

FAIRWAY NEWS



FEBRUARY
2024



Welcome to SGC golf in 2024

The year has got off to a bumper start with a huge field of nearly 130 playing in the opening round of the Club Championships and the Club enjoying its strongest membership numbers in decades. To help kick off the year the Club is having two events in rapid succession.

Meet and Greet for new members.

An informal opportunity for new members to meet the Club's Captain and Vice Captain and get the inside info on how the Club operates.

29 February @ 6:30pm -7.30pm at Sandy Golf Links

Club Social Function 3 March 3pm

A good time is guaranteed at the annual Club Social Function at the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron. **Book it in now via OneGolf!**

3 March @ 3.00pm -6.00pm at Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron

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Review of annual prizes and trophies

The Committee is undertaking a review of how the Club currently awards a number of annual trophies.

Currently the winner of a range of annual trophies would have their name engraved on the specific trophy, hold onto it for a year and then return it so it can be prepared or the next winner. In most cases there was no permanent memento of the member's triumph. As part of the review the Committee is hoping to achieve a couple of things:

- Increase the value to members of annual competition wins –in \$s and in other ways
- Simplify the competition program and introduce greater variety with less stableford rounds

A work in progress but for more detail see later in the newsletter.

Upcoming events

17 February	Stroke, Club Champs R3
24 February	Stableford
29 February	Meet and Greet for new members
2 March	Stroke, VGL Medal
3 March	Club Social Function at the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron.
9 March	Stableford
16 March	Par
23 March	2 Ball Ambrose

Recent Results

- Dan Harrison's excellent 42pts squeaked him over the line on 9 Dec to win the overall. Gavin Kinnaird (41pts C Grade), Mark Brooks (40pts A Grade) and Colin Hunter (40pts C Grade) chased Dan home. Jacqui Hastings (32pts) won the Women's Division.
- The 2 ball Ambrose on 16 Dec was won by Mike Roker and Craig Brenner whose 51.75 was well clear of Rod Burke and Grant Nicholson (53.5) who were 2nd on a countback from Brian Falvo and Grant Nicholson allowing Grant to feel both happy and disappointed at the same time. (Note: Two teams can be made when playing a 3 ball.)
- Peter Karvelis' fantastic 44pts took out the pre Christmas comp on 23/12 but only narrowly from Dwight Mackinnon's 43pts which won C Grade. A and B Grades were won the Phillip Kamay (38pts) and Philip Hopkins(40pts) respectively. Recently published author Liz Tanzimat (38pts) won the Women's Division on a countback from Kate Caridakis and Theresa Whalen.
- 2023 Founder's Shield winner Gavin Kinnaird finished the year strongly by taking out the last round of the year with 43pts. Andrew Thompson (41pts B Grade), Geoff May (39pts A Grade), Liz Mann (39pts Women's) and Wayne Powell (38pts C Grade) were the other winners.
- The first round of 2024 was won by Andrew Steggall with 40pts. Wayne Powell had a great festive season taking out his second C Grade in a row with 39pts. Sarah Adam-Gedge (38pts) and Timothy Strickland (37pts) won the Women's and A Divisions respectively. John Bris saw off Colin Hockley and Jeff Coghill to win B Grade after all 3 had tied on 37pts.

THE PRESIDENT'S BLOG

Welcome to 2024 and congratulations to all our members who have maintained a presence at our regular events, despite receiving the New Year present of yet another increase courtesy of the Course Management / Administration. This one was not as severe as the previous increases, but nonetheless an increase.



Membership loyalty was clearly demonstrated with the first round of the Club Championships attracting a field in excess of 100 participants, the largest field in a long time. Let's hope we can get a similar representation in round 2 and then beyond that into the rest of the season.

Following the completion of the Club Championships, it is intended to have a celebratory social event and more will be announced very soon so as everyone has time to plan their diary.

Personally, it's great to get back on the course after a 3 month lay-off. Surprisingly I am still able to find all of the nooks and crannies of the course layout that get me into trouble.

...and remember...Brand new golf balls are attracted to water, and the power of the attraction is in direct proportion to how much the balls cost.

Regards

Rob

Breaking News – Hole in one and Exceptional Score

Tony Morgan scored a hole in one on the 16th on 10 February. More details next issue.

Congrats to Tony.

In the mid week completion the preceding week Tom Tomlin matched the mid week course record with a phenomenal 48pts of a handicap of 14. Great playing Tom!

Recent Results (cont.)

- The round on 13 Jan saw an amazing set of scores (see elsewhere for details). All grades were won with 40pts of more with Neil Singh's 44pts topping the list. Tony Morgan's 43pts won C Grade and George Bakrnchev (41pts) won A Grade. Countbacks were needed in B Grade (Rod Burke beating Ricky Plummer and Mal McAfee – all on 41pts) and Women's Division (Jacqui Hastings beating Kate Caridakis and Alison Kenny – all on 40 pts.)
- Trevor Schultz narrowly missed tying the Club Record for a Par round with his +8 winning the overall on 20 Jan. (The record is +9). All the other Divisions were won with a score of +4. Jenni Clarke (Women's Division), Todd Wilson (A Grade), George Andreetta (B Grade) and Terrey Baker (C Grade) were the other winners.
- Countback rules came into play again on 27 Jan (see later for how they work). Scott Reed won the overall on a countback with 40pts. Fortunately the other 40pt scorers Gary Boschen (A Grade) and Peter McLeod (B Grade) won other prizes. Paul Rich (35pts) won C Grade. Olivia ODonahoo (35pts) won the Women's Division on a countback from Sarah Adam-Gedge and Anna Puchalski. Gary's round was highlighted by 3 birdies in 4 holes to end the front 9 at 1 under par.
- In the first round of the Club Championships on 3/2 Stephen Hoey's net 60 won the overall and the VGL Medal. Michael Kent (net 63) won A Grade on a countback from Colin Hunter. Ruth Branagh (Women's net 64), Bruno DiStanislo (B Grade net 62) and Toby Turnbull (C Grade net 62) were the other winners.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Welcome to a New Year of golf at Sandringham. The long spring has finally turned to summer and warm weather is starting to dry out the course and make those greens a bit harder to manage.



We have seen another increase in green fees, which is both expected and disappointing. Many members will be seriously looking at their options and weighing up the cost versus value.

As a club we are working hard to ensure that those members who participate in the club events are getting value for their membership. When you pair this with a public course in great condition in the Sandbelt area and its consistent playability all year round I think we present a great combination. I will draw your attention to ongoing favourites and some new incentives being worked on by Committee to maximize this value.

- Your club will reimburse your entry to VGL events.
- Subsidized golf lessons
- A revised Fixture with a greater mix of competition types
- Participation in Pennant competitions
- Meet and greet for new members
- An expanded list of prizes for special competitions
- Annual social event at Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron
- The same low annual membership fee
- No competition entry fee for members

I think this offer will ensure that Sandringham Golf Club remains a part of your golfing future. The 121 entries in round 1 of the Club Championships are a testament to this.

Cheers and happy golfing.

Michael Kent

- Two net 60s led the way on 10/2. Jeff Coghill won the overall and Grant Nicholson C Grade. Richard Grace (net 64) won B Grade and Julie Coupe (net 65) the Women's Division. David Mallen (net 65) beat Tim Noonan on a countback to win A Grade.

News and Notes

Best Wishes

Best wishes to Jason Maynard as he recovers from a recent stroke.

Also to Ann Forwood who was hit on the wrist by a ball from the 10th whilst playing the 5th hole (14th on the day) on 10 February.

Members are asked to take and show care when on the course. Even within your own playing group wayward shots can cause problems if people are out of position.

On your own misdirected shots always give a Fore even if you can't see anyone or the ball has gone out of view. People are sometimes in the least expected spot on a golf course!

What a round!

The Stableford round on 13 January saw some exceptional scoring. In the men's field 25 players scored 36pts or more and 6 scored more than 40pts. With men's field size of 82 it meant that 30% of the field scored 36pts or more. Scoring was just as hot on the women's side with 7 of the field of 16 scoring 36pts or more (44%) and 3 scored 40pts or more.

New equipment got for Christmas or a newfound zeal for the game? Who knows?

Normal service has been resumed in subsequent rounds!

The Athena Golf Tournament moving

The Athena Golf Tournament, which has been played at Sandy Golf Links for its first two years, will be played at Peninsula Kingswood in 2024. Dates are 24-25 February.

Club Apparel

Members can purchase Club apparel.

- Polo shirt \$35. Women's polos now also available; Cap \$10

Email:

memberservices@sandringhamgolfclub.org.au or text 0413 438 048

Review of annual prizes and trophies cont.

Here are some other things that are being considered as part of the review:

- Increase existing or attach cash prizes to annual competitions
- Ensure that competitions do not systemically favour a section of the membership i.e. low or high handicappers.
- Increasing the provision of engraved bag tags for the winners of all major competitions to replace the annual trophies
- Retire some of the Club's current set of trophies*
- Replacing Pairs Aggregate Stableford rounds as they are not a good fit with MiScore
- Introduce an "Olympic" competition which would reward the best golfer over a 3 round stretch of Par/Stableford/Stoke.

Stay tuned for more details as they are known!

* Trophies used to be handed out at the AGM – witness photo below from 2016. My daughter's remark when she saw the range of trophies was that "it was worse than Under14 basketball!"



Local course conditions and the rules.

Recent course improvement works overseen by Gerri O'Callaghan (Course Superintendent for RMGC and SGL) has increased the number of GUR areas and it is worth noting how they affect play and our local rules. Here is an extract from a recent email from Gerri to all clubs.

"I have had many questions about Immovable obstructions etc on the course. These rules apply at Sandy Golf Links but may not apply at other courses.

As you will have been aware for a while now to negate 'most' of the golfers walking across our greens and to distribute the wear there have been white ropes and white hoops on or near the greens. These ropes and hoops are movable obstructions. So if one them is in your line of shot, interferes with your stance or your intended swing path you may remove them but please put them back as close as possible to where you took them out from.

You will have seen there are some new GUR'S around the course. We acquired some sprigs of couch from the fairway renovations which recently took place on the West Course at Royal Melbourne Golf Club and we hope that they will strike to get some grass cover on areas close to greens or sides of fairways where a lot of balls go. These are either roped off by steel pegs with a GUR play prohibited sign in them and a dotted white boundary painted or they have a GUR play prohibited sign in them with a dotted white paint around them. You can obtain free relief from these dropping no nearer the hole where you can take your shot. Until they are established and I consider them not to be GUR please adhere to this. I will not be marking drop zones.

The other areas which you can obtain free relief are our vegetation areas on 4,9,10,18. These are also marked with a white dotted line.

Thank you for your patience as my ground staff and I continue to improve the playability of the course."

It is no coincidence that these comments align with our local rules which can be found on the club website or via the MiScore app. All members should be aware of the relevant sections of the local rules and wherever possible, these should be shared with visitors, guests and Sandy members who may need a refresher. A point worth noting is the lack of drop zones and the negative impact this can have. Courses don't always provide a defined drop zone around large GUR areas. Members need to ensure that when taking mandatory relief from a GUR that the ball must be dropped such that full relief of stance, swing and ball strike is clear of the GUR. The ball must be dropped at the nearest point of relief no nearer the hole, and sometimes this may result in a drop point with a poor lie (see next pages).

Remember nearest not nicest!

Best advice: if you are uncertain of the location of your ball - always hit a provisional ball

A Note on Paths

You are only allowed to take free relief from a cart path if it is artificially surfaced. There is no free relief from natural paths such as grass or sandy paths. At Sandy this means relief is only allowed where the path has embedded stones as there are no artificial surface paths in bounds.

Relief from Abnormal Course Conditions (ACC) including GUR

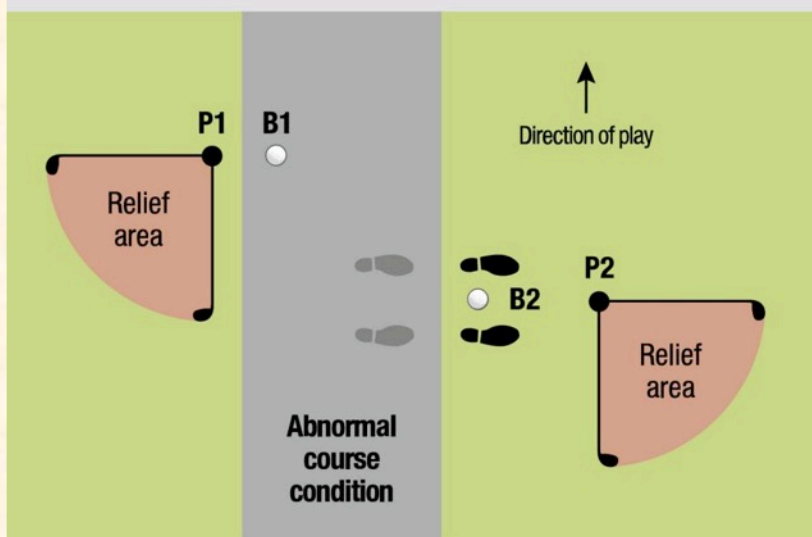
So you have hit into a GUR or no play zone what can you do?

The diagram shows two situations. First when the ball is in the Abnormal Course Condition (B1) and secondly when the course condition would interfere with the stance or intended swing (B2).

In both cases the nearest point of complete relief is established and a relief area of one club length no nearer the hole is established and the ball dropped within that area.

Important Note: You do not have to have found your ball. If you and your marker are virtually certain the ball has entered the ACC you can drop another ball in the relief area for no penalty.

DIAGRAM 16.1a: WHEN RELIEF IS ALLOWED FOR ABNORMAL COURSE CONDITION



The diagram assumes the player is right-handed. Free relief is allowed for interference by an abnormal course condition (ACC), including an immovable obstruction, when the ball touches or lies in or on the condition (B1), or the condition interferes with the area of intended stance (B2) or swing. The nearest point of complete relief for B1 is P1, and is very close to the condition. For B2, the nearest point of complete relief is P2, and is farther from the condition as the stance has to be clear of the ACC.



It's getting harder to find your ball in the no Play Zones as the vegetation grows. The area on the left of the 4th hole on 4 November (I) and on 23 December (below)



Fairway News Contributions and Feedback

Fairway News is always looking for contributions so if you have any comments, suggestions, photos have a Sandy golf story to tell or fancy a bit of creative writing please send it along to newsletter@sandringhamgolfclub.org.au

Taking Relief- even the best get it wrong

As Rory McIlroy found out in the Pebble Beach tournament in early February you need to know your rules. Rory was penalised 2 shots after his round for not taking a correct drop. He fell foul of a change in the rule in 2023.



The current rule, which was rewritten in January of 2023, requires that if the player is taking relief by going back from where his ball was in line with the flag and then drop the ball on that line. The ball, once dropped, can then roll up to a club length in any direction before a re-drop is required. Rory proceeded under the rules as they were pre-2023, which was you go back on the line and then you would measure one club length off the line in either direction as long as it was no nearer the hole and drop it within that club length. So if you take an **unplayable lie** what can you do? You have three options:

You can play **stroke-and-distance relief** by playing a ball from where you played the previous stroke. **(Point 1 in the diagram below)**

One shot penalty

You can take **back-on-the-line relief** by dropping a ball behind the spot of the original ball, keeping the spot of the original ball between the hole and the spot on which the ball is dropped. **(Point 2 in the diagram below)**

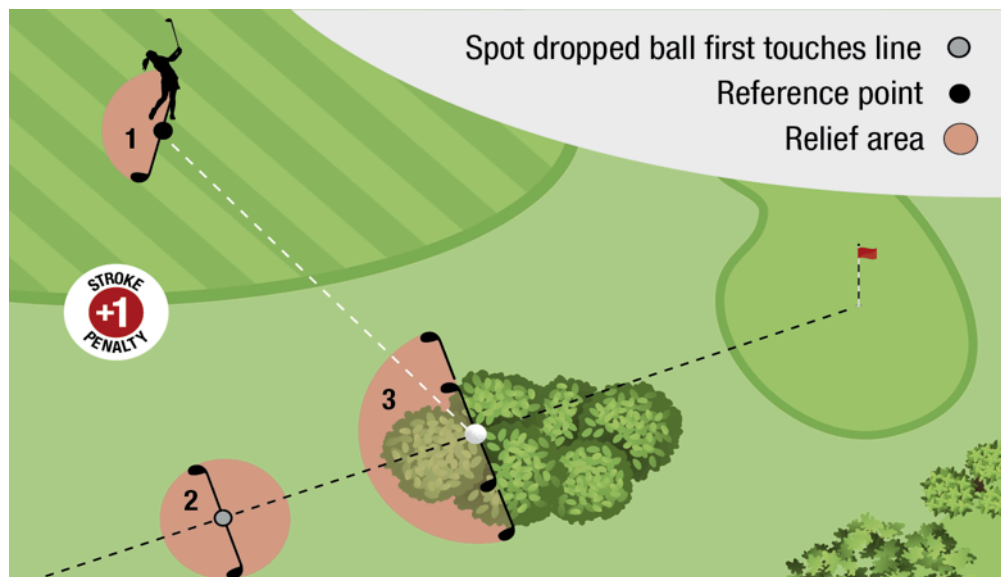
The spot on the line where the ball first touches the ground when dropped creates a relief area that is one club-length in any direction from that point, **but** with these limits:

- Must not be nearer the hole than the spot of the original ball, and
- May be in any area of the course, **but**
- Must be in the same area of the course that the ball first touched when dropped.

One shot penalty

You can take **lateral relief**. The reference point for taking relief is the spot of the original ball and a ball must be dropped in and played from the two club-length relief area, which is no nearer the hole than the reference point. **(Point 3 in the diagram below)**

One shot penalty



Golf on TV – why does it look like it does?

Golf is one of the few sports where for most of a tournament or indeed in most tournaments the viewing experience is often better from the couch than on the course. You can be shown the play on multiple holes from multiple camera angles and get a good feel for how the tournament is progressing and who is in contention. You get to see almost every crucial shot live or after a short delay. On course you may be jostling in a crowd while you follow a leading group or favourite player or stuck viewing a particular tee or green as groups come through. You may not get a good picture of the tournament situation and will more often than not miss the memorable shots that win the trophy.

TV coverage of golf has come a long way from fixed cameras to mobile and hand held cameras, from tower shots to ground hugging low angle zooms on putts as they curve into the hole, super slow motion swing analysis and through blimps to drones (see later).

One of the pioneers of telecast golf was Frank Chirkinian (known as the 'father of televised golf' or by some as the Ayatollah for his brusque, uncompromising approach to directing broadcasts!). Chirkinian was executive producer of CBS's golf coverage from 1959 to 1996 and produced the Masters TV coverage for 38 years and is responsible for how the Masters looks on TV. He was an innovator popularising the concept of "under par"



showing players relation to par on scoreboards and TV screens. Previously only stroke totals were used. Some of the other things he pioneered or made regular were:

- Multiple cameras from multiple angles
- A blimp cam
- Sending cameras out on the course with reporters
- Putting white paint in the holes so viewers could see them on TV
- Putting microphones around the green and tee boxes and in the cups to hear the players, the crowd the strike of ball on club and ball dropping into the hole.

Chirkinian loved Greg Norman and there are stories of him insisting that the broadcast show Norman even if he wasn't in contention.

Golf on TV as a commercial proposition has always been fraught especially in the US. Heavy commercial loads (to recoup the big bucks paid for the TV rights) often mean key shots are missed or shown on delay and out of context. Other network commitments have sometimes led to golf coverage being cut short as the networks switch to news, sitcom reruns or in the case of LIV last year a skin care infomercial. In Australia we are blessed with golf coverage. The commercial stations are not as intrusive, Foxtel/Kayo broadcasts seem to keep showing golf during the American TV ad breaks and the feed of the Major tournaments is usually fantastic.

So couch or live?? Your preference?

Pennant Golf 2024

Sandy's Pennant season gets underway in late February with the Seniors Team opening the season on with an away fixture at Creekside (Morack Golf Course).

It's a while since Sandy has had a pennant win so let's hope for success in 2024.

If you are at a loose end and want to support our teams feel free to come along and walk a few holes.

Good luck to all players and teams.

Pennant Schedule

	Scratch (Div 2)	Handicap (Div 3)	Seniors
Rd 1	Brighton (A) 24/3/24	Elsternwick Red (H) 24/3/24	Creekside (A) 22/2/24
Rd 2	Craigieburn Wilmott (A) 7/4/24	Ringwood Blue (H) 7/4/24	Craigieburn Wilmott (H) 29/2/24
Rd 3	Westgate (H) 14/4/24	Creekside (A) 14/4/24	Eastern Sward (A) 7/3/24
Rd 4	Brighton (H) 21/4/24	Elsternwick Red (A) 21/4/24	Creekside (H) 14/3/24
Rd 5	Craigieburn Wilmott (H) 28/4/24	Ringwood Blue (A) 28/4/24	Craigieburn Wilmott (A) 21/3/24
Rd 6	Westgate (A) 5/5/24	Creekside (H) 5/5/24	Eastern Sward (H) 4/4/24

Content Advisory Warning

The picture to the right may disturb some viewers but we have been assured it is (h)armless!

Who forgot his golf shoes in 10 February???



How do you know who the members are when you book in Quick18?

As mentioned last time the Club is asking members to edit their surnames in their Quick18 account by prefixing the surname with SGC. This idea has received a lot of positive feedback and helps new and existing members to identify fellow members when booking rounds.

Where to redeem your vouchers if you are lucky or good enough to win one!

- Sandy PGA Pro Shop
- House of Golf
- Some Drummond Stores
- Sandringham Café for food or drink
- Grape and Grain Liquor Cellars, Station St Moorabbin
- Royal Melbourne Golf Club Pro Shop

Are you ready for match play in 2024?

Wiped out in the Club Championships? Fancy yourself in one on one competition? Why not try Match Play?

SGC conducts two match play competitions during the year – a singles (the John Pittard Trophy) and a pairs competition (the Ian Fraser Trophy).

Members can nominate into a draw for both these competitions. The deadline for nominations is 1 March 2024. Nominations are now open and made through the OneGolf booking process.

Once a random draw is established it is the members responsibility to schedule the matches with their opponents in accordance with the Club's timetable(see below).

Some things to note:

- Matches are played on a handicap basis using the standard Match Play Index (**NOT the stroke index we use for regular competitions**). Shots are given on certain holes depending on the differences in handicaps. For the pairs competition shots are given in relation to the lowest handicapped player.
- Matches do not need to be played at Sandy Golf Links but can be arranged elsewhere by mutual agreement.
- You cannot play a match in a SGC Match Play competition and enter another competition on that day – i.e. you can't play on the Saturday Stableford comp if you are having a match.

Date	Pittard Singles	Fraser Pairs
27 April	Round 1 Complete	
8 June	Round 2 Complete	Round 1 Complete
13 July	Round 3 Complete	
27 July		Round 2 Complete
24 August	Round 4 Complete	
25 September	Round 5 Complete	Round 3 Complete
26 October	Final Complete	Final Complete

John Pittard Singles Match Play 2023

The delayed final of the 2023 Singles Match Play competition was played in early February and Andy Bakker came out on top defeating Jason Rainbow 3 and 2 preventing Jason from sweeping Match Play titles in 2023. Congratulations to Andy on his win and to Jason for a stellar Match Play season.

The Professional Game: Golf Saudi – the great disruptor!

There is a common element that is shaping the future of both women and men's professional golf internationally. That element is Golf Saudi. First some terms:

- The Saudi *Public Investment Fund (PIF)* bankrolls the rebel LIV golf tour and oversees investment in golf through:
- Golf Saudi - an umbrella group whose mission is to “*Facilitate uptake and participation in Saudi Arabian Golf through the delivery of world-class facilities, operational excellence, and implementation of best practices while harnessing wider commercial opportunities within golf.*”
- A key sponsor of golf is *Aramco* - the state-owned petroleum and natural gas company i.e. the national oil company of Saudi Arabia. As of 2022, it is the second-largest company in the world by revenue

The Women's Game

The two major women's tours the LPGA and the LET (Ladies European Tour) had announced a merger in 2019. Negotiations had proceeded amicably and the final agreement was due to be put to a vote in November 2023. On the verge of the vote the LET asked for a postponement citing the need to “review additional information”. This appeared to be at the behest of Golf Saudi.

So what happened? LPGA players have been told that”

‘As a significant partner of the LET, Golf Saudi wanted to ensure that they fully understood any risks, implications, and opportunities for the Aramco Saudi Ladies International and Aramco Team Series before finalising their commitment to the events in 2024....Based on this communication, the LET Board decided to pause the vote and the meeting was adjourned. The LPGA Board supported that decision.’

The LET is the much smaller organisation but includes 33 events in 21 different countries and a prize fund of \$US43m. Aramco-sponsored events comprise nearly 25% LET's season prize pot. On the other side the LPGA has shied away from Saudi investment but has a total prize pool of over \$US116m in 2024. It appears Golf Saudi was concerned that its influence might diminish if the merger went ahead.

The Men's Game

On the men's side we all know about LIV but a final agreement is still to be reached between the PGA, the DP World Tour and the PIF - agreement was promised by the end of 2023. However the traditional tours have announced the creation of an investment vehicle - *PGA Tour Enterprises* and the PGA Tour has agreed to a private equity deal worth around \$US3bn with a group of investors led by the *Fenway Sports Group*, which owns Liverpool FC. As a result, golfers who have remained loyal to the tour and rejected advances from the LIV Golf circuit are set to receive \$US1.5bn in immediate and future equity. Negotiations on how the PIF can invest in this vehicle are ongoing.

Meanwhile the PIF has continued to recruit players to LIV (Jon Rahm, Tyrell Hatton and Lucas Herbert) and bide its time whilst the investment mechanism is worked out.

There is no doubt that Saudi money is playing a huge part in shaping the future of the professional game.

