



Management Committee Report

For the year ending 31 December 2017

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Management Committee, to submit our report on the activities of the Senior Golfers' Union of South Africa for the year. Your Union enjoyed another successful year and is in a strong position to face the challenges of the future.

In 2015 it was decided to replace the Tournament computer system as the legacy application was unstable and posed an unacceptable risk to the running of the tournament. A new web based system was developed during the latter half of 2016 and was introduced for the National Tournament in Cape Town in April 2017. The new system has greatly eased the workload of the secretariat and has allowed greater flexibility in deadlines set. Further detail in this regard is given under the IT heading.

It has been anticipated for some time that sponsorships, particularly at the national level, would become more difficult to attract and maintain and I must report that SAB has elected not to renew its sponsorship for 2018. Fortunately we are financially well able to withstand this loss.

This year the tournament organisers again had to deal with a large number of withdrawals due to incapacity and ill health, which can be anticipated given the nature of our organisation. The result was that a number of Societies were again depleted of reserves. In line with this reality we will continue to limit the size of the field to avoid finding ourselves in the embarrassing situation of not being able to replace withdrawals. We have also this year continued the tradition of extending an invitation to the Senior Golfers' Societies of Zambia and Zimbabwe for a limited number of players to join us for our National Tournament. I am pleased to report that we have 8 visitors from these countries joining us in Johannesburg.

Financial Report

We are pleased to report that your Union continues on a sound financial footing and a summary of the unaudited financial statements is attached for your information.

Financial highlights

The financial statements again reflect a positive situation for the Union showing a surplus (before the revaluation of investments) of some R23 590 for the year versus the previous year's R324 794. The 2016 surplus was boosted by a profit on disposal of the SAB shares of R154 494. Also during 2017, payments totaling R60 000 were paid to the affected societies to assist with the hosting of the inbound Australian tour.

Congratulations are due to the Western Cape Society for achieving a surplus R39 436 in hosting the 2017 National Tournament.

Income from Investments comprising both interest and dividends amounted to R194 176 versus R191 925 in 2016.

A further R70 000 was spent in the current year on the development of the National Tournament operating system.

The only major variance from budget related to fees payable for the maintenance of the new National Tournament operating system and the increased charge for amortization of the IT development costs. The adverse variance amounted to R68 496.

Investment in equities.

Our equities portfolio achieved an increase in value this year of R158 600, representing an increase of 7% year on year.

The Investment fair value reserve is currently stated at R510 807 and the long term value of our investment has been maintained above inflation.

Audited financial statements are available to members on request.

A budget for the year ending 31 December 2018 is attached and reflects a deficit of R88 155.

Tours

2017 was a busy year for the Senior Golfers touring itinerary.

In February and March of 2017 a Senior Golfers group from Australia toured our country. A total of 32 Seniors and their partners arrived in Cape Town on the 11th February for the start of the tour, unfortunately many without their luggage which was left behind in Sydney by Qantas. After the first game one of the couples had to leave because of a family emergency back home. The vacancy was not filled and the tour continued with 15 Seniors. After Cape Town the group moved on to the Southern Cape where they were hosted by the local Senior Society. The weather was great as was the hospitality and after three games the group moved on to KZN where they were met by the local committee and transferred to the famous Oyster Box Hotel for their stay. The weather in KZN did not play ball and one game at Zimbali was cancelled, although some of the group were able to get a game at Beechwood GC instead. A visit to Thanda Game lodge for a few days of rest and recuperation was extremely successful and very much enjoyed by all. Then on to Johannesburg for the final leg of the tour. After games at The River Club, Johannesburg Country Club and a washed out game at Royal and Kensington GC the group departed on the 4th March following a final farewell dinner at CCJ.

Once again the camaraderie and good fellowship between the visitors and the locals was a highlight of the tour and it seems that the bonds that bind the international Senior Golfers get stronger and stronger.

All the hosting Societies and their organising committees are to be thanked for their hard work and congratulated on an excellent tour. Without their input and great effort we would not be able to host groups like this on such a grand scale.

We did not send a team to the 2017 Senior Golfers World Championships in the USA in 2017.

In July 2017 Stuart Morris led two teams to the Annual King Leopold III Challenge in Belgium. The teams played on the Royal Limburg GC and the Spiegelveen GC and, as in the past, acquitted themselves very well. In the Net competition the SAA team of Peter Bailey, Stuart McLean, Stuart Morris and Dave Horak came second after some magnificent golf. The SAA team also achieved a credible 6th place in the final Gross classification.

Once again a good time was had by all.

During 2017 we were approached by the United States Senior Golfers Association (USSGA) regarding the establishment of ties between our organisations and to possibly consider reciprocal tours between our two countries. We are currently in discussion with the USSGA and will report on progress made at the next Governing Body meeting in April 2018.

In 2018 we will send the Chilean Senior Golfers Association an invitation to visit South Africa in 2019.

IT

The new Membership and Tournament System was used for the first time for the 2017 National Tournament that was held in Cape Town hosted by the Western Province Society. A small number of insignificant errors were identified which did not detract from the management of the tournament.

Following the tournament all societies were requested to submit suggestions in terms of the usage and functionality of the system. Most suggestions submitted related to the administration, logistics and operation of the tournament and not to the system itself. A small number of societies have made constructive suggestions that have been incorporated into the future enhancement program and your input is appreciated.

A system review was conducted by Mancom, together with the project manager, Mike Bladen, to identify and prioritise required fixes and enhancements. Given the limitations of our Maintenance and Enhancement contract concluded with the developer, not all enhancements have been addressed. Future enhancements will be attended to when resources are available.

While most of the society members are able to utilise the system themselves, there are a number who need assistance. Consequently, the secretary level functionality has been enhanced in order for society secretaries to assist members who have limited computer literacy or access to the internet.

The National Tournament for 2018, to be hosted by the Gauteng Society at The Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Club, has been loaded onto the system and the tournament processes such as society member applications, society allocations, member acceptances, et al is under way.

The Guide for Setting Up and Running the Annual National Tournament is to be updated to lay out clearly the procedures in terms of the timing and delivery of the details of future tournaments.

National Tournament 2017

The 2017 National Tournament held in Cape Town was an enjoyable tournament that was well organized and run. Congratulations are due to Bill Stephens and his Local Organizing Committee. Cape Town is a comparatively expensive venue and this was reflected in an entry fee increase of 25%. In the event there were 378 applications to attend, an increase on PE. Three hundred and forty two players were accepted from the various societies based on the quota allocation and the number of entries. By the time of the tournament there had been 58 withdrawals and the field was reduced to 320.

A number of withdrawals were due to nonaccepted applicants making other arrangements in the interim and we would therefore urge players who are not initially accepted to keep themselves available to fill the inevitable vacancies. The very small number of applicants from some of the smaller Societies was disappointing. The continued and growing interest from international players is most encouraging and we look forward to being able to welcome a limited number of international Seniors in future.

The over-riding concern before and during the tournament was the performance of the new computer system which, in the event, performed admirably. There were very few glitches although there are inevitably a few aspects that can and will be improved to provide added value for members. Mike Bladen the developer and an EP Senior went way beyond the call of duty as did Allan Bulmer from Mancom. Heartfelt thanks to you and your teams.

As with most recent venues Cape Town struggled to raise cash sponsorships, which resulted in a rather steep increase in entry fees. In the event the standard of the Cocktail Party and Gala Dinner were maintained and after some cost saving measures and hard work raising sponsorship a profit of R39436 was realized.

Cape Town was experiencing a severe drought in April 2017 and all players were, I am sure, very pleasantly surprised by the good condition of both the King David Mowbray and of the Royal Cape golf courses and in particular the greens. The set-up of Royal Cape for the Championship did not take account of the weather, which was unfortunate, and the course was testing to say the least. Closer attention to this aspect will be paid in future.

Kelvin Grove was a good venue for both the Cocktail Party and the Gala Dinner. Four hundred and sixty attendees at the Gala Dinner was always going to be a tight fit, which resulted, inter alia, in prize winners taking an unavoidably long time to wend their way through crowded tables to the podium. Changes to the format of prize giving are being considered to address this problem.

Congratulations are due to Wim Fourie from Gauteng North, the overall winner of the Carlton Levick Trophy on a score of 160 and to the runner up, Hennie Heyns of KZN, on a score of 162. By far the greatest number of participants are in the 'C' and 'D' Classes and changes to the number of prizes in these categories to address this imbalance are being considered for 2018.

On behalf of Mancom I would like to express my thanks to Bill Stephens, his team and all the volunteers, especially the ladies, for their enthusiasm, hard work and commitment to making it a successful and enjoyable tournament.

Conclusion

I would very much like to thank the members of Mancom, John Brownrigg, Ross Grainger, Allan Bulmer and Colin Esslemont for their dedication and commitment during the year. This year has been particularly busy and their contributions and support have been invaluable. My thanks are of course also due to Frank Rosslee, the Union Secretary, for his substantial contribution to the smooth running of your Union.

Rob Wassenaar
Chairman
Management Committee