chose him as a Foursomes partner. Another indicator of his golfing prowess is the names on the NSW PGA Foursomes Trophy. Among many other famous names in Australian Golf, the list includes Norman von Nida, Ossie Pickworth, Eric Cremin, Kel Nagle, Bruce Crampton, and Bruce Devlin.

Tommy played in many local and interstate competitions, as well as in New Zealand, but it was challenging to compete successfully while holding down a club professional job.

He also had one attempt at the Open Championship at Troon in 1973. Unfortunately, for personal reasons, he could only travel to the UK shortly before Qualifying started and was still suffering from jet lag when the Championship began. He tried to prequalify at Gales Links but was unsuccessful. He did have the opportunity to watch the tournament and saw many great golfers, including winner Tom Weiskopf.

The Life of a Golf Pro

Tommy recalled that when he first became a professional, they were looked down upon as glorified caddies who could play. They were generally called by their surnames, so Tommy was commonly addressed as 'Moore'.

Life as a golf club professional in the 1950s and 1960s was tough, although some say it is still tough. The club pro was a contracted employee who would receive a small stipend for being the pro and free rent for the Pro Shop.

The shop was open seven days a week, for up to ninety hours in summer, and the only day the shop closed was Christmas Day. Although Tommy employed trainees to look after the shop when absent, he still had to work long hours, including weekends.

The golf club's ruling committee was critical to the club professional's success. Tommy believed that if there was a good committee that respected the pro, things were good for the pro and the club.



Dining with Legends - Norman von Nida (Right), Peter Thomson (2nd from Right) and Tommy Moore (3rd from Right)

Heroes of the Game - Tommy Moore

If there was a bad committee, particularly if they believed that the pro was making more money than he should, life would be tough for the pro.

Like all club pros at the time, Tommy had learned the art of club-making and assembling. He liked making clubs for people that suited them. Tommy likened it to a tailor making clothes that fit. By the 1970s, however, club golf professionals no longer made golf clubs or assembled them as they were being made in factories.

Tommy was one of the few club golf professionals who had studied as they had generally started at 13,14 and 15 when they left school. His accountancy studies helped him keep his own books and run a successful business.

Tommy believed that people became club professional golfers because they were passionate about the game. If they weren't passionate, they wouldn't last.

Tommy gave thousands of lessons over the years and touched many people's lives. His students came from all walks of life, from solicitors to doctors to dentists to cricketers to Olympic athletes. One of Tommy's star pupils was the Olympic runner Betty Cuthbert, who Tommy described as a lovely, lovely lady.

He remembers teaching an Olympic weightlifter, who was probably the only pupil he struggled to teach because his muscles didn't work normally. He couldn't get back to the ball when he got the club back because of his muscles.

Tommy was teaching at a time before the advent of video. However, many new gadgets and devices emerged during that era. Tommy did not have much time for these and believed in an old-fashioned approach – watching, explaining, and getting people to hit balls.

Jack Newton

On the professional side, Tommy's star pupil was Jack Newton. Jack Newton Senior (Jack Newton's dad) had been a coal miner in West Cessnock but was retrenched in 1956.

Jack Sr, his wife Meg, young Jack, and sister Janet moved down to West Epping in Sydney, where Jack Senior became a policeman, and Meg resumed her nursing career.

They joined the Muirfield Golf Club. Jack Senior became a good golfer, eventually playing off scratch. Tommy recalled that Meg was a keen golfer who had won several club championships. Jack Junior joined when he was twelve with a first handicap of twenty-two, down to four a couple of years later.

Tommy recounts that young Jack was a natural who he helped a lot.

He was a powerful man, and he was able to hit a long drive. I would get him out there, and I would stamp on the ball, and I'd say, 'go and hit that, you silly bugger'. He said, 'if you would get out of the road, I'll show you' and he could hit that on to the green. He could do the same with a fairway wood out of a bad lie. He was also a good putter.

He had a strong desire to win and a killer instinct. Whether he played golf, ping pong, or snooker didn't matter. He would try to beat you.

One day, we had a championship at Muirfield, and the best score in the clubhouse was par. He had five holes left and got five threes to finish up with to win. He had a great desire to win even in those days.

When he was about 18, Tommy told Norm von Nida that Jack Junior had potential and introduced them. Von Nida took Jack Junior under his wing, and Jack Junior acknowledged that Von Nida had played a key role in his early career.

Newton won several tournaments, including the 1979 Australian Open, with his dad as caddy. He finished second in the 1975 Open Championship at Carnoustie, losing in a playoff to Tom Watson, and also second to Seve Ballesteros in the 1980 Masters.

Newton's career was tragically cut short due to an accident in 1983 as he was entering his prime.



Left Photo: Tommy Moore teeing off on the seventh hole at New South Wales Golf Club in 1968 on the day Tommy introduced Jack Newton to Norman von Nida.

Right Photo: Jack Newton teeing off on the same hole From L - R Norman von Nida, Tommy Moore, Jack Newton Jnr., Jack Newton Sr.

Tommy said that Newton was very talented, and it was sad that he didn't fully realise his potential due to the accident.

Newton acknowledged Tommy Moore in his autobiography as a 'big help to me in my formative years.'

Alex 'Sandy' Faichney

In the mid-1950s, golf was still a winter game, and very few people played in the summer. Tommy got a job at the Slazenger factory and worked there five days during the week and at Muirfield on the weekend. That's when he got under the thumb of Alex 'Sandy' Faichney, a golf iron-head maker.

Britain wasn't in a very good place after the war, and in 1948, Faichney met Norman von Nida. The Von said we need a clubmaker in Australia, and I'll get you a job there. So the Von organised for him to bring his family to Australia in 1948, and Faichney, a five handicapper in Scotland, was appointed Head of the Slazenger Golf Club Manufacturing Division.

The Slazenger factory was out Redfern way and Tommy worked a lathe at the factory. He worked at the Slazenger factory for three months over the summer for only about two years because television came in 1956, golf boomed, and he was needed at Muirfield.

Tommy had an excellent education working with Faichney, who became a world-renowned club-maker. Tommy described the clubs made by Faichney as astonishing, and they were highly sought after by overseas stars, including Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player.

Interestingly, Lee Trevino used a set of Faichney Slazenger irons to win the 1971 and 1972 Opens. Unfortunately, he had to put adhesive tape over the Slazenger name as he was contracted to another club manufacturer.

The PGA

Tommy joined the Committee in 1970 as he thought everyone should show an interest in their profession.

He became chairperson of the New South Wales section in about 1972 for about five years. That was a challenging job.

Colin Johnson resigned as chairperson in December, and Tommy was elected. Their annual meeting was in March. The Secretary told Tommy that they expected to break even for the year. He went to the annual meeting and presented a \$ 3,000 loss, and Tommy was roundly criticised for being a bad organiser.

The following year, they had a proliferation of events where they made money, and at the next annual meeting, they reported a profit of \$ 15,000. He was again criticised for being stupid and not doing something with this money as they were not a profit-making organisation. So if you made money, you were criticised; if you lost money, you were criticised.

One of the things that pleased Tommy the most during his tenure was the PGA taking over the education of young pros. Until that point, educating the young pros was a hit-and-miss affair. It depended on the quality of the pro that the assistant was working for, and that varied greatly.

Tommy recounts that in the early 1970s, at a committee meeting, he proposed that women be accepted as members of the PGA. The motion was laughed at and easily defeated. Tommy could not understand why women were not treated equally and was pleased when they were eventually accepted as members.

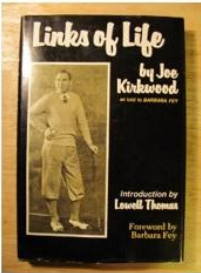
In 1999, Tommy was appointed a Life Member of the PGA for his service to golf, particularly for his work developing senior golf.

Only around fifty people have received this honour in over one hundred and ten years.

Part 3 of this article will appear in *The Brassie Issue 2 2025*



PGA Life Members Left to Right Billy Dunk, Tommy Moore, Dave Mercer, Col Johnson



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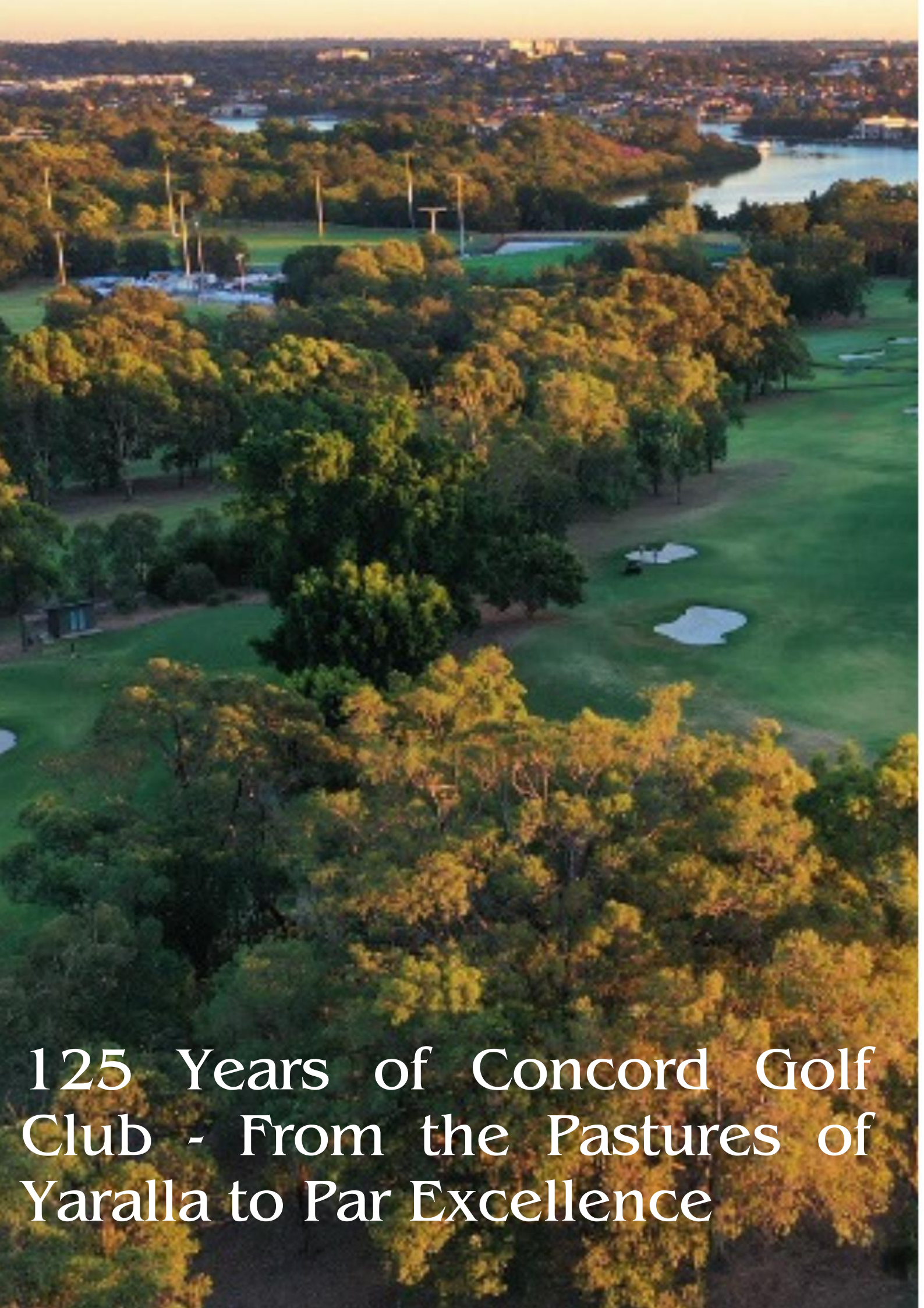
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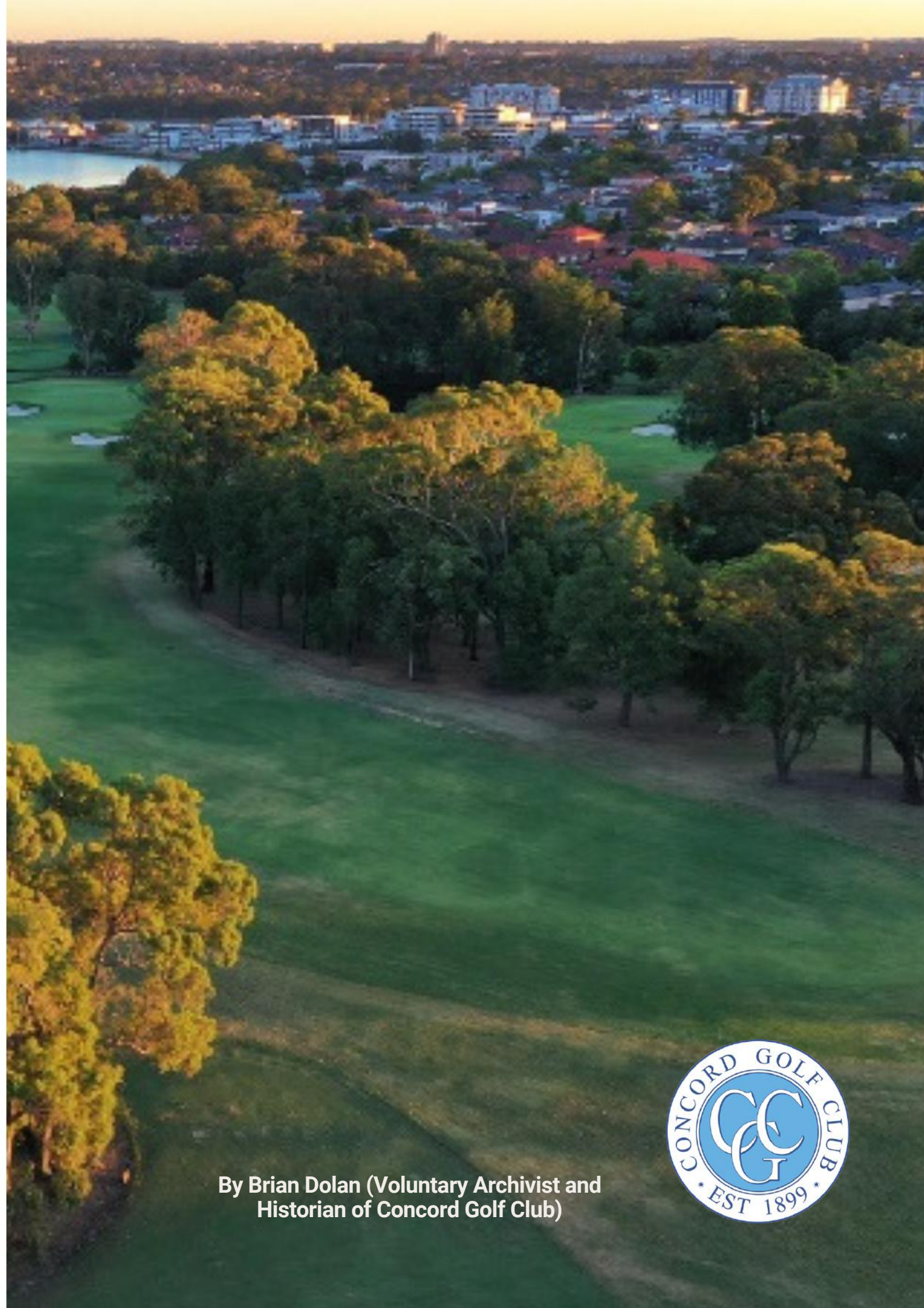
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125 Years of Concord Golf Club - From the Pastures of Yaralla to Par Excellence



**By Brian Dolan (Voluntary Archivist and
Historian of Concord Golf Club)**





Dame Eadith Walker's Estate Yaralla



Dame Eadith Walker



Concord's original architect, Dan Soutar

125 Years of Concord Golf Club

Concord Golf Club is in the Sydney suburb of Concord, just over 10 km west of the Sydney CBD, near the southern shore of the Parramatta River.

Early History

In the late 1850s, a wealthy businessman named Thomas Walker began acquiring a country estate for himself in the Concord area by buying up blocks of land.

Eventually, he came to own a large slab of present-day Concord and built a fine house for himself, which he named Yaralla, on what is now called Yaralla Point.

His estate sprawled over 600 acres. Walker's large land acquisition proved, in time, an immensely valuable legacy for Concord as a whole. Much of the land he owned was spared from residential development, with the result that modern, suburban Concord has unusually large tracts of open space.

When Thomas Walker died in 1886, his daughter Eadith inherited most of his substantial estate. She was aged 25.

Golf was first played at Concord in 1893.

In 1893 a group of Sydney golf enthusiasts had obtained Miss Eadith Walker's permission to use part of her Yaralla Estate at Concord as a golf course and formed themselves into a club which they named the Sydney Golf Club. Their initiative was to prove of immense historical importance to the game in Australia for it led to the establishment of not one but two of the nation's leading clubs, Concord and Royal Sydney. An Irish-born lawyer named Leonard Dobbin played a leading role in forming the new club. One contemporary commentator gave Dobbin the credit for not only establishing a club at Concord but for bringing the game to life in Sydney. Leo Dobbin, as he was known to friends, was new to golf. He said he did not start playing the game until May 1893. He was keen on tennis and was introduced to golf by a fellow tennis player named Irving Kent. Kent was a young Queensland-born barrister who learned to play golf in England.

Leo Dobbin became a very enthusiastic golfer. Two months after taking up the game he set about forming a club with the help of Irving Kent. Dobbin approached Eadith Walker and asked if the new club could use her estate. Eadith Walker was by nature a generous woman, and it seems she had a special fondness for golf and golfers. She granted Dobbin all he asked for and more. Dobbin was in his mid-twenties, and Eadith was about 32. The new club was not only given permission to lay out a nine-hole course on Yaralla's land, but its members were offered the use of the lodge at its front gate or part thereof as a clubhouse. The original course was not where it is now. It was somewhere near the intersection of Concord Road and The Drive because that was where the lodge, which was the original clubhouse, was.

Thus, the Sydney Golf Club, later to be the Royal Sydney Golf Club, was formed at Concord.

Later in 1893 some Sydney Golf Club members wanted to find another area for a course. Their motivation was primarily to find true links-style, sandy land for the course, which they found in the Bondi area. So, by the end of 1893, Sydney Golf Club had two courses, one at Concord and one at Bondi.

Over the next few years, the Sydney Golf Club was spending more money on the Bondi links. There was a move in 1897 to abandon the Concord Links and move permanently to Bondi.

Finally, in June 1899, the club decided to spend no money at all in Concord. Royal Sydney Golf Club (It had acquired the name in 1897 when Queen Victoria approved the prefix royal) was clearly ready to sever its ties with Concord altogether. Thus, in 1899, the Royal Sydney Golf Club left the Concord area for good. Golf at Concord certainly did not die. The 9-hole course was still available, and there were golfers living in affluent suburbs nearby, such as Strathfield and Burwood, who had no desire to track all the way to Bondi for a game. In 1898, a few of them, including Alex Orr, met to discuss the possibility of forming a new Concord-based club. It was a small yet promising beginning.

When Sydney Golf Club abandoned the Concord links in 1899, the newly formed Concord Golf Club took over.

There were several problems with the current Concord links. It was a temporary lease; it extended to the cattle sale yards and was likely to be used for residential development. Cattle on the course were a continuing problem. Concord Golf Club needed to find a new permanent home.

To assist in this process, in 1905, Concord Golf Club combined with some Strathfield Golf Club members, who also had problems at their course, to form Concord Golf Links Ltd. An entity was created to purchase land in Concord. Concord Golf Club as a separate entity would continue, and the Strathfield Golf Club members would join Concord Golf Club.

There was another tract of Walker land which was available. It was called the Police Paddock because local police rented it from the Walkers for their horses. It consisted of 114 acres (46 hectares) of gently undulating land, which by the turn of the century was still well-timbered. In 1905, the paddock was bought for £50 an acre from Eadith Walker by the Concord Golf Links Ltd.

Extra land was leased from Eadith Walker. This extra land totals just over 22 acres. The lease agreement with Eadith Walker was finalised on the 15th of June 1906, and the rent was set at £45 for the lot.

Dan Soutar, the Scottish professional and course designer, had a vast expanse of land to work in, totalling 136 acres. He was able to lay out not only an eighteen-hole course for members, which was 5,600 metres long, but also a nine-hole, 1,800 metres long course for the ladies, who were becoming a force within the club. Work on building the courses was well underway when the Sydney Mail of 5 September 1906 reported a visit to the course by directors of Concord Golf Links Ltd and various other members of the Concord Golf Club and Strathfield Golf Club.

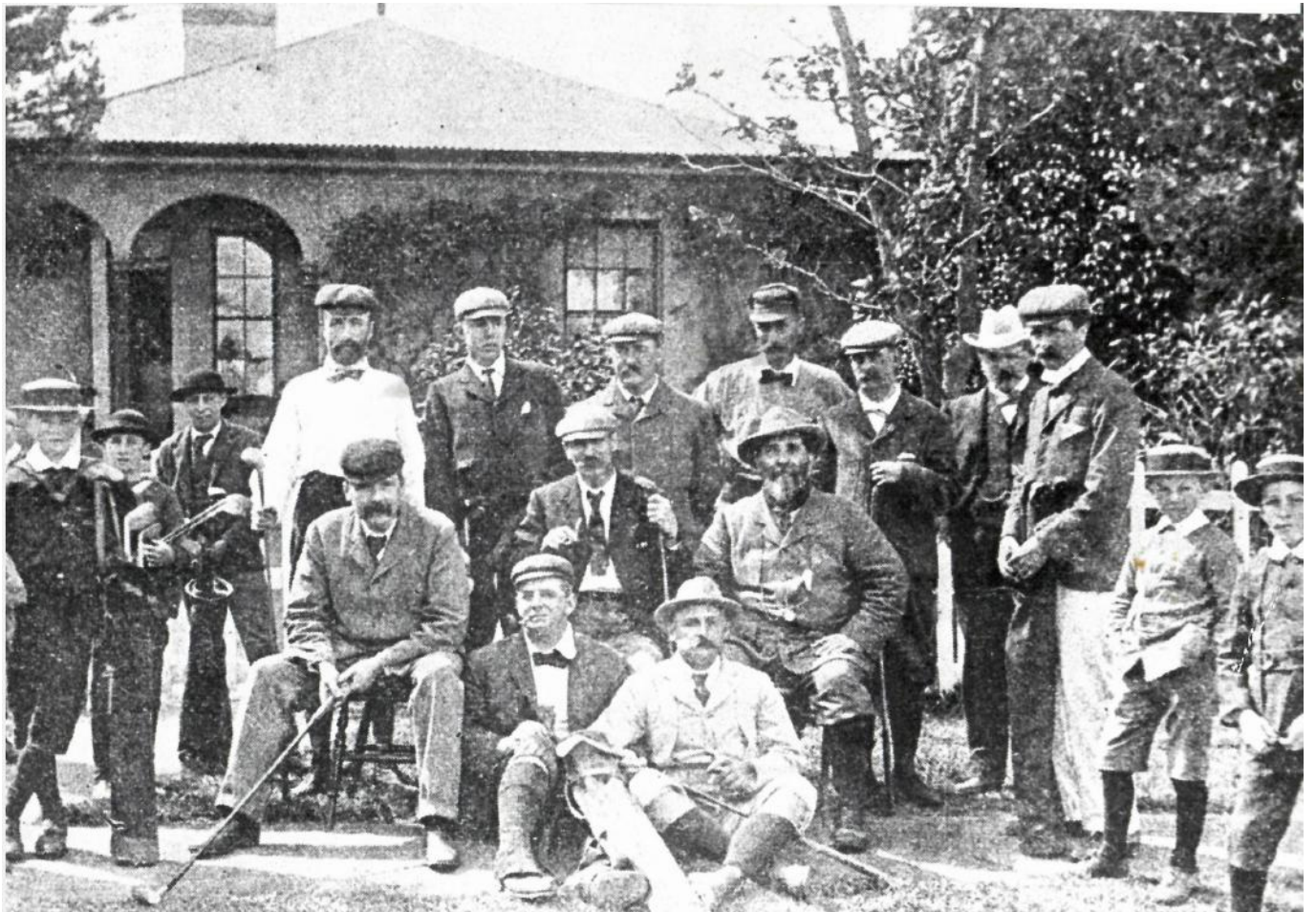
The courses were finished by April 1907, and Concord members began playing on them soon afterwards. The Strathfield members were absorbed into Concord GC.

After the many disruptions and the uncertainty of the past eight years, it must have been a relief for all connected with the club to know that, at last, they had acquired a permanent home.

In 1914, in the midst of World War I, the club found itself compelled to make some big decisions about the future. The legal arrangement by which the club leased the golf course from Concord Golf Ltd was due to expire on 16 March 1916, so the club had to decide what to do thereafter. That is, to renew the lease or somehow acquire ownership of the course in its own right.



Above: Sydney Golf Club Associates in 1896. The photo was taken at Bondi, but several of the group were Concord-based



Above: Royal Sydney and visiting Strathfield golfers outside the lodge at Concord which was used as a clubhouse - October 1898

125 Years of Concord Golf Club

David Roxburgh, who was Concord's president when the club began discussing this in earnest towards the end of 1914, later wrote a detailed account of how the club dealt with the matter. The main problem was that several of the original shareholders in Concord Golf Links Ltd had died since the company was formed nine years earlier, and people who had inherited their shares were keen for the company to sell the land.

In 1915, the club settled on a course of action; it would effectively incorporate itself by forming Concord Golf Club Ltd, which would then acquire the course from Concord Golf Links Ltd.

An essential part of the deal was that Concord Golf Links Ltd would, in the meantime, sell off a strip of land along Correys Avenue, then the golf course's southern boundary, and use the proceeds to pay the money it still owed the Walker Estate for the purchase of the land in 1906.

Nearly 30 acres of the club's land along Correys Avenue was duly sold, enabling the debt to the Walker Estate to be settled. The land was subdivided and a new street, Links Avenue, was built through it. Having thus completed its last allotted function, Concord Golf Links Ltd was placed in liquidation on 22 October 1915.

The club also approached Concord Council seeking to buy Mortlake Street, the area designated for a street but still unused, which ran along the eastern boundary of the course, adjoining Majors Bay Road. David Roxburgh and another member experienced in business, Walter Keep, an older brother of Leonard Keep, went to see Concord's mayor, David Cumming, on 1 December 1914, in the hope of persuading him to sell the land. The mayor declined, but he did invite the club to effectively take control of the land by erecting a fence on Mortlake Street's eastern boundary. The club accepted the idea, and the fence went up.

The sale of almost 30 acres of land along Walker Street meant the club no longer had enough space for a separate course for associates, which accordingly was dispensed with. All this

necessitated a complete redesign of the members' eighteen-hole course, and Dan Soutar was hired to plan a fresh layout within the club's new boundaries. The cost of rebuilding the course and buying the extra 22 acres of land was financed by a loan from National Mutual. On Saturday, 20 May 1916, the new course was used for the first time in a club competition. This layout has substantially remained the same ever since.

When the war ended in 1918, Concord Golf Club was exhausted financially, but it did own, under its own name, all the land that it played on. The club had gained a kind of security it had never known before, although it had gone heavily into debt to do it. The wonder is that during the dark days of the war, a time of immense uncertainty, the club's leaders were willing to undertake an ambitious reconstruction of its financial structure, not to mention the reconstruction of the golf course. To some extent, this was forced on them by circumstances, most notably the expiry of the existing lease of the course in 1916, yet they still showed remarkable confidence in the club's future to act as boldly as they did.

Golf Course Designer

DG 'Dan' Soutar (1882 - 1937) was the winner of the 1905 Australian Open Championship and runner-up seven times. He also won the 1903 Australian Amateur Championship and six Australian PGA Championships. Dan Soutar was a class act.

A burly Scot from Carnoustie, Soutar, had an equally large impact on golf in Australia in the first part of the last century.

He became a prodigious course designer. As well as designing Concord, he also designed or partly designed many well-known clubs, including Christchurch GC (NZ), Kingston Heath GC, Long Reef GC and Elanora Country Club. Kingston Heath, co-designed with the renowned course architect Dr Alister Mackenzie, is ranked the 22nd Best Course in the World.



Above: From Right to Left Eric Apperley, Tom Howard, and Dan Soutar at a pro-am event at Concord in 1919



Above: Concord Clubhouse 1923



Above: Well-known professionals at Concord GC in 1923 . Back Row L - R Reg Clarke, Len Tombs. Middle Row L - R Roy Smith, Walter Clark, Vic James, Chas Kane, Carnegie Clark, Tom Howard. Front Row: L - R Les McManus, Tom Popplewell, Fred Popplewell



Above: Famous Visitors visit Concord in 1930 from left Tom Howard, Walter Hagen, Dan Soutar and Joe Kirkwood

Clubhouse and Facilities

Centrally located in the Inner West, Concord Golf Club is close to Sydney Olympic Park and a convenient drive from the city.

The current clubhouse was built in 1920. The main section of the clubhouse, facing the course, is largely unchanged. It has a member's bar, dining rooms, meeting room, men's and women's locker rooms and facilities, its own extensive kitchen, well-stocked golf shop, practice facilities, including a practice range, practice greens with chipping and bunker area, teaching facility with high-tech golf swing analysis equipment and a physiotherapy room.

The clubhouse and gardens provide an intimate and picturesque setting for weddings, christenings, and a wide array of celebrations, with the highest quality food and beverage service and immaculate club facilities.

Overall Description of the Course and Key Features

Concord Golf Club prides itself on having a beautifully manicured and prepared golf course.

The design philosophy is to present a course that is both interesting and challenging for all levels of golf. Generally, the fairways are generous. The bunkering and green complexes can be quite challenging.

Most of the greens have runoff areas of couch so that a shot that misses the green by a short margin will run away and leave the golfer with a challenge to either pitch onto the green, chip and run or putt. Most of the greens have quite a few subtle slopes and hills built into them. Several have false fronts and edges also to trap the unwary golfer. They can be very challenging.

The greens are made of bent grass, so they are generally very fast. When playing most holes at Concord, the challenge increases the closer you get to the hole.

Signature Holes

1st: A classic risk versus reward opening hole. A short par 4 - the longer hitters can take the fairway bunker out of play and maybe even drive the green. Most golfers should choose a club that doesn't reach the bunker or play down the right side, trying to avoid it. The green slopes from front to back, with the edges rejecting the ball. This also has a false front to catch the pitch shot that falls just short. A pitch that is a little short and left but still makes the green will most likely end up in the left-hand bunker. This is a birdie chance, but danger lurks.

8th: Another great risk-reward hole. There are no bunkers on this 485-metre par 5. It is reachable in two by the very long hitters, but it's important to be in a good position off the tee. For most golfers, it's a 3 shotter. You may only have a pitch into the green, but the shot is full of great risks. The green is guarded by a creek that runs in front and around the left-hand side, and there are bunkers on the right-hand side. The green has two levels with severe slopes to the left. Anything landing on the left side of the green could end up in the creek. In spite of this, in the 2021 NSW Open, Elvis Smylie scored that rare bird, an albatross, when his second shot found the hole.

13th: Another short, drivable par 4 but with a really complicated, sloping green complex. It has a Bill Coore inspired arrowhead green. Get on the wrong side of the green, and 3 putts are on the card.

18th: A great finishing hole. From the black tee, this par 4 is 391m long, with the final 160m uphill. The second shot is designed by Tom Doak, like the famous Redan style par threes, which feature a 45-degree right-to-left oriented green protected by a deep bunker along the left side. Redans carry a great deal of slope that typically runs toward the bunker and from the front of the green to the back. Traditional Redans also typically feature a bunker short of the green, as does Concord's 18th.






The clubhouse today



Greg Norman hitting across the dam from the 15th tee during the 1988 NSW Open



Who are we?

We're the dynamic duo you're going to want on your side. Why? Between our social media knowledge and golf course industry knowledge, we're a force to be reckoned with. We are a specialist social media and marketing agency that works exclusively with golf clubs, golf courses and golf industry businesses to generate high level organic and effective exposure through a variety of social media channels.

Our professional team is led by Social Media Expert **Briana Graydon** and former Golf Course Superintendent, Golf course architect enthusiast and creator of The Golfing Greenkeeper Podcast, **Steve Smith**.

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How are we different?


Everyone who plays golf thinks they are a golfer, and everyone who posts on Facebook thinks they're a social media expert. We're here to tell you that we are actually experts in our fields - Steve is a golf expert and Briana is a Social Media Expert.

We're not just an agency who covers all industries and offers way too many services. We've niched down into our specialty as we know that's where we can make the biggest impact and drive results for our clients.


Our People



Briana
Social Media Expert



Steve
Golf Expert



125 Years of Concord Golf Club

Significant events in the club's history

1898: First meetings in which the formation of Concord Golf Club was discussed to take over the course when Sydney Golf Club abandoned the Concord links.

1899: The newly formed Concord Golf Club takes over the Concord links on Dame Eadith Walker's estate.

1905: Concord Golf Links Ltd formed and purchased 114 acres of land, known as the Police Paddock, from Eadith Walker. This is the current location of Concord Golf Club.

1906: Concord Golf Club enters into a lease agreement with Eadith Walker for an additional 22 acres between Yaralla Street and Majors Bay.

1906: Dan Soutar designs an 18-hole and 9-hole course on the 136 acres of land owned and leased by Concord Golf Club.

1908: Tom Popplewell is appointed Concord's first professional. He is the brother of Fred Popplewell, who was the two-time Australian Open Champion.

1916: Concord Golf Club Ltd completes the sale of 30 acres south of what is now Links Avenue, purchases the land leased from Eadith Walker, pays out the shareholders of Concord Golf Links Ltd, liquidates that company and becomes the outright owner of 105 acres (42.6 ha) which has accommodated the course ever since.

1916: Dan Soutar designed a new course to accommodate the new landscape. This layout stayed substantially the same until 2009, 93 years later. Even today, the general layout of all but 3 of Dan Soutar's original holes remains the same.

1920: The clubhouse is built at its present location.

1934: The first significant professional championship held at Concord, the NSW Close Championship, was won by Vic Richardson.

1991: First Australian Professional Championship held at Concord, the Australian PGA won by Wayne Grady

1996: Major renovation of the course by Ross Watson. The Dan Soutar layout is largely unchanged but new greens and bunkering are created.

1999: The club celebrates its centenary. The clubhouse undergoes a major refurbishment.

2009: The layout of three holes is changed on the course, and now the ninth hole comes back to the clubhouse. Two consecutive par threes (the 9th and 10th) are now a dog leg par four, and a par five is now a par three, followed by a par four.

2017: Tom Doak's Renaissance Golf Design completely renovates the course. This includes restoring the par five that was changed previously and converting another to a par four and par three. All tees, greens and bunkers were changed, fairways widened, many trees removed, and greens made more complex and challenging.

2018: Renovated course opens.

2024: The club celebrates its 125th anniversary.





The par 5 8th green - a great risk-reward hole where Elvis Smylie got an albatross in the 2021 New South Wales Open

125 Years of Concord Golf Club



Aerial view of the clubhouse today



9th hole



Above: The Heritage Room

Women

Women have been playing golf at Concord at least as early as May 1895, when they were first admitted as associate members by Sydney Golf Club. Thereafter they proceeded to join in sizeable numbers. Just over a year later, nearly a quarter of the total membership were women. Among them was the young woman who owned the course they played on, Edith Walker.

Women must have been joining the Concord Golf Club within months of its formation in 1899, for by September the following year, Concord was able to field an associate's team in interclub competitions.

At Concord, on the 15th of August 1901, 29 women from various Sydney clubs contested what seems to have been the biggest women's tournament staged by the club up to that time. The Sydney Mail noted: 'The Concord ladies provided them all with refreshments at Miss Walker's gate lodge, which serves the club excellently as a club room.'

By 1904, exactly 1/3 of the club's total membership were women. They were now a force within the club. By 1906, Concord's associates had become affiliated with the Ladies Golf Union.

In 1923 the associates' membership had risen so much that they had to restrict their numbers. They introduced a waiting list for associates.

In the 20s, the Concord associates started to play a novel game called flag competition in which you carried the flag the furthest you could until your handicap ran out. The person who carried it the furthest won the competition.

First and Subsequent Professionals

The first professional was Tom Popplewell in 1908, and the subsequent professionals were:

1911: Jack Clark
 1915: Arthur W. East
 1922: Tom E Howard
 1935: J Don Spence
 1950: Bruce Jackson
 1987: Kyle Francis
 1997: Ken Trimble

2015: Cherie Alison
 2021: David Northey

Notable Golfers

Tom Howard, Concord professional from 1922 to 1935, was the Australian Open Champion in 1923.

Peter Langham, in 1959, won the NSW Amateur and, with Harry Berwick (St Michaels), the Australian Foursomes.

Noel Groth, in 1961, won the NSW Amateur Foursomes with Ian Esdaile of Manly.

Craig Parry, a Concord member since 2002, has 23 career victories. These include two on the PGA Tour (the 2002 WGC-NEC Invitational and the 2004 Ford Championship at Doral), 6 times on the European Tour, twice in Japan, the Australian Open and the NSW Open. Craig led into the last round of the 1992 US Masters, won by Fred Couples.

Nick Flanagan, in 2003 won the US Amateur.

Won Joon Lee, in 2006, won the NSW Amateur Championship and was the number one ranked amateur in the world. He was runner-up to Craig Parry in the 2007 Australian Open.

Helen Oh, 2006 Australian Women's Amateur Champion

Recent Initiatives

In 2022 the **Water Harvesting Project with Floating Solar Panels** was completed and is now working to achieve its objectives of enhancing the sustainability of Concord Golf Club through recycling street water drainage for course irrigation, reduced demand for potable water, reduced pollution entering the Parramatta River, sustainability of the course, & solar energy to reduce energy consumption. The project has been viewed as an opportunity to build a generational asset that would assist to drought proof the course for the next 50 years.

The club recently celebrated its 125th Anniversary and Clubhouse renovations and a new Heritage Room starred in the 125th Anniversary Celebrations.

Significant Professional and Amateur tournaments hosted at the club

The Concord Cup is a world-ranked amateur event that has been played every year since 1911, except during the World Wars. Here is a list of the other events hosted by the club with the winner's name.

- 1934 NSW Close Championship Vic Richardson
- 1939 NSW Close Championship Norman von Nida
- 1949 NSW Close Championship Eric Cremin
- 1953 NSW Amateur Championship Harry Berwick
- 1956 NSW Close Championship Frank Phillips
- 1966 NSW Open Championship Frank Phillips
- 1968 NSW Amateur Championship Jack Newton
- 1980 NSW Open Championship George Serhan
- 1983 NSW Open Championship Greg Norman
- 1985 NSW Open Championship Ian Stanley
- 1986 NSW Open Championship Greg Norman
- 1988 NSW Open Championship Greg Norman
- 1991 Australian PGA Wayne Grady
- 1992 Australian PGA Craig Parry
- 1993 Australian PGA Ian Baker-Finch
- 2001 ANZ Championship Peter Lonard
- 2004 Australian Women's Open Laura Davies
- 2006 NSW Amateur Championship Won Joon Lee
- 2007 Handa Australian Senior Open Wayne Grady
- 2008 Handa Australian Senior Open Wayne Grady
- 2014 NSW Amateur Championship Jarryd Felton
- 2021 NSW Open Bryden Macpherson
- 2022 NSW Open Harrison Crowe

Famous golfers who have played at the club

Apart from the golfers who took part in the championships above, the following well-known golfers have played matches at Concord: Walter Hagen (1930), Joe Kirkwood (1930), Peter Thomson (1951) and Jim Ferrier (1951)

Some well-known members

- John M Arnott, Chairman of Arnott's Biscuit Company. Percy Arnott, John M's nephew.
- Bill Kell and Les Rigby are principals of the large engineering firm Kell and Rigby.
- Preston Gowing, of Gowings Department store.
- Anthony & Sir Samuel Hordern of Anthony Hordern's store.
- Walter Hardie is the founder of Hardie Building Products.
- Vic Richards, rugby five-eighth, played for NSW and the Wallabies.
- Jack Gregory was an all-round test cricketer of the 1920s.
- Alan Davidson, Australian test cricketer.

- Bob Simpson, Australian test cricketer.
- David Campese, Australian Rugby Wallaby.
- Sir Keith Campbell, advisor to both Coalition and Labor governments on financial matters.
- George Peponis, Australian Rugby League representative and administrator.
- John Ballesty, Australian Rugby Wallaby and Rugby League player and administrator.
- Dawn Fraser AC MBE, Olympic Gold Medallist, Swimming
- Lynne Bates (nee Watson), Olympic Silver Medallist, Swimming
- Madeleine Barnett, Olympic Diver
- Loretta Dorman OAM, Olympic Gold Medallist, Hockey

Recent Initiatives (continued)

One significant change is the renaming and repurposing of the old Western Lounge. With the luxurious upgrades to this space, the opportunity is now available to provide a premium dining service to Members and their guests. The room has been renamed 'The Dame Eadith Walker Lounge' and will feature newly created menus by our Chef, premium table service, and an exceptional wine list for intimate dining for up to 16 Members and guests. The entrance foyer has also been completely renovated.

In the new Heritage Room, the Concord Cup takes Pride of Place. It has taken up residence in our Heritage Room for Members and guests to view. It traditionally resides at The Royal Sydney Golf Club, and the Cup represents a highly prized and special part of the two Club's joint histories.

After a wonderful day of golf on Friday the 6th of September, the rich history of competition and collaboration between two of Sydney's premier golfing establishments was celebrated and the Cup graciously, if only temporarily, provided on loan to Concord to take prominent position in our fabulous new display area.

In Conclusion

Concord Golf Club stands as a testament to 125 years of golfing excellence, deeply rooted in the legacy of visionary figures like Dr Tom Frizell, Alex Orr, Dame Eadith Walker, and course designer Dan Soutar. From its early days on the Walker Estate to becoming a premier golfing destination, Concord has continuously evolved, hosting prestigious tournaments and nurturing talented golfers.

The club's commitment to preserving its historical significance while embracing modern innovations ensures that Concord remains not only a cornerstone of Sydney's sporting community but also a symbol of the enduring spirit of the game of golf.

As it looks to the future, Concord Golf Club continues to honour its storied past while striving to maintain its place at the forefront of Australian golf.

Brian Dolan has been a member of Concord GC since 1988. He has represented the club in the Masters Pennants, the PACK Cup and the PACK Plate. He spent six years on the board and four as Vice-Captain. He is a State Level Rules Official and has refereed at many matches for Golf NSW.



The historical information in this story has been primarily sourced from 'Concord Golf Club - The First Hundred Years', Phil Derriman, Playright Publishing, Sydney, 1999.

They Broke the Mould - Norman von Nida



Norman von Nida (The Von) is one of Australia's greatest-ever golfers and sporting heroes. Robbed of some of his best years by The Depression and World War II, we can only guess how much more he could have achieved.

They Broke the Mould - Norman von Nida

'Enigma – something that is mysterious and seems impossible to understand completely.'

Cambridge Dictionary

Enigma! If ever a word described someone perfectly, then this word describes Norman von Nida perfectly.

Consider the following comments made about Norman.

'I consider The Von to be such a unique and remarkable friend.' - Jack Nicklaus

'I cannot recall anyone, amateur or professional, who came near to behaving so consistently badly, according to our standards, as von Nida.' - Henry Longhurst in Sporting Life in 1948

'Proudly, I claim him as a friend. This little man is a giant amongst sportsmen, a credit to his profession and a great Australian.' - Peter Thomson

Norman, as a caddie, dumped the bag of the wife of the Royal Queensland GC President and told her, **'Carry your own clubs.'**

'Norman von Nida was one of the first great Australian golfers, and he was an excellent role model for the many young Aussies who would follow through the years.' – Gary Player

'Norman von Nida's passport should be suspended.' - Australian tennis legend Harry Hopman wrote in the Melbourne Herald after Norman's fistfight with American pro Henry Ransom in 1948.

'Norman has been of enormous assistance to me over the years' – Greg Norman

'I have always had a great admiration for Norman von Nida. He inspired the present great Australian golfers to seek honours overseas.' - Henry Cotton

'Sore loser.' – popular American pro 'Porky' Oliver

'Norman has been an inspiration to Australian golf.' – 1954 US Open Champion Ed Furgol

'Norman did many great things that contributed to the lives of young players like myself. He was a great friend !!' - Bruce Devlin

'Norman von Nida will be remembered as both a fine player and the greatest coach Australia has produced.' – Rodger Davis

'Bad Sport' – spectator at the 1946 Open

'The Von was a nice bloke' – Tommy Moore, Australian Golf Heritage Society Patron

'He was enormously generous, almost to a fault. He had no reasons to do generous things for me, but he was that sort of man' – Peter Thomson

Norman was one of five pros who **offered to donate their earnings** from exhibition matches with Bobby Locke in 1950 to the PGA, which was in a dire financial situation.

'I love Norman and his wife Elva dearly' – Bruce Crampton

Scottish caddies **refused to caddie for him** at the 1946 Open after he had fired one of them.

'He has been the most inspiring Australian sports hero of my time.' - Golf Writer Phil Tresidder

It is difficult to believe that the above comments relate to the same man, but they do.



Previous page: Norman doing what all sporting heroes should do. Above: Touring Australia together. Four-time Open Champion Bobby Locke (2nd from left) and Norman (3rd from left)

The Beginning

If you could have picked a time to be born, 1914 would not have been the first choice, particularly if you were going to be a professional golfer.

Norman von Nida (affectionately known as 'The Von') was born on 14 February 1914 in Strathfield, Sydney, but soon after his birth, the family moved to Pinkenba, a suburb of Brisbane.

His father, Andrew, was born in South Australia to German parents and worked as a fitter for the Water and Sewerage Board. He was hardworking, honest, and truthful, which are characteristics that Norman inherited. His mother, Clare, was of English descent and proud of her ancestry. Norman was the second youngest of nine children – seven boys and two girls.

The von Nida house was near two places that had a significant influence on Norman's life.

First, there was the Doomben racecourse. Norman used to hang around with the grooms and apprentice jockeys, which kindled a lifelong interest in horse racing and betting.

Second, there was The Royal Queensland Golf Club. In their spare time, Norman and one of his brothers often looked for golf balls and hit an old club around the course. When Norman was around ten, he got a job there as a caddie and immediately fell in love with the game, which led to his career as a golf professional.

While both his parents initially thought golf a waste of time, once they saw Norman's determination and will to succeed, they both became very supportive.

It became evident very quickly that Norman would become a good golfer. First, he defeated the caddie champion at Royal Queensland in a one-on-one match and then went on to win the Royal Queensland Caddie's Championship four times. The last three times, the championship was open to caddies from all associated clubs in Queensland.

It also became evident very quickly that young Norman was not a great respecter of authority.

In one incident, he told the famous visiting Scottish Comedian Sir Harry Lauder to keep his caddie fee. He viewed the threepence offered a measly sum and told Sir Harry to keep it as he obviously needed it more than Norman did.

In another incident, while caddying for the wife of the Royal Queensland club president, she objected to Norman referring to her daughter by her first name. She told him that her daughter's first name was not for the likes of him, a caddie. They were on the fourth hole, and Norman dumped her bag and told her she could carry her own clubs. The only thing that stopped him from being fired was the fact that he was the club president's regular caddie.

A third incident involved a wealthy member who kept tossing his clubs on the ground after each shot, expecting the caddie to pick them up. On one particular day, Norman was in a bad mood and

decided not to retrieve the clubs. When they got to the second tee, the member asked Norman for his driver and was told it was still on the first tee where he had tossed it. While his playing partners found this amusing, the member did not, and Norman was fired as his caddie.

Surprisingly, probably because he was such a good caddie, he did not get punished for these impudent actions.

Walter Hagen

Meeting Walter Hagen in 1930 was probably what most influenced his golf career. Hagen was one of the greatest players of all time, having won eleven majors (five PGA Championships, four Open Championships, and two US Opens).

Hagen came to Royal Queensland in April 1930 for an exhibition match with Joe Kirkwood. By then, Norman was recognised as the club's number-one caddie and assigned to Hagen. One look at the small, underweight Norman and Hagen was dubious. Norman confidently told him he was to caddie for him and was the best caddie in Brisbane. Amusedly, Hagen took him on, and it was an experience that changed Norman's life. Norman was mesmerised by Hagen's shotmaking prowess, particularly his recovery shot on the 15th hole from behind a tree from a bad lie to within six feet of the pin.

Below: Walter Hagen during his 1937 visit to Australia warming up at Roseville GC





Above: The Royal Queensland GC in the 1930s. Note the Brisbane Abattoir sign in the background.



Above: Norman participating in a tournament in Brisbane in the 1930s

They Broke the Mould - Norman von Nida

However, Norman was not impressed just by Hagen's golf; his style made the greatest impression. Hagen was one of the most charismatic golfers of all time. Stories about his showmanship, self-confidence, tardiness, flamboyance, indulgences, and generosity are legendary.

Norman saw most of these characteristics first-hand. Hagen was dressed immaculately and wowed the crowds with his wonderful golf and flamboyant personality. Norman noted that he was fearless.

Norman was also impressed by Hagen's generosity. He took the time to give young Norman some golf advice, which he took on board. More importantly, the five pounds he gave Norman for caddying was a large amount of money in those days.

Not surprisingly, Norman wanted to be like Hagen, and his ambition was fuelled when he saw what could be achieved by a talented golfer with personality.

Not for the Faint-hearted

Growing up in a working-class suburb in Australia in the 1920s and 1930s was not for the faint-hearted. Norman was always small and had to learn to take care of himself.

Some ferocious fights took place in the caddie yard. Norman once took on the much bigger caddie champion in a fight. Three punches from Norman, and the fight was over.

Norman became a good young boxer in the featherweight division. When he was about fourteen, he took part in the Queensland championships with high hopes. It took one punch from a boy from Mackay to end his aspirations. He was knocked down but managed to get up and go the distance. After the fight, he could not remember anything about it, which made him realise boxing was not for him, and he retired.

Another incident highlighted what it was like growing up in that environment. When he was seventeen, he met a pretty girl at a dance. They got on well, and she agreed to let him walk her to the train. Unfortunately, this girl was the girlfriend of a well-known thug.

As they were crossing a bridge over the Brisbane River, Norman was attacked by the thug and four of his friends. They beat Norman up and threw him into the river fifty feet below. It was not very nice, particularly as the Brisbane River was infested with sharks then.

The Great Depression

The Australian economy was already in trouble in the mid-to-late 1920s, and the country was experiencing a depression. In 1929, Wall Street crashed, and the world went into the Great Depression, with Australia being one of the worst affected countries.

Like many other people in Australia, Andrew von Nida lost his job and was out of work for two years. He managed to get the odd day's work from time to time, but it was the generosity of the local grocer that helped the von Nidas and other local families to survive as he allowed them to buy essential goods on credit and only repay when they had the money.

This act of kindness had a profound effect on Norman. Years later, Norman asked the grocer, Mr Edmonds, why he had been so kind to so many families and was told that it made him happy and he got pleasure from helping them. Norman later became well-known for raising money for charity and for his generosity in helping young golfers both with advice and financially. He attributed this altruism to the lesson he learnt from Mr Edmonds.

Norman used the Depression as an excuse to leave school, which he did not enjoy. He got a relief job with the local council working on the roads for a nominal payment of one shilling per day. His parents were upset that he quit school, but they probably had mixed feelings, as this money, together with that he earned as a caddie on weekends, helped them during this challenging period.

After working on the roads for sixteen months, Norman got a 'lucky break' through one of his caddying clients, Mr. Gall, the Queensland Meat Exporting Company manager. He offered Norman a job for over 5 pounds a week, a fortune at the time. He soon found out why the pay was so good – the job involved working knee-deep in cattle entrails, removing the fatty tissue from them. There was blood all over, and the smell of the place stayed with him all his life.

He soon got another 'lucky break', picking up a job at the State Abattoir doing slightly less unpleasant work. More importantly, the early starting and finishing times allowed him to practice golf.

Early Golf Career

By now, Norman was obsessed with golf and practised until dark every day, working on all aspects of the game. He was driven to practise by the vision of Hagen. He improved to the point that he felt he could put the ball where he wanted to, and by 1932, he was playing really well.

During this period, he met Tom Mullins, the club champion at Nudgee Golf Club, who was impressed by Norman's golf and took a liking to him. He became Norman's benefactor, buying him a set of clubs, sponsoring him to join Nudgee Golf Club, and helping him through some early tournaments.

Fortunately for Norman, the superintendent of the State Abattoir, Ed Sunners, was a keen golfer and gave him two weeks off to participate in the 1932 Queensland Open and Amateur. Norman took advantage of the opportunity, did well in the Open, and went on to win the Amateur.

Emboldened by his win, he resigned from the abattoir and took a job with Jack Quarton, a professional at Brisbane department store McWhirter & Son. This did not end well. During an exhibition of trick shots, Quarton attempted a shot off Norman's knee and broke his kneecap. This resulted in four months in plaster and, unsurprisingly, the end of their relationship.

He then took the club professional job at Nudgee GC, where he earned reasonably well and had adequate time to practise.

He won his first Queensland Open title in 1935 when he was just twenty-one, beating the defending champion and hot favourite Jim Ferrier by two shots. Ferrier was to become a legend of Australian golf, winning the Australian Amateur Championship four times, the Australian Open Championship twice, the 1947 US PGA Championship and seventeen PGA tour events. Norman went on to win the Queensland Open a further six times.

Gene Sarazen

Next up was an eighteen-hole challenge match at Royal Queensland in 1936 against Gene Sarazen, which Norman won by two-up in front of around three thousand people, the largest crowd in Queensland history. This was a great win as Sarazen was one of only five men in history to win the Grand Slam of Majors (Masters, US Open, Open and US PGA), the others being Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods.

Sarazen was still very competitive, having recently won the second Masters in 1935 with a famous albatross two on the fifteenth hole at Augusta National, and he went on to come 5th in the 1939 Masters and 2nd in the 1940 US Open.

Moving to Sydney

Before the Sarazen match, Norman decided to move to Sydney to further his career. When he moved to Sydney, he got a job teaching at the David Jones department store. Soon after, he quit because he thought the teaching adversely affected his golf.



Above: Gene Sarazen during his 1936 visit to Australia



Bottom left: Norman winning the 1932 Queensland Amateur being congratulated by his opponent Dr. Clive Boyce



Bottom right: (L - R) Norman, Larry Montez (the Philippines) and Eric Cremin

They Broke the Mould - Norman von Nida

He decided to focus on tournament golf and play in money matches against professional punters, bookmakers, wealthy amateurs, and golf hustlers, often at Bonnie Doon GC. This turned out to be quite lucrative, and Norman found that playing for high stakes with his own money on the line honed his skills and taught him to play under real pressure.

He had been interested in horseracing from his early days and was pleased that many of his opponents during this time were interested in or connected to racing. He spent much time at the Randwick Racecourse, often losing the money he had earned at golf.

During this period a dream came true for Norman. Who would have thought in 1930 that Walter Hagen's caddie at Royal Queensland GC would be engaged in a challenge match with him a mere seven years later in 1937? They played in Brisbane over 18 holes at Indooroopilly and 18 at Gailes, drawing a crowd of 7000 people. Norman was thrilled to beat his hero one-up in an exciting match. Although Hagen was past his prime, he remained competitive in challenge matches and still drew the crowds.

In the period leading up to World War II, Norman won several local tournaments, including the NSW Close, NSW PGA, Queensland Open, Queensland Close, ACT Open, and the Lakes Open. One of these tournaments was the 1937 Queensland Open, which was his third win in the competition. After the tournament, he would have been pleased to hear his father say 'Norman is a good boy. I am proud of him.'

In 1938, while in Sydney, he worked for sporting goods company Slazenger. During this time, he went overseas for the first time to the Philippines and won the Philippines Open. He won again in 1939.

In 1939, Norman visited the USA for the first time. He arrived a few days before the US Open and had little time to prepare. He finished a disappointing T 59, but interestingly, two shots ahead of Ben Hogan. Norman also witnessed firsthand one of the greatest collapses in US Open history. He was on the 18th hole watching Sam Snead complete his final round. Snead needed only a par five on the last hole to win outright, but he was under the impression that he needed a birdie four. In his aggressive pursuit of a birdie, he made a few mistakes and made a three-over-par eight to finish two shots outside the playoff. This was devastating to Snead, who never did win the US Open.

World War II

In March 1940, Norman moved to Newcastle and joined sports store Reg A. Baker as a teacher. Soon, he also started working as the professional at the Newcastle Steel Works Golf Club (now Shortland Waters GC) and the Waratah Golf Club.

This arrangement lasted until April 1941, when he enlisted. Norman volunteered for the Royal Australian Air Force but was rejected. He believes that it was because he was of German ancestry. He then joined the First Armoured Brigade of the Australian Imperial Force. The unit was not deployed overseas, and Norman spent the war years in Australia.

During this time, he worked with the Australian cricketer Sid Barnes, producing a chemical used in a mosquito

repellent for use in the tropics. During the latter part of 1944, he was discharged from the service because of a stomach ailment.

He participated in some golf matches to raise funds for charity during the war, but it was a relatively uneventful and frustrating period for him.

After leaving the service, Norman was short on cash, and Sid Barnes got him a job working for Sid's brother, reconditioning drums used by the army. He also practised a lot, and he was playing well. After winning a few tournaments locally, he decided that it was time to have a go at the Open. This was scheduled for July 1946 at St Andrews.

The Glory Years in Britain

He sailed to Britain on the Stirling Castle and was hosted by Bill and Daphne Shankland on arrival.

Bill Shankland was a great all-round sportsman who represented Australia in Rugby League. He had moved to England to play Rugby League for Warrington. After retiring from Rugby League, he focused on his golf. He had learned the game as a caddie at Royal Sydney GC and was not bad at golf either, managing to finish in the top ten of the Open three times, including almost winning the 1947 Open.

It was fortunate that the Shanklands extended their hospitality to Norman as he arrived in Britain with only 17 pounds in his pocket. He was also lucky to meet Archie Compston, the pro at Wentworth, who organised some money games for him, and he earned enough to tide him over until he started earning money from tournaments.

He almost won his first tournament, the Dunlop Southport Tournament, but faltered over the last two holes. He lost to Max Faulkner by one stroke, prompting renowned golf writer Henry Longhurst to question Norman's ability to close out a tournament. How wrong can you be?

Norman won his very next tournament at Mere Cheshire ahead of Bobby Locke and 1939 Open Champion Dick Burton. A few weeks later, he won again at the News Chronicle tournament in Brighton.

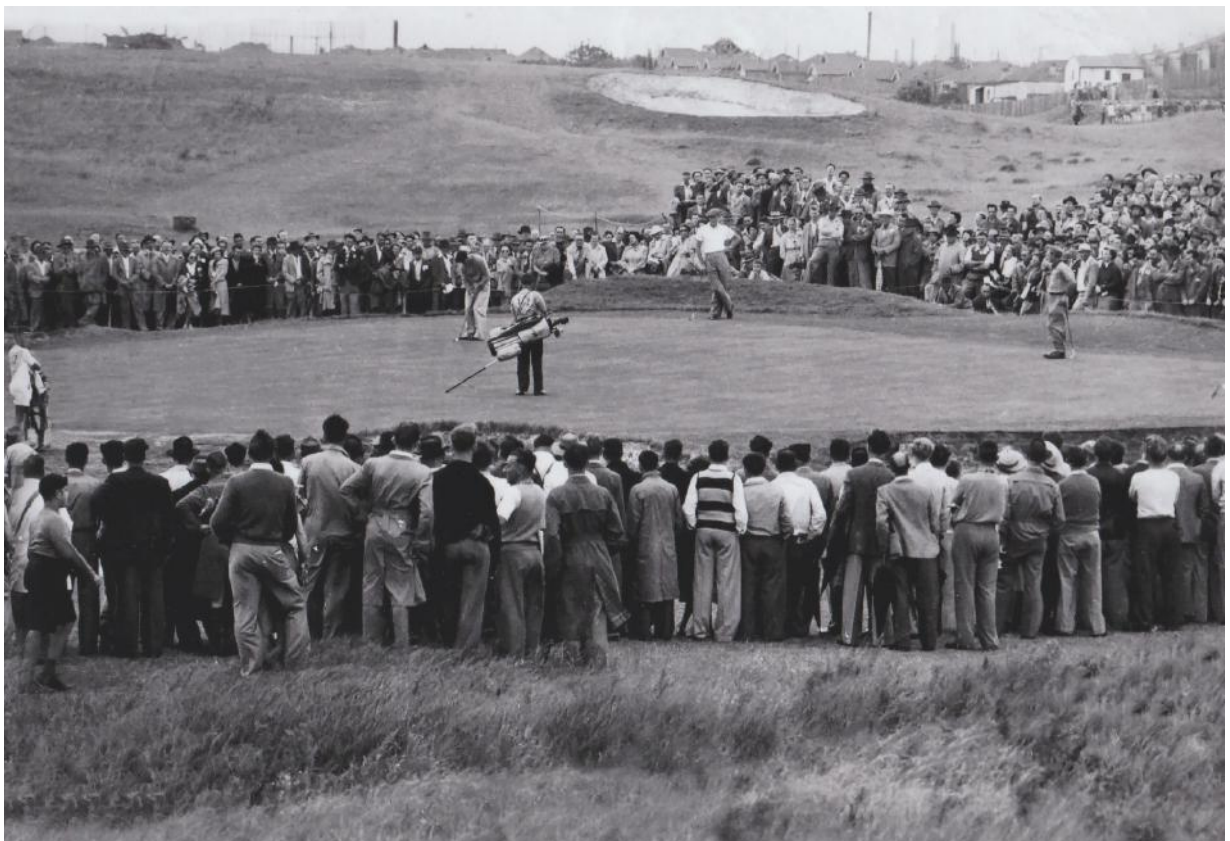
Next up was the 1946 Open at St. Andrews, which was memorable for Norman for two reasons. First, he led the qualifying rounds before finishing a creditable tied fourth five shots behind Sam Snead. Second, he fired one of the highly regarded St. Andrews caddies during a practice round, prompting a caddie boycott of him in St. Andrews. He had to contact his English caddie to come north to avoid carrying his own bag.

1946 was a good year for Norman in Britain. He had two wins and a T-4 in the Open. He had earned 1330 pounds in prize money during the year, making him the joint second-highest money winner with Dai Rees behind Bobby Locke.

His exploits did not go unnoticed in Australia. He was named the Australian Sporting Globe's outstanding performer in sports for 1946, ahead of cricket legends Sir Donald Bradman and Keith Miller and ahead of other outstanding sportspeople of the day.



Above: Norman (2nd from left) wearing his 'NvN' monogrammed sweater



Above: Norman putting at the 1949 Australian Open at The Australian Golf Club

They Broke the Mould - Norman von Nida

1947 was an even better year. He won for the first time at the Brand Lochryn, his second tournament of the year, beating Max Faulkner. He won again at the Dunlop Southport and then tied with Henry Cotton in the Yorkshire Evening News at Leeds. Belgian Flory van Donck was the victim in the final of the London Star Tournament.

Next was the 1947 Open at Hoylake, where he finished a creditable sixth, but it could have been so much better. This is discussed in more detail later.

He put the disappointment of the Open behind him by winning the North British 2000 pounds tournament at Starbeck. This was followed up by an easy win in the Lotus 1500-pound tournament. His last win of the season was at the Penfold 1000 guineas, where he tied with Dai Rees and Reg Whitcombe.

His seven wins for the season were a record, and he also had a second and a loss in a playoff.

Unsurprisingly, he won a record 3263 pounds for the season. He also won the Vardon Trophy, awarded to the player with the best average score for the season. His average of 71.25 for 52 rounds was also a record.

The Vardon Trophy was first awarded in 1937 and is now awarded to the winner of the Race to Dubai. The winners have included Sir Henry Cotton, Bobby Locke, Seve Ballesteros, Sir Nick Faldo, Ernie Els, Pádraig Harrington, and Rory McIlroy.

However, there have only been two Australian winners in around eighty years – Norman von Nida and Greg Norman. This is surprising, given the number of good Australian golfers who have played on the British and European circuits.

Greg Norman felt enormously proud of this achievement as he was the only Australian besides the 'great Norman von Nida' to win this and because of the link to the all-time great Harry Vardon.

Norman continued winning in Britain in 1948 almost at the same rate but only won once again after that.

During those years immediately after the war, he established himself as one of the best players in the world and certainly one of the most charismatic.

The Australian Open

He first played in the 1934 Australian Open at Royal Sydney GC and finished well down the field. He next participated in the 1936 Australian Open at Metropolitan GC, which was won by Gene Sarazen, where he finished twelfth.

In the following year at the Australian GC, Norman led after three rounds with George Naismith, who went on to win. Norman had a poor 77 in the final round in windy conditions when his putting let him down. He finished fifth, three shots behind Naismith.

From 1938 until 1955, Norman had a remarkable run in the Australian Open.

In 1938, he came second at Royal Adelaide GC to amateur Jim Ferrier, who won by 14 shots. In 1939, at Royal Melbourne GC, he came second to Ferrier

again, but this time, he had been in contention. Norman had shared the third-round lead with Ferrier and Martin Smith. Ferrier won by two shots after a great putting display with only twenty-one putts in the last round.

It would be ten years before Norman participated in another Australian Open. Six Opens were lost to WW II, and he did not participate in 1946, 1947 and 1948 as he was playing overseas.

In 1949, it was second again for Norman at The Australian GC, this time seven shots behind Eric Cremin.

It was a different story in 1950 at Kooyonga GC in Adelaide. In an exciting finish, Norman just managed to hold off a charging Peter Thomson by one shot. Thomson shot a final round 66 with a brilliant putting display. Norman's great bunker play contributed to his win – he got up and down from the sand on the first three holes.

Runner-up Peter Thomson said, 'No man ever more thoroughly deserved to have his name on Australia's greatest links trophy than von Nida.'

In 1951, at Metropolitan GC, it was Thomson's turn to win, beating Norman by four. Norman was strongly in contention until his second shot on the seventh hole hit a spectator on the head, unsettling Norman.

Norman won his second Australian Open in 1952 at Lake Karrinyup GC Western Australia, five shots ahead of Ossie Pickworth. In an excellent performance, his four-round score of 278 beat the old Open record by four shots.

1953 brought a brilliant performance from a thirty-nine-year-old Norman at Royal Melbourne GC (East) – one of the best of his career. Peter Thomson led Norman by four shots after the third round, and Norman would need something special to win. Norman delivered something special – a closing 65 that included eight birdies and an eagle. This was six shots better than Thomson or anyone else in the field and matched the lowest round in an Open held by Billy McWilliam. It also broke the course record, which he had previously broken in the first round with a 66. Norman described it as his best ball-striking round ever.

The following year at Kooyonga GC, he finished second, eight shots behind runaway winner Ossie Pickworth.

In 1955, Norman had another excellent chance to win at Gales GC in Queensland. Bobby Locke won by one shot ahead of Norman and Kel Nagle with the only sub-70 round. Norman missed a five-foot putt on the last to get into a playoff.

Alas, this was the end of Norman's amazing run in the Australian Open.



Above: Norman putting at The Lakes GC during the 1950 PGA where he beat Eric Cremin 6 and 5

They Broke the Mould - Norman von Nida

He had finished first or second in the last seven Australian Opens. Even more impressive was that he had finished first or second in the last nine Australian Opens in which he had participated.

He had an outstanding Australian Open record, given that he did not participate during some of his prime golfing years between 26 and 35.

Other Tournaments

In addition to the tournament wins previously described, he had numerous other wins. In total, he had close to fifty professional wins during his career.

He won the Australian PGA in 1946, 1948, 1950 and 1951 and was a surprising runner-up in 1960 at the age of 46. Only Kel Nagle (6), Dan Soutar (6) and Billy Dunk (5) have won more Australian PGA Championships than Norman.

He won most of the other big tournaments held over the years in Australia, including the Adelaide Advertiser, McWilliams Wines and the Ampol Tournament, and numerous state championships.

Career in the USA

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, very few overseas professionals played on the US circuit. There were short visits by players such as Henry Cotton, Dai Rees and Max Faulkner, but the first overseas player to make a meaningful assault on the US circuit was South African Bobby Locke in 1947.

Norman went to the USA for the second time in Jan 1948. His first tournament was the Los Angeles Open at Riviera, and he had the good fortune to be paired with Ben Hogan in the first round. Hogan was impressed by Norman's ability to fade the ball at will, as it was the only part of his game Hogan had failed to master. After the round, they became good friends.

Norman did not play well, and after two months and only eight tournaments, he returned to Britain. He only earned money in four tournaments, although he managed to get 10th place in the Lower Rio Grande tournament and 5th place in the St. Petersburg Open.

Norman returned to the USA for the 1950 Masters. During the tournament, his friendship with Ben Hogan continued to flourish as they played some practice rounds together and were paired together in the first round. Norman finished 27th and out of the money.

Next, it was on to Atlanta for the Atlanta (or North Fulton) Open, where Norman finished 5th. This was the start of Norman's best run on the US circuit. He finished in the Top 10 in his next four starts on tour, including a 3rd place at the Greenbrier tournament behind Ben Hogan and Sam Snead.

Norman was looking forward to the US Open at Merion Cricket Club, and his confidence was boosted when he led the sectional qualifying at Fort Worth, Texas. Unfortunately, in the US Open proper, he had two 75s to miss the cut by one.

In four more events in the year, he had one more Top 10, but he picked his tournament well. The World Championship of Golf at the Tam o' Shanter Club in Chicago carried by far the biggest purse in golf, and his 8th place was worth \$1650, by far his biggest prize of the year.

There, he ended his only meaningful attempt on the US circuit. In 1950, he participated in 12 events, finished in the Top 10 six times, and earned money in 9 events. That's not bad, considering the challenges faced by overseas players trying to play the circuit on a part-time basis.

He played sporadically in the USA between 1951 and 1954, mainly in the Masters, the All-American Open and the World Championship of Golf, with limited success.

He also played in the Masters in 1958, 1960 and 1962. He continued playing in practice rounds with his friend Ben Hogan, and in 1962, he introduced a young Bruce Devlin to Hogan and included him in a practice round.

He played 35 times on the US Circuit, making the Top 5 five times and the Top 10 a further five times.

To put this in perspective, five-time Open winner Peter Thomson first went to the USA in 1950 and only won one cheque in his first seven starts, although he did better in future.

These very average performances by Norman and Thomson were hardly surprising. Competing in the USA on the US circuit as a foreigner in the 1940s and 1950s was challenging for various reasons. First and foremost was the ball. The players outside the USA played the 1.62-inch ball and struggled to adjust their games to play with the 1.68-inch ball. Then there was the cost of travel and accommodation, particularly as the purses were small and often players outside the Top 20 in the tournament earned nothing at all. The foreigners also did not have a base in the USA and flew in for a few tournaments during the year, so it took time to acclimatise.

Although both Norman and Thomson found some players in the USA welcoming and became friends with them, this did not apply to everyone. There was resentment from mostly the weaker players who felt that the foreigners were taking their money. The treatment meted out to Bobby Locke in the late 40s by tour officials and some players to drive him away has been well-documented and a story for another day.

Although Norman's record in the USA was average, his attempt to take on the circuit, together with Bobby Locke, was important as they were pathfinders who inspired the next generation to try their luck there. Players like Peter Thomson, Bruce Crampton, Bruce Devlin, Frank Philips, Billy Dunk and Gary Player.

Performance in the Majors

Many golfers' careers were badly affected by World War II. Henry Cotton, Bobby Locke, Kel Nagle, Sam Snead and Ben Hogan come to mind, but there were many more.

Few, if any, were more impacted than Norman von Nida.

World War II broke out on 3rd September 1939 and ended on 2nd September 1945. International golf effectively resumed with the Open Championship from the 3rd to the 5th of July 1946.

They Broke the Mould - Norman von Nida

In addition, Norman only participated in a single major, the 1939 US Open, before the start of World War II. This was attributable to the impact of the Depression in Australia and the cost and difficulty of travelling overseas in that era.

Norman participated in his second major at the 1946 Open at St. Andrews at 32 years and five months old.

To put this in perspective, Tiger Woods only won three (out of fifteen) Majors after this age and Jack Nicklaus seven (out of eighteen).

Sadly, before turning forty, Norman participated in only ten majors (six Opens, two Masters, and two US Opens).

He had little success in the Masters and US Open, for the reasons outlined previously, with T27s at the Masters in 1950 and 1952 his best finishes.

However, in the Open it was a different story.

In his first Open at St Andrews in 1946, he finished T4 behind Sam Snead after being the leading qualifier. At Muirfield in 1948, he finished third behind Sir Henry Cotton despite suffering from severe sinus congestion. At Royal Lytham and St. Anne's in 1952, he finished ninth behind Bobby Locke.

However, his best chance came at the 1947 Open at Hoylake when he was joint leader after three rounds with Sir Henry Cotton, Arthur Lees, and Fred Daly.

Norman was playing well with his 71 in the morning third round, the second-lowest score of the round, and his confidence was high.

There was little wind at the start of the fourth round, but it got progressively worse during the round, and by the end, it was close to gale force. Unlike today, the leaders did not go out together and last, but rather in a random order. Unfortunately, Norman played in the worst of the wind, which affected him badly, particularly his putting. Taking four shots from the edge of the fourteenth green finally put paid to his chances.

Fred Daly from Northern Ireland, playing in the best of the weather, played well and was a popular winner. Norman finished T-5.

So, a win in the Open was not to be for Norman. Still, four top-ten finishes in six attempts between 1946 and 1952 was not a bad effort in an era that included many great players such as Sam Snead, Bobby Locke, Sir Henry Cotton, Dai Rees, Roberto de Vicenzo, and Peter Thomson.

End of Part 1

Part 2 includes 'Controversy, Thank You Walter, His Game, Personal Life, Norman the Teacher and Mentor, Later Years, Norman the Generous, Honours, Norman Saw it All - the Link Between the Past and Future, Not Bad for a Poor Caddie from Brisbane, How Talented was Norman? and They Broke the Mould.'

This article was first published in *The Serious Golfer* (Issue 2 2024). It is republished in *The Brassie* in a shortened version, courtesy of *The Serious Golfer*.

Podcast Segments

- Aussie Golf History
- Keeper of the Greens
- Walking the Fairways
- The Design Brief
- The Board Room
- Inside the Greenkeepers Shed

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Captain's Report

December 2024

2024 was an outstanding year for hickory golf in this part of the world.

We had a wonderful New South Wales Hickory Championship at Sawtell in July, with good participation on an excellent regional course.

The Australian Hickory Championship was held in Sydney in September. Warringah GC hosted the Foursomes and the 36-hole championship was held over 18 holes at historic Manly GC and 18 at Cromer GC. All three courses were in excellent condition and provided a testing, but fair challenge.

A number of other successful events were held, including one to celebrate Pymble GC's centenary and another to celebrate 125 years of golf at Concord GC. This continues the trend of clubs organising hickory events to celebrate special occasions. Any clubs wanting to organise an event should contact me at lesnkate@bigpond.net.au.

An exciting development has been the increased hickory activity in Asia Pacific, with championships in New Zealand, China, and Japan, and one in Korea planned.

Most pleasing has been the increased international participation. There were Australian participants at the New Zealand Hickory Championship in Christchurch, and Peter Whittall participated in the inaugural China Hickory Championship.



Captain Les Browne

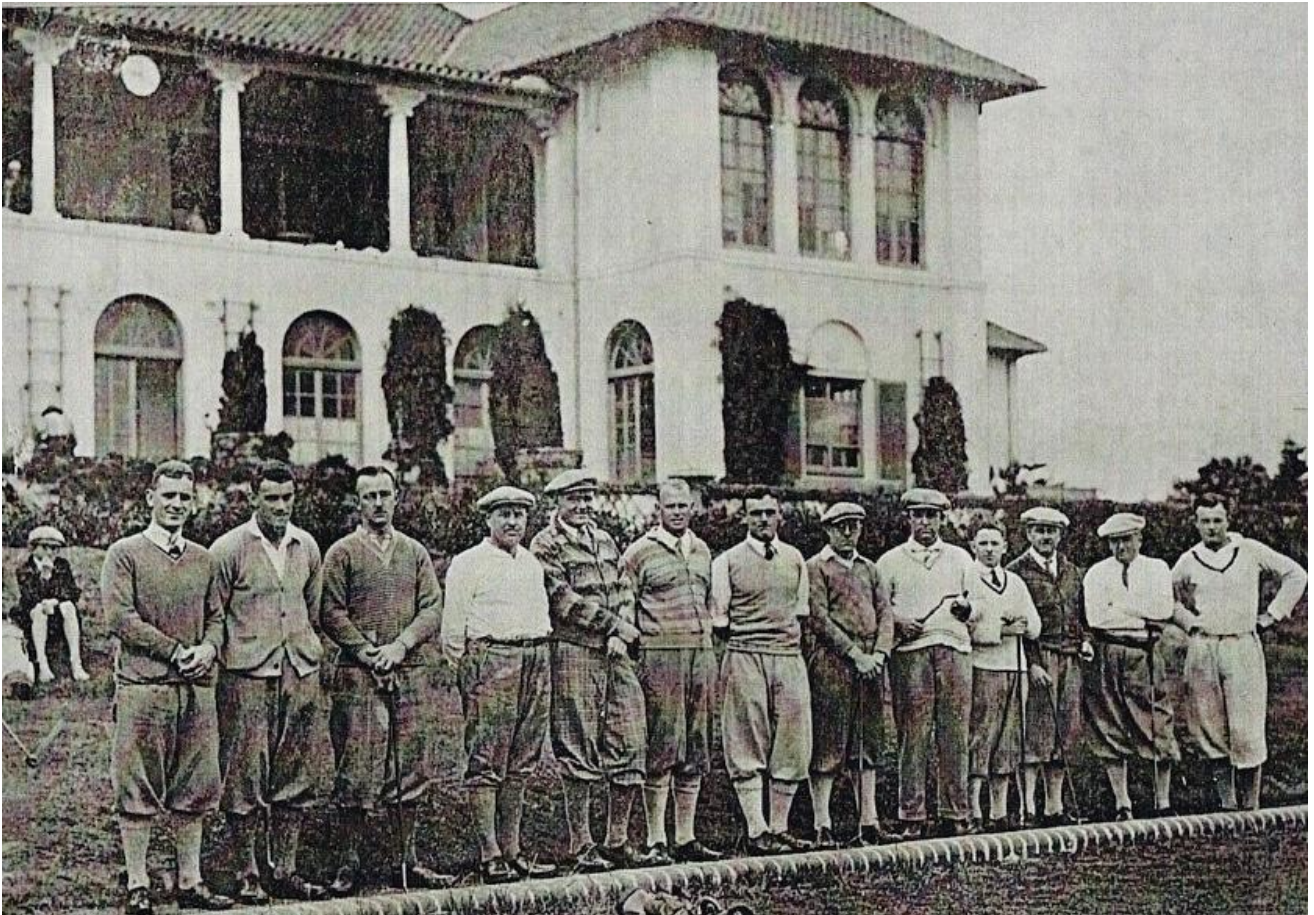
The Australian Hickory Championship on Sydney's Northern Beaches had participants from Japan, China, New Zealand and Canada.

This trend is expected to continue.

We have an exciting hickory golf schedule planned for 2025.



Overseas participants at the 2024 Australian Hickory Championship: Left to Right Yoshi Okubo, James Feng, Alice Mitsuhashi, Scott Nakase, James Nakahata, Brad Wakamatsu, Peter van Eekelen, Orelo Hanakaoka, Scott Bower



Top: The historic Manly GC clubhouse in the 1920s, Bottom: The historic Manly GC clubhouse in 2024 hosting the 2024 Australian Hickory Championship

2024 Australian Hickory Championship

The Australian Hickory Open Championship is the premier event in the Asia Pacific Hickory calendar.

Players from all over Australia, Japan, Canada, China and New Zealand turned up with their 100+-year-old hickory clubs, most dressed in period clothing, to compete.

Warringah, Manly and Cromer Golf Clubs, on Sydney's Northern Beaches, hosted over 50 keen hickory enthusiasts for the 29th playing of the event.

After some ordinary weather, Sydney put on three great days.

Canadian Foursomes was the first event on Sunday at the host club, Warringah GC; with its tight fairways and small greens, quite a few "I'm sorry" were heard. Club Captain Ian, General Manager Mark and resident Pro Rob were seconded into playing.

The standouts on the day on 75 were Craig Bernhardt (Manly) with partner Darron Watt, who plays his golf on sand greens at The Rock near Wagga, beating Brendan Barnes (Sawtell) and Scott Bower (Canada) on the count back. Third place was between locals Phil Baird/Dave Saunders and Rob Richards/Wayne Wright on 77. However, Brendan and Scott won the Handicap section with net 69 with runners-up John Trevorrow (Metropolitan)/Peter van Eekelen (NZ), 70.

Manly GC hosted the first round of the Singles Championship; its recent Thomson/Perrett design is in keeping with the club's 120 years.

Many of the players struggled to negotiate their way around some of the hazards. Not so for local member Dave Saunders, who recorded 76, which was helped by a hole-in-one at the 127m 15th, the first in tournament history. Tim Sayers (Bankstown) and Alex Sutherland (Eastlakes) were 2 shots behind.

The leading woman was Suz Brown, also a local from Manly GC. Leaders in the handicap section were Scott Nakase (Japan) on 69 and Zhong Jung Hua (China) on 67.

An enjoyable dinner followed at the club, where a wonderful selection of Manly's memorabilia was on display, celebrating the centenary of the clubhouse.

Day two of the championship hosted by Cromer GC, with its tight fairways, was a real test using antique clubs. Cromer also has a long history; founded in the 1920s, there have been several redesigns, resulting in one of the toughest courses in Sydney.

The best score on the day was Craig Bernhardt's 73, but three players could not be separated for the Championship on 154: Tim Sayers (78,76), Dave Saunders (76,78) and Justin Ryan from Bendigo (80,74). Alex Sutherland was one off the pace with 155.

The Women's Champion was Suz Brown (198), a clear winner over Kim Hastie (Metropolitan) and Alice Mitsuhashi (Japan).

Handicap honours were dominated by overseas players, with Scott Nakase on 125, followed by Xing Xiao Jun (China) on 130 and Peter van Eekelen (NZ) on 133.

For the second year, the over 70s cup went to Brian Dolan (Concord) on 169.

The presentation luncheon was the excellent Cromer BBQ. The overseas players could not believe the quantity and quality of the food.

It was good to have AGHS Patron and PGA Life Member Tom Moore in attendance and GSA President Kim Hastie up from Melbourne.

Following the presentation, there was a Buy/Sell/Swap of hickories. There was a big display of good quality play hickory clubs. Tom Moore took the opportunity to visit his back garage and brought a good quantity of clubs... at good prices! All but a few were sold, mostly to our visitors from Japan and China, where hickories are in short supply.

All the players were impressed with the quality and presentation of the three courses and are looking forward to next year's event.

The Championship is organised and administered by The Australian Golf Heritage Society.



Top: Foursomes Champions Craig Bernhardt (l), Darron Watt (r), Bottom: Foursomes Handicap winners Scott Bower (l) Brendan Barnes (r)

Seen at the Australian Hickory Championship



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)

Photos (1) Dave Saunders hole in one 15th Manly (2) L to R Phil Baird, Craig Bernhardt, Dave Saunders, Mark Anderson, Renato Petrillo, Darron Watt (3) Les Browne addressing the guests at the Manly Dinner (4) Leading Left Hander with his trophy, Warwick Stanwell (5) L to R Orelo Hanakaoka, Scott Bower, Brendan Barnes, James Nakahata, Brad Wakamatsu, Yoshi Okubo (6) Craig Bernhardt



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)



(7)



(8)

Photos (1) Joint Singles Champions Tim Sayers (L), Dave Saunders (R) (2) Joint Singles Champion Justin Ryan (3) Ladies Champion Suz Brown (R) with Tommy Moore (4) Jim Mansfield (5) Handicap winner Scott Nakase (L) with GSA President Kim Hastie, (6) Paul Gladwin (7) L to R, Alice Mitsuhashi, Scott Nakase, Darryl Hearsch, John Treverrow, Julian Jackson, Peter van Eekelen (8) Phil Baird



Day 1 2024 Australian Hickory Championship - Foursomes at Warringah GC



Day 2 2024 Australian Hickory Championship - Singles at Manly GC



Day 3 2024 Australian Hickory Championship - Singles at Cromer GC

Seen at the Australian Hickory Championship



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)

Photos (1) AGHS Patron Tommy Moore (R) with son Philip (L) (2) James Feng (China) addresses the guests at the Manly dinner (3) Left to Right: Renato Petrillo, Brian Dolan, Alice Mitsuhashi, Scott Nakase, Peter Whittall, Gary Martinolli, Anne Dolan (4) Denis Sundin on the practice green

2025 NSW (Incl Major Interstate & Pacific Rim) Hickory Events

Event	Proposed Date	Venue	Format
New Zealand Championships	30 Jan – 2 Feb	Christchurch GC	4 days of Hickory
Alex Lowe	Sun 23 Feb	Wollongong GC Noon hit off	18 Holes Stableford Coverage by ABC TV South Coast
World Sand Green Hickory Championship	Sun 9 Mar	Portland GC 3 hours west of Sydney	18 Holes Stroke
NSW Foursomes Hickory Championship	Sun 6 Apr	Tuncurry GC	18 Holes Canadian Foursomes
NSW Hickory Shaft Championship	Mon - Tue 7 - 8 Apr	Tuncurry GC & Forster GC	36 Holes Singles Stroke
China Invitational	Mon – Tue 21 -22 April	Shanghai Links CC	36 Holes
Japan Hickory incl Asia Pacific Championship	Wed – Sat 14 – 17 May	Tokyo	4 Days of Hickory
Dan Cullen	Wed 4 June	Roseville GC	2 Ball Ambrose
Qld Foursomes	Fri 27 June	Royal Qld GC	18 Holes Canadian Foursomes
Qld Championships	Sun 29 June	Brisbane GC	18 Holes Stroke
Vic Championships	Mon - Wed 21 – 23 July	Yarrowonga GC On the NSW/Vic border	18 Holes Foursomes, 18 Holes Singles Interstate Match Play
Australasian Early Steel Championship	Sun 17 Aug	TBA	18 Holes Stableford Clubs - Early Steel
2025 Australian Hickory Shaft Foursomes Championship	Sun 12 Oct	North Adelaide GC	Canadian Foursomes 18 Holes Stroke
2025 Australian Hickory Shaft Open Championship	Mon- Tue 13 – 14 Oct	Royal Adelaide GC	36 Holes Stroke
South Australian Championship	Wed 15 Oct	Ashbourne Private Links	18 Holes Stroke
China Hickory Championships	Tue - Wed 11 – 12 Nov	Hainan Island (South China)	36 Holes
Southern Highlands Challenge	Sun 16 Nov	Bowral GC	18 Holes Stableford
Gutty Challenge	TBA	Georges River GC	18 Holes Stroke – Special Rules

2021- 2023 NSW Hickory Championship

As highlighted in my previous Captain's letter, many hickory events took place between the issue of The Brassie in March 2019 and Issue 1, 2024 July, and we wanted to record them in the Brassie as a record for the society.

In Issue 1 2024, we covered the Australian Hickory Championship, and in this issue, we cover the NSW Championship. Other important events from that period will be covered in future issues.

2021 – Tuncurry Golf Club

For the first time, the event was held outside Sydney in conjunction with the imminent opening of the new clubhouse, which incorporates a golf museum curated by AGHS.

The best score in the Foursomes was a father and son team of David and Jim Mansfield with 87. The runners-up on 91 were David Reckless and Stuart Meredith. The Net went to Tony Mountstephens and Michael Deacon.

The main event saw some nervous shots off the first as the local TV station (Prime Port Macquarie) was in attendance videoing the players.

Wollongong member Greg Thomson handled the course well, shooting 82 to win the Championship. Close behind with 84 was Eastlake Pro Alex Sutherland. Brisbane-based Bruce Collins, who only plays with hickories at his home course, took out the Net with 75.

2022 – Avondale and Killara Golf Clubs

Day one at Avondale had well-known golf instructor Dave Saunders lead the field with 75, followed by Manly Pro Phil Baird and clubmaker Tim Sayers with 76. Kathy Every-Burns led the Women on 99.

The handicap winner was local member Warwick Stanwell with a net 73.

The players raved about the recently redesigned Killara course, and the scores matched the improved layout. Dave Saunders continued his good form with 74 (total 149) to take out the title. Tim Sayers and Alex Sutherland were runners-up on 152.

The Women's Champion was Kathy Every-Burns on 212. Paul Gladwin won the handicap trophy with Net 150. The handicap winner on the day was Bruno Pase, with a net 72.

2023 – Bowral Golf Club

Bowral Golf Club, one of the oldest in NSW, was the perfect venue to hold this year's NSW Hickory Championships. These hickory clubs would have been used when the club was first opened in 1901.

A special event aimed at locals interested in trying the 100+ year-old clubs was held in conjunction with the championship on Thursday. Hickory clubs were provided, and the players were amazed at how well they played.

Captain David holed a good putt on the 18th to take the trophy from Peter Cottee and Peter Whittall. In fact, Cottee hit the ball so long and straight with the hickory driver don't be surprised if it is in his bag next week!



Les Browne with Bowral event winners, L to R: Les Browne, Runner-up Peter Cottee, Winner David Burgess and 3rd Peter Whittall.

2024 NSW Hickory Championship - Sawtell GC

The event, run by The Australian Golf Heritage Society, moved to the NSW North Coast at the testing Sawtell GC this year.

Resident Pro Brendan Barnes and Club Captain Ian Jones welcomed everyone, including players from Victoria and Queensland.

Although the course was damp, it provided a good playing surface, particularly the greens, which were firm and fast.

The Sydney-based players were pleased to be playing again after the terrible conditions at home.

Although not compulsory, many of the players were in period dress, which made a great spectacle for the event.

Day 1 saw the players line up for Foursomes, which is difficult enough with modern clubs but doubly difficult with the 100+-year-old hickories.

Local knowledge was evident with Pro Brendan teaming up with Bonville Captain Tony O'Rourke, who was a first-time hickory player, taking the title with a fine 77. Runners-up were hickory tragics, from Brisbane GC, Bruce Collins and David Mansfield, who also took out the Handicap event.

After the golf and the 'we could a' discussions, the group moved to the nearby RSL Club for an enjoyable dinner and more stories.

Day 2 again saw wonderful weather for round one of the Championship, which was reflected in the scores. 2023 Champion, Bankstown's Tim Sayers, shot one over 71, with six others beating 80. The Women's Championship had reigning Champion Suz Brown, from Manly, a shot behind Concord's Truda Rail. The day's highflyer was Bowral's Peter Whittall's net 62.

The final round on day 3 had Tim continuing his good form with a 72, for a total of 143 and taking the title. Runner-up, all the way from Yarrowonga, on 150 (76,74) was Todd LeGrand.

Peter Whittall continued his good form taking out the Handicap Championship with net 128 note the cards have been sent back to Bowral for handicapping!!

In the Women's Championship, Suz Brown was too consistent and took the title for the second successive year.

The championship presentation was at the club, where players commented on the wonderful hospitality and course layout, which were not to be missed if they were in the area.



Singles Champion Tim Sayers



Seen at the NSW Hickory Championship



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)

Photos (1) L to R: Todd LeGrand, Bruce Collins, Brendan Barnes (2) L to R Les Browne with Foursomes winners, Tony O'Rourke, Brendan Barnes (3) Ladies Champion Suz Brown (4) Handicap winner Peter Whittall (5) Warwick Stanwell (6) L to R Anne Dolan, Truda Rail (7) L - R Denis Lynch, Peter Whittall, Chris Nicholson (8) Troy LeGrand, Paul Gladwin, David Rail (9) L to R Foursomes Runners-up and Handicap winners Bruce Collins and David Mansfield (10) Some of the participants

(6)



(7)



(8)

(9)



(10)

