

FAIRWAY NEWS



OCTOBER
2025



Things you need to be aware of before 11 October

Starting on 2 October Golf Australia introduced a new digital home for golf that replaced GolfLink, their current website and app. As the 11 October will be the first competition since the transition members need to be alert but not alarmed!

Hopefully you will have checked your old account and updated any details before the change happened particularly ensuring that your email address for the current Golf Australia App is correct and matches your email address with Sandringham Golf Club.

After October 10, you will need to load the new app on your phone to access the GA Handicap site but your MiScore account should not be impacted. Your old GolfLink number will become your new Golf ID. Big technology changes often have teething problems. Let's hope any associated with this change are minor.

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Annual General Meeting

7.30pm 11 November

Black Rock Sports Club

2 Fern St, Black Rock

Come along and meet fellow members, discuss issues about the Club's operation and elect the 2026 Committee.

Also, at the meeting members who have been lucky (or skilled enough) to win Club Competitions will be presented with the appropriate medals. Drinks and finger food provided.

Upcoming events

11 Oct.	Stroke, Star Medallist
18 Oct.	Stableford
25 Oct	4BBB, Singles and Pairs Match Play finals complete
1 Nov	Stroke, Olympic R 1
8 Nov	Par, Olympic R 2
11 Nov	AGM
15 Nov	Stableford, Olympic R 3
22 Nov	Stableford, Southern Cross Cup
29 Nov	Stableford

Recent Results

- It was a tightly clustered field on the 9/8. Three scores of 38pts and two of 37pts took the prizes. Matthew Pond(38pts) won the overall on a countback from Chloe Lazar and Mark Johnston who won the Women's Division and A Grade respectively. Ian Nicholson (37 Pts B Grade) and Ben Nottle (37pts C Grade) were the other winners.
- The 4BBB on 16/8 was even tighter with 3 teams returning scores of 43pts. Sarah Adam-Gedge and Linda Best got the chocolates on a countback from Peter Bowen and Dale Barratt and Colin Hunter and Paul McGarry. Peter and Dale got the nod for Runners Up. Sarah and Linda thus won the **JJ Meade Trophy** for the second successive year.
- Lynda Douth took out the overall on 23/8 with an excellent 41pts. Again, there was a bunched field. Liz Tanzimat (40pts Women's Division), Pat Maginness (39pts B Grade) and Ben Nottle (38pts C Grade) were clear winners. In A Grade a 3-way tie on 39pts was decided on a countback with Cameron Smith getting the nod ahead of Harrison Hooper and Adam Canwell.
- Scoring on 30/8 reflected the extremely difficult conditions. No player scored 36pts or better and the Daily Difficulty was assessed as +2 – one off the maximum. Ben Nottle took out the (unofficial!) title of player of the month by winning the Overall with 35pts. This gave Ben 3 wins for the month having taken out C Grade twice earlier in August. Ollie Cunliffe(33pts) won B Grade on a countback from Brett Williams. Other winners were Liz Tanzimat (32pts Women's Division), Kieran McAlister (34pts A Grade) and Jason Maynard (29pts C Grade).

THE PRESIDENT'S BLOG

Welcome to Spring and hopefully an upturn in the weather we have all been enduring. First thing we all hope to change is the continual windy (borderline hurricane) conditions we have had.



Commiserations to all the Cats supporters and congratulations to all the Fitzroy crowd (sorry, Brisbane Lions) and now we look forward to the cricket season and what is hopefully a victorious one for the Green and Gold. And while I'm at it, Congratulations to the European team (phew!!) over the "get in the hole" USA team in the Ryder Cup.

The resilience of the Sandy fraternity continues to shine through, with strong fields on a weekly basis (Grand Final weekend excepted). With Daylight Savings on our doorstep, (and probably already upon us by the time of publication) then no doubt fields will be stronger, so as we come into this period and the increased level of traffic, it is important that we all remember to treat the course with the respect it needs....repair divots and rake out the size 12 indentation in bunkers (they all seem to be size 12 if you're "lucky" enough finish in one).

The Clubs AGM is rapidly approaching so mark your calendars with the 11th November as it is important to have as many members as possible present at the meeting. This year the meeting will return to the Black Rock Sports Club in Fern Street, Black Rock. More information will be issued as the meeting gets closer.

After much asking we have just been informed that the course will be closed from 1 December to 9 December while the Australian Open is played at Royal Melbourne (see later).

Always remember:

An interesting thing about golf is that no matter how badly you play, it is always possible to get worse.

Regards

Rob

Recent Results (cont.)

- The Stroke Round on 6/9 saw Peter Bowen's excellent net 59 take out the overall. Other winners were Pat Fitzgerald (net 61 A Grade), Ben Akdag (net 63 B Grade) and Christine Nicholson (net 72 Women's Division) – on a countback from Julie Coupe. Visitor and former Australian of the Year, wheelchair tennis and basketball champion Dylan Alcott (net 66) won C Grade on a countback from Brock Hebard.
- Club Treasurer Christine Nicholson was forced to write a second cheque to herself in two weeks when she won the Club Medal Par round on 13/9 with a score of +5. Renay Hammerschlag (+3) won the Women's Division and Mark Johnston (+4) won A Grade on a countback from Darragh Nevin. It was a good week for the Russell brothers as Barry (+4) won C Grade and Peter (+3) won B Grade on a countback from Peter McLeod.
- Windy conditions pushed the Daily Difficulty to +1 on 20/9 but it didn't impact Paul Scanlon who won the overall with 39pts. Other winners were Anne Forwood (Women's Division 35pts), Michael Sneyd (A Grade 37pts), David Raftis (B Grade 37pts) and Michael Lenkic (C Grade 35pts).
- Two of our winners from the previous week backed it up on Grand Final day. Anne Forwood's 41pts this time took the overall. The rest of field was tightly bunched. Anna Puchalski (36pts Women's Division), Michael Sneyd (37pts A Grade – second week in a row) and George Andreetta (37pts B Grade) won their Divisions. Paul Reinsch (37pts) won C Grade on a countback from Jason Maynard.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Hi members,

In this report I want to highlight some of the changes impacting our game over the next months.



Most of you will be aware of the upgrade being performed by Golf Australia to the handicapping system but not so sure of what impact that it will have. I suggest you dig into the many articles if you are into that sort of thing, but if you are here to just play the game, we all hope for a seamless transition with few impacts to the regular golfer. **(Note: the new app and website are now available to SGC members as of 6/10)**

One resulting change we may see at our club is the removal of the 9-hole competition as the new system automatically accommodates rounds of golf with less than 18 holes and calculates a pro-rata result for your handicap. We will trial this for the remainder of the year before making a permanent decision.

The 2026 fixture will be posted shortly and includes the removal of 2 Ball Ambrose for all events other than the Pink Day fundraiser. These will be replaced by the 4BBB Stableford Pairs which is much easier to manage within MiScore and quicker to play. The other major change is the Eclectic which will become a best Gross aggregate instead of the best Stableford aggregate. So check it out and plan your new year campaign around the key dates.

Happy golfing.

Michael Kent

Australian Open Arrangements Update

Clubs have just received notice that Sandy Golf Links will be closed from Monday 1 December to Tuesday 9 December whilst the Australian Open is played at Royal Melbourne.

The driving range and the 8th and 9th green areas will be used for practice and other areas used for logistics. More detail to come.

News and Notes

Register Please

Course Management has asked that members register with the café/pro shop before they tee off. Please take the time to let them know you are on course.

Stand Alone Sunday Competition Now Running

The stand-alone Sunday competition is up and running and is averaging around 30 entries over the last 5 weeks. Prizes are 1st place \$60, 2nd \$40, 3rd \$20. No NTP.

Do you know? Seniors/Concession Rates

Seniors and concession holders pay \$15 less for 18 holes all day Mondays and after 1pm Tues to Friday (except public holidays). Proof of age/concession status need to be supplied to the Pro Shop so it can be flagged in Quick18.

SGC Bag Tags Available

Yellow SGC Bag Tags are available from the Pro Shop at no cost. Just ask the staff.

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

The Club is asking members to edit their surnames in their Quick18 account by prefixing the surname with SGC. This idea helps new and existing members to identify fellow members when booking rounds.

Club apparel

The Club has Men's and Women's Polos and Caps for sale. See April 2024 issue for pictures of these items or admire from afar fellow member who wear them with pride. To inquire or purchase Email:

memberservices@sandringhamgolfclub.org.au

OR send a message on the website's [Contact Who](#) page

Competition News

Founders Shield (Eclectic)-Thomas Sneyd

The Founders Shield is awarded to the highest Eclectic score in Saturday Stableford rounds from 1 January to the last round in September. An eclectic counts the best Stableford score on each hole. It basically tells you what you would score if you added all your best results over the period on each of the 18 holes.

Congratulations to Thomas Sneyd (64pts) who took the title this year finishing 3pts ahead of Peter McLeod and Anne Forwood.

Captain's Trophy – Mark Johnston

The Captain's Trophy is awarded to the highest aggregate score over three stipulated Stableford rounds. Mark Johnston's 38pts on 9/8 was enough to give him the 2025 Captain's Trophy but only just. His 99pts over the three rounds was matched by Guy Robertson but Mark got home on a countback. Monique Quinn finished a point further back.

John French Memorial Trophy – Matthew Farrelly

The John French Memorial Trophy is presented to the member with the highest aggregate Stableford points from their BEST 16 rounds in singles events held on Saturdays at Sandringham from the first competition in January through the last competition in August.

Congratulations to Matthew Farrelly who won the 2025 Trophy with a score of 570pts. Matthew played 27 eligible rounds and averaged 35.6pts across his best 16 rounds. He was well clear of last year's winner Guy Robertson and Timothy Strickland who both scored 552pts. Alan Russell was a point further back. Remarkably Alan only missed one qualifying round playing 31 of the possible 32 rounds!



Wednesday Whispers from the News' ace rolling reporter

- One of the unluckiest Wednesday players was in the trees on the 8th hole and fired out a low stinger heading for the green when all a sudden a Golf Maintenance vehicle came from nowhere shunted the ball off course into the sand wasteland. I suppose this could be considered **the rub of the Green Fairway**.

Here is a picture of Craig and Friend re-enacting the scene



- The unluckiest golfer in the previous story finally had a change of luck on the 11th Hole two weeks ago when he topped his tee shot to see it head through the bunker towards the tractor near the green. Skipping between the tractors wheels and running along the hose onto the green. This could be considered **the rub of the Green Tractor**



- A big welcome to new Member Brian Barnett and wife Kiko who has joined the club after 22 years of playing socially on Wednesdays. Brian has a different slant on the 11th Par 3 hole tractor story when the groundsman called them up and Brian played a beautiful 5 iron over the tractor only to see the ball disappear not into the hole but stopped by the hose connected to green side sprinkler head - **the rub of the Green Hose**. Brian in working life was a geologist and has promised some geological facts about the course in future newsletters.

Changes to Handicap Grades for Saturday Competitions

From October 4th, the grades for Saturday competitions will change. The new grades will be:

- A Grade 0-15
- B Grade 16-20
- C Grade 21 +.

This is to balance the number of players in each grade on SATURDAY competitions. Sunday and mid week are not impacted.

Mixed Pennant Update

Sandy's Mixed Pennant team started the season well with a home win over Australasian and followed two away losses and an away draw with an excellent win at home to Brighton. The final round is at home to top team Tirhatuan and the team has an outside chance of finishing in the top two. Highlights of the season so far have been Anna Puchalski's 10 and 8 win in the first round and Sarah Adam-Gedge winning her 3rd round match while giving 21 shots!

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Australasian (H) W 9pts to 7pts	Brighton(A) L 10pts to 6pts	Tirhatuan(A) L 12pts to 4pts
Round 4	Round 5	Round 6
Australasian (A) D 8pts to 8pts	Brighton (H) W 11pts to 5pts	Tirhatuan (H) 12/10/25

Vale Jeff Wright

The Club was saddened to hear of the recent passing of former Club Secretary Jeff Wright.

The Club expresses its condolences and best wishes to Carolyn, Ray and Jeff's broader family.

Jeff made a significant contribution to the Club and always had the best interests of members at the centre of his roles on the Club Committee from 2006 to 2013 including 4 years as Club Secretary.

Jeff Wright served on the Sandringham Golf Club Committee from 2006 to 2013. He was Assistant Secretary in 2008 and filled the role of Secretary for 2009 to 2013. As part of that role, he managed the Club's website and was responsible for welcoming new members to the Club. For a many of these years Jeff was also an assistant competition steward back in the days when that meant collecting cards and processing results. Jeff also represented the Club in Handicap and Senior Pennant and as a VGL Councillor in 2008.



Jeff joined the Committee at a low point for the Club when membership was only around 170. Through his and others efforts the Club got its act together both internally and externally and by the time Jeff left Club membership had reached 300. Jeff's willingness to work for the betterment of the members, improve our systems and his insistence on good governance was a major contribution to that turnaround.

Jeff would be the first to admit he was not a great golfer, but he thoroughly enjoyed his rounds at Sandy (mostly) with his regular playing partners Mal McAfee and Cris Payne.

Vale Jeff and thanks for your contribution.

Match Play Competitions Update - a tough gig!

The Club's match play competitions may just be the hardest of our comps to win. Sixty players started the Singles competition and sixty-four players in 32 pairs commenced the Pairs competition. Players or teams must win four rounds just to get to the final and five to take the win. That's tough. Competition has been fierce and at times nerve wracking:

- In the Singles nearly half of the matches have been decided on the 17th hole or later with 5 playoffs and 11 matches being decided on 18.
- It's a similar situation in the Pairs with just over 50% of matches being won or lost on the 17th or later with 4 playoffs and 10 decided on the last including the final.

John Pittard Singles Match Play

Congratulations to Ben Akdag and Matt Scott on reaching the final this year. Ben defeated George Andreetta in one semi-final and Matt saw off Liz Tanzimat in the other semi-final.

John Pittard Singles Round 3 Results

Matt Scott def Dan Harrison 4 and 3

George Andreetta def Mark Brooks 1 up

Due to scheduling issues both Liz Tanzimat and Ben Akdag went through to the semi-finals.

John Pittard Singles Semi Final Results

Matt Scott def Liz Tanzimat 7 and 5

Ben Akdag def George Andreetta 3 and 2

Ian Fraser Pairs Match Play - Ruth Branagh and John White

Congratulations to the defending champions Ruth Branagh and John White who won their second successive Pairs Match Play title. They defeated the team of John McCarthy and Pat Maginness 1 up in a tense decider where they only trailed after one hole but there was never more than one hole difference in the match over the last 13 holes.

Ruth and John defeated Linda Best and Sarah Adam-Gedge 3 and 2 in one semi-final whilst John and Pat saw off Tom Rogacki and Jamie Staib by the same score in the other semi.

Ian Fraser Pairs Round 3 Results

Ruth Branagh/John White	def (1 up)	Rod Bridger/Jeremy Matthews
Linda Best/Sarah Adam-Gedge	def(forfeit)	Cathy Dixon/Jenni Clarke
John McCarthy/Pat Maginness	def(3 & 2)	Don Tasevski/Gary Gibb
Jamie Staib/Tom Rogacki	def(2 up)	Michael Sneyd/Matt Scott

Ian Fraser Pairs Semi Final Results

Ruth Branagh/John White	def(3 & 2)	Linda Best/Sarah Adam-Gedge
John McCarthy/Pat Maginness	def(3 & 2)	Jamie Staib/Tom Rogacki

Ian Fraser Pairs Final Results

Ruth Branagh/John White	def(1 up)	John McCarthy/Pat Maginness
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Ryder Cup – the biggest event in golf



The recently concluded Ryder Cup had probably the biggest build-up of any golf tournament ever and is now arguably the biggest golf event in the world. Two years in the making (longer since Bethpage Black was announced as the venue for this Ryder Cup way back in 2013) this home Ryder Cup for the USA came after Europe convincingly won the last match in Rome 16.5 to 11.5.

Rory McIlroy said that the hardest thing to do in golf is to win an away Ryder Cup. It's obvious what it meant for Europe in the photo of Shane Lowry jumping for joy after he sank the putt that meant Europe retained the trophy.

Europe pulled off the win 15 to 13 after dominating the first two days where matches were played in pairs – foursomes (alternate shot) and fourballs. So, given that the talent tends to favour the US and the home team had the ability to set up the course in their favour - how did they do it?



Culture and strategy vs good old US knowhow??

The generally accepted answer is that Europe was better prepared and made better decisions (and played better) than the US team. The narrative is that Europe (historic underdogs) has developed a culture of togetherness and desire to beat the US that bonds the leadership and the players and enables them to perform in the big moment. Not for nothing was the documentary about Europe's win in the previous match in Rome called "Una Famiglia" (One Family). This culture is supported by a superb data-based strategy and attention to detail. Europe captain Luke Donald has fantastic relations with his players and spent the last two years focused on preparing to win this year's event. He was supported by a group of vice captains with a long lineage in the Ryder Cup – Thomas Bjorn, Francesco Molinari, Jose Maria Olazabal and the golf data whiz Eduardo Molinari. It was obvious that the whole team was on the one page.

On the other hand, the US team seemed to rely on individual talent and "intuition" and based on a perception of European players that might have been true in the past but certainly not now. Some decisions about the set up and pairings confounded seasoned golf analysts. In what could only be a distraction US Captain Keegan Bradley was in contention to play as well as captain right up until the teams were announced

How course setup and data can impact the Ryder Cup

In 2023 Europe's data analysis had shown that their players were better than the US team when shots into greens were played from 170 to 190 yards. They then set up the course accordingly adjusting tees and rough so that approaches were mostly in that range. For this year's match Bradley admitted he got the set up wrong. Tellingly he commented that they should have made the greens faster because the European players were not used to it on their tour. This perception ignored the fact that nearly all the European team play on the PGA tour full time.

Other things that illustrate the differences of the two sides:

- Europe's uniforms were designed after what each of the past four teams that won on away soil wore. Of course, the US probably did not want to pay homage to the universally recognised worst uniform of all time that they wore in 1999 (r).
- Europe ensured their players were as comfortable as possible by patching up cracks in the doors to make hotel rooms darker, changed the bedding and swapped out shampoo in the rooms for one with better smell and better quality. Talk about attention to detail.
- The US team had an issue hanging over them from the last match. Would they get paid? More on that later.
- Tellingly Europe won the four sessions involving pairs 11.5pts to 4.5pts. The two sessions where players played alternate shot were won by Europe 6pts to 2pts. These are the matches where data and chemistry have the most impact.
- Europe had meticulously selected their pairings based on data showing who would be better hitting which shots on which holes. The US sent out a pair of Harris English and Colin Morikawa which according to the data **was ranked 132 of the 132 possible pairings available**. In other words, dead last. They then sent them out twice for two losses. The losing Friday foursomes pairing of Scottie Scheffler and Russell Henly had Henly teeing off on the odd holes and Scheffler on the even holes when the data was suggesting the reverse. According to on the ground rumours it was Scheffler's caddy who suggested they swap for the Saturday session. The fact that they did and lost again just goes to show that data is not everything. Players still must hit the shots and Europe just hit better shots more often.
- Post match commentary also shows up some difference between the two teams: "They made more putts." Keegan Bradley said multiple times. "Luck was on their side," Bryson DeChambeau. On Luke Donald Rahm said "The level of professionalism he's shown us the last four years. His attention to detail ..." McIlroy added.



Crowd Behaviour

In what was probably a self-fulfilling prophecy the crowd behaviour was appalling at times. Ryder Cups have been getting increasingly boisterous, and the anticipation was that the New York crowds would take it to the limit. It had been a talking point ever since the venue was announced. And the crowd passed the limit on many occasions.

The abuse from the crowd was horrendous and vicious at times. Directed primarily at Rory McIlroy but also his family including his wife who was on course and hit by a beer cup after it was all over (potentially on accident). As a minor example on the first tee on the Saturday the crowd started chanting "F—k you Rory" and the MC then joined in and through a megaphone started leading the chant. McIlroy mostly let his play do the talking but snapped and roared back at the crowd a couple of times. Another self-inflicted wound was the sale of cocktails which included a squeaky duck toy which was then used by some in the crowd to make noise during player's swings. Organisers did send out additional security from Saturday and US players particularly Justin Thomas tried to hush the crowd when

his opponent were over their shots. However, probably what was more disappointing was the reluctance from the US side to acknowledge how bad it got.

The churlish reaction from the PGA of America (not the PGA Tour) President Don Rea sums it up:

"You've got 50,000 people here that are really excited, and heck, **you could go to a youth soccer game and get some people who say the wrong things,**". He went on to say the behaviour was "distracting American players because they had to spend energy helping to control the crowd."

"It happened when we were in Rome on the other side and Rory understands ... things like that are going to happen and I don't know what was said. **But all I know is golf is the engine of good,**" Now there's a line to remember! Maybe we can adopt it as a club motto!

Pay for Play

Historically players have not been paid to play in the Ryder Cup. For this year's event agreement was reached that each US player would receive \$500k consisting of a \$200k stipend and \$300k directed to the charity(ies) of their choice. The European players would not be paid (and also not allocate money to charity).

The Ryder Cup is one of the most lucrative events in golf and is a cash cow for the PGA of America when it is held in the US and the DP World Tour when it is held in Europe. Past players such as Tiger Woods and David Duval have suggested that some of the money should be distributed to charity and some of this year's team have indicated that all of the \$500k would go to charity.

Still it feeds a perception that Europe is in it to win the cup for its own sake ("I would pay to play in the Ryder Cup" said Rory McIlroy) whereas the US players are interested in financial gain.

As one commentator put when the decision to pay the US players was announced "Luke Donald's team talk has just been written."

Wildlife Watch

The little corellas seem to have disappeared, and the first groups of ducklings have been sighted. This year there seems to be more of these beauties around– the Common Bronzewing(r) is a medium-sized, heavily built pigeon. Groups of 3 or 4 have been seen in recent weeks.



"Their plumage ranges from grey, to dull brown, and they have a distinct white line that runs around and under each of their eyes.....The most iconic characteristic of the Bronzewing is the patches of iridescent colour on their wings, ranging from green, blue, red, gold and bronze. This colouring is what led to their name." Source: Friends of Native Wildlife (Bayside). They have a very distinctive low repetitive "oom" sound.

Also, for the first time in some years rabbits have been seen on the course during the day. Maybe the clearing of the tee tree has had something to do with their visibility.



Show me the money!

The summary of the money earnings on the PGA Tour this year is astonishing reading and shows that the Ryder Cup \$500k is a drop in the bucket for top players. The stats below are on course earnings up til the end of the ProCore Championship in September and don't include off course earnings or some bonuses that the PGA hand out. The table also includes the player's scoring average and what their earnings represent as a percentage of the available pool for the events they competed at.



	Earnings \$US	Wins	2 nd	3 rd	Top 10s	Total Rounds	Scoring Average*	% Available \$s
1 Scottie Scheffler	\$27,659,550	6	1	2	17	76	68.140	39.11%
2 Tommy Fleetwood	\$18,496,238	1	1	1	8	74	69.351	29.15%
3 Rory McIlroy	\$16,992,418	3	1	0	8	58	69.083	26.54%
4 Russell Henley	\$14,707,570	1	2	0	10	68	69.716	20.92%
5 J.J. Spaun	\$13,138,722	1	3	1	7	83	69.880	16.91%
6 Justin Thomas	\$10,896,155	1	3	0	8	76	70.041	14.89%
7 Sepp Straka	\$10,650,894	2	0	1	6	76	70.047	14.38%
8 Ben Griffin	\$10,644,352	2	2	0	11	96	69.827	12.61%
9 Patrick Cantlay	\$9,441,931	-	1	1	5	70	70.319	13.11%
10 Justin Rose	\$8,857,976	1	1		5	58	70.614	13.37%

* Note: Two other players averaged less than 70 strokes but didn't make the top ten in earnings - Harry Hall (69.764) and Bob McIntyre (69.900) who were 5th and 8th in scoring.

- First thing to note aside from the money is what a year Scottie Scheffler had – 6 wins, 17 top tens, nearly a full shot ahead of the next best scoring average (McIlroy) and won almost 40% of the available \$s.
- Scheffler also finished first in 4 out of the 6 “Strokes Gained” categories: Total SG, Off the Tee, Tee to Green and Approach to Green. He was top 20 in the other 2 and was more than a stroke ahead of second (Fleetwood) in total strokes gained. Comparisons are beginning to be made to Tiger Woods!
- Thirdly the impact of the prizes in the big events. Scheffler won 2 majors, McIlroy the Masters and the Players, JJ Spaun won one major and Tommy Fleetwood won \$10m in one hit when he won the Tour Championship. These are 4 out of the top 5 on the money list.

So what about LIV you ask??

PGA/LIV Earnings comparison – petrodollars vs TV rights plus

When LIV Golf started, they threw massive amounts of upfront money at players to get them to join but also offered large prize pools for each event - \$25m total and \$4m for the winner. The PGA Tour responded in kind and prize money across both tours has reached almost obscene amounts.

Today's *Golfer.com* has done a comparison of player's earnings on the PGA and LIV Tours for 2025. These numbers are different from the previous table because they include bonuses that players can pick up e.g. Jon Rahm earned an \$18m bonus for winning player of the year on the LIV Tour. (Amazingly Rahm won that title ahead of Joachin Niemann despite not winning a single event and Niemann winning five times).

Rank	Player	Tour	Earnings
1	Scottie Scheffler	PGA Tour	\$49,579,550
2	Jon Rahm	LIV Golf	\$38,751,876
3	Rory McIlroy	PGA Tour	\$34,492,418
4	Joaquin Niemann	LIV Golf	\$32,993,866
5	Tommy Fleetwood	PGA Tour	\$22,696,239
6	Russell Henley	PGA Tour	\$20,733,556
7	Bryson DeChambeau	LIV Golf	\$20,280,877
8	JJ Spaun	PGA Tour	\$18,492,723
9	Sepp Straka	PGA Tour	\$17,235,895
10	Justin Thomas	PGA Tour	\$16,048,496

Top money earners are split 7 to 3 in favour of the PGA Tour but if you go further down 13 of the top 25 are on the PGA Tour but 26 of the top 50 are on LIV. It's the bonuses that make the difference. If bonuses are removed the top 10 splits 50/50.

It is hard to see how these amounts are sustainable but that doesn't seem to be a concern to either operation. It was reported that the UK-based LIV Golf Ltd, which runs the league's activities outside of the US, lost \$A942.79 million, in 2024 bringing their total losses for only that entity of the circuit, backed by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund, to \$2.25 billion since the league started holding golf tournaments in 2022. (Source: Australian Golf Digest reporting on an article in The Athletic)

As Golfer's-Today says "What a colossal waste of time this has all been." And indeed money!

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

VGL Teams Shine in Mildura to claim Country Week Division 3 titles and promotion!

The Victorian Golf League (of which Sandy is a member) participates in the annual Victorian Country Week tournament. Run by the Golf Australia (Victorian Division) the competition is teams match play in three divisions involving the golf associations from around Victoria. This year's event was played in Mildura in hot and windy conditions. The VGL men's and women's teams both won their Divisions and will be promoted to Division 2 in 2026.

Sandy's three-time Women's Champion Kate Caridakis represented the VGL in the competition. Here is Kate's account of the week.

The Victorian Golf League (VGL) went to Mildura for Country Week 2025, with both men's and women's teams of seven representing Melbourne's public golf courses. This was the second year of VGL Country Week and my second year playing for the VGL Women's Team, and what a week it turned out to be!

Monday kicked off with almost 36 holes, and I managed to win both matches 3&2 after two tight battles. The team also secured two strong wins, setting us up beautifully for the week ahead.

On Tuesday, we faced the relegated Division 2 team. My opponent played flawless golf, and I went down fighting, but our VGL Women's Team still claimed the overall win, booking a place in the finals.

Wednesday's final saw us take on that same relegated Division 2 team again — this time in very windy and testing conditions. I was thrilled to find my rhythm early and turned the tables, winning 4&3 against the same player who beat me the day before.

It was a nail-biter overall, with the team result finishing squared, but thanks to our earlier wins, the VGL Women's Team took the flag and earned promotion to Division 2 for next year! 🏆

The VGL Men's team also won their final, an unforgettable week of golf — full of heat, grit, and camaraderie — and a fantastic achievement for everyone involved.

🔥 Next year, the VGL Women's Team and the VGL Men's team will proudly compete in Division 2! Woohoo! 🎉💪💖



Congratulations Kate and to the VGL Teams

Before Adam and Jason, before Karrie and MinJee, before the Shark, before Thompson and Nagle there was ...The Von.

Norman Von Nida (1914 -2007) was Australia's best known golfer from the late 1930s to the 1950s. He was known as "The Don Bradman of golf" and was the first Australian to try and make a living overseas especially in Britain.

Von Nida had great success and played against a lot of the early greats of the game including Walter Hagen, Bobby Jones, Henry Cotton, Gene Sarazen, Bobby Locke and Ben Hogan.

Von Nida became the first Australian to win regularly on the British PGA circuit. In 1946, he travelled to Britain for the first time and finished second on the Order of Merit; in 1947, he returned and won seven tournaments and topped the Order of Merit.



He amassed an impressive record including 3 Australian Opens and 4 Australian PGAs. In later years he became a mentor and friend to many young Australian golfers and to those from other countries. He helped Gary Player early in his career and became friends with Jack Nicklaus – spending annual teaching stints at Nicklaus' home course. Peter Thomson credits him with paving the way for his storied career. All three of these wrote forewords to the book pictured above.

Von Nida was easily recognised by his signature black beret and whilst only small in stature he was known for his feistiness once getting into a brawl with future U.S. Ryder Cup player Henry Ransom that resulted in the local sheriff having to pull them apart.

Starting as a caddy in Brisbane he caddied for Walter Hagen at 14 and at 22 challenged and beat Gene Sarazen in a £50 winner takes all match. Between 1949 and 1955 he either won (3 times) or was runner up in the Australian Open. Another story is that later in life with failing eyesight he was able to advise Nick Faldo to make a swing adjustment based on the sound the ball made on the clubface.

"Even for a golfer he was an uncommon person" Peter Thomson

Norman von Nida's Playing Record

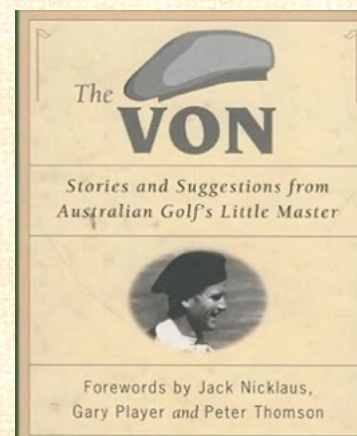
Career wins: 48, European Tour wins: 14, Australasian Tour wins: 32

Australian Open: Won (1950, 1952, 1953), Australian PGA: Won (1946, 1948, 1950, 1951)

Some Sources: The book pictured above. The second link below has a 38min audio presentation about Von Nida including interviews with Von Nida and other well known players.

<https://pga.org.au/news/australias-greatest-golfer-norman-von-nida-v-brian-jones/>

<https://www.bruceyoungmedia.com.au/a-friendship-with-norman-von-nida/>



Podcasts everywhere you look – an Australian flavour

We live in a podcast world and the world of golf is no exception and there are now plenty of Australian examples. Some of these are also available on YouTube. Here's a couple of examples:

Talk Birdie to Me

Hosted by former tour pro's Nick O'Hern and Mark Allen this show comes out weekly and doesn't shy away from controversy. Mark Allen in particular is not afraid to take strong positions on a range of topics. One issue close to Sandy members was his recent comments on the removal of tee tree at Royal Melbourne at the bequest of "mad, mad golf course architect types."



They lean into click bait with their titles and previews on YouTube: *"The Shark was Horrible to Play With"* : Tour Pro Lucas Parsons; *"Colin Montgomerie: A Pro, but also a pest"*

Top100 Golf Courses controversy

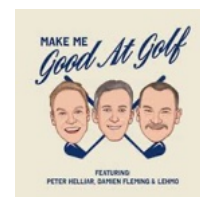
The organisation Top100golfcourses.com publishes lists of the top 100 courses in the world and by area and country. The *Talk Birdie* guys had some issues with how some Australian courses were ranked in the world list when it came out earlier this year. Their response exposed some cracks in the Australian golf scene.

Specifically, they had issues with *St Andrews Beach* being ranked at No:89 in the world when courses like *Victoria*, both *Peninsula Kingswood* courses and *Royal Melbourne East* did not appear in the top 100. They floated what they called a "conspiracy theory" that *St Andrews Beach* was associated with Mike Clayton and that *Victoria* and *Peninsula Kingswood* were associated with OCM (the firm that redid Sandy) which Clayton had split from. The implication was that these associations had somehow influenced the judges.

In an attempt to resolve the issue they got the CEO of Top100golfcourses.com onto their show. Interesting listening!

Make me good at golf

For a celebrity take on golf "*Make me Good at Golf*" features Peter Hellier, Darren Fleming and Lehmo talking about their journey to get better at golf. Fun and relatable. Also on YouTube.



Aussiegolfer.com.au has a survey of Australian golf podcasts at the link below:

<https://aussiegolfer.com.au/the-best-aussie-golf-podcasts-you-should-be-listening-to/>

Some include *"The Thing about golf, Tee it Up"* and *"The swing of it"*

A range of perspectives and approaches here. Check them out!