

FAIRWAY NEWS



DECEMBER
2025

All the best to all our
members and their
families for the
Christmas - New Year
Season.

See you in 2026!!

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AGM sets new subscription fees

The AGM agreed to the Committee's recommendation to raise the joining and subscription fees for the 2026/27 year. These increases do not impact current members until September 2026.

- the joining fee for new members will be increased from \$110 to \$200 for adults and from \$55 to \$100 for applicants under 18 years of age.
- The annual subscriptions fees for existing members will be increased from \$150 to \$180 for adults and from \$75 to \$90 for applicants under 18 years old. This is pro-rated for new members joining part way through the year.

This is the first real increase in fees since 2014 and is designed in part to slow down the growing waiting list for membership. See later for a detailed rationale.

Upcoming events

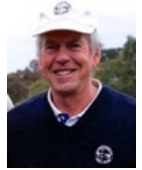
13 Dec.	Two ball Ambrose
20 Dec.	Stableford
27 Dec.	Teams Aggregate Stableford, President vs Captain
3 Jan	Stableford
10 Jan	Stableford
17 Jan	Par
24 Jan	Stableford
31 Jan	Stroke Club Championships R 1
7 Feb	Stroke Club Championships R 2
14 Feb	Stroke Club Championships R 3

Recent Results

- After a week's hiatus due to the Golf Australia tech upgrade competition resumed on 11/10 with some very solid scores. Pat Maginness took out the overall with an excellent net 60. Monique Quinn (net 66) won the Women's Division on a countback from Lynda Doutch. Mark Brooks (net 63 A Grade), George Andreetta (net 62 (B Grade) and Wayne Powell (net 65 C Grade) were the other winners. Lynda got some revenge by taking out the Women's Star Medallist. Peter Bowen (net 65) won the Men's Star Medallist.
- The Stableford round on 18/10 saw some hot scoring with all grades being won by 40pts or more. Ruth Branagh and Glenda McDade tied for the best of the day on 42pts. Ruth getting the nod for the Overall prize on a countback from Glenda who won the Women's Division. Other winners were James Mackie (41pts A Grade) and long-time member Trevor Schultz (41 pts C Grade). Andrew Ball (40pts) won B Grade on a countback from Colin Hunter.
- In the 4BBB comp on 25/10 the pair of Renay Hammerschlag and Tessa Levin scored 48pts to win on a countback from the father/son pair of Clayton and Cooper Ford.
- In perfect conditions the scoring was hot on 1/11 – see later for more details of just how hot. Sarah Adam - Gedge won the overall with a net 59. Cooper Ford (net 61 A Grade), John McCarthy (net 62 B Grade), Andy Sheehan (net 63 C Grade) and Linda Best (net 66 Women's Division) were the other winners.

THE PRESIDENT'S BLOG

Summer has arrived (according to the calendar) but the weather of late seems to not reinforce this, however we will persist, and I am sure it won't be too long before we are commenting on the hot conditions!!



First up I would like to congratulate the re-elected committee which will see our club through 2026. Personally, I also would like to thank everyone for voting me in for another year as President.

As voiced at the AGM, it is imperative that we need to see more of our extensive membership nominating themselves for a committee role, with the intention of continuing through to leadership roles (President, Secretary, Treasurer and so forth). Succession planning is important for any committee to remain strong and ensure fresh ideas for future years.

Congratulations to our golf club on winning the Southern Cross Challenge for 2025 against our long-term Japanese opponents. As always it was a hard-fought affair and turned around our performance of the last two events which were won by the Japanese golfers.

By now everyone will be aware that the course will be closed for a week from 1st December through 8th December for the running of the Australian open being held at RMGC and for which Sandringham will be used for practice areas, sponsorship tents and no doubt car-parking.....enjoy the week off and see everyone back from 9th December.

Did you hear Why Tarzan was spending so much time on the golf course.....because he was perfecting his swing

Regards

Rob

Recent Results (cont.)

- In contrast to the previous week, it was cold, wet and windy on 8/11 and the scores reflected the conditions. Craig Brenner's 38pts was one of only two scores of 36pts or better and he won the Overall. Geoff Thornton(36pts) was the only other one to play to his handicap and won B Grade. Michael Lenkic (34pts) won C Grade and George Bakrnchev (34pts) won A Grade on a countback from Matt Cameron and Clayton Ford. There were not enough entries for a separate Women's Division.
- The Par round on 15/11 saw Geoff Thornton continue his good form and return the third best Par score on the new course. His +7 won the overall. Visitor Bryce Herrick (+5) won C Grade, Deep Sareen (+4) won B Grade and Fiona Reynolds (+1) won the women's Division. Brett Ryan (+4) won A Grade on a countback from visitor Daniel Lyons.
- The Stableford round on 22/11 saw visitors have a day out including Alexandre Mirzayantz who won the overall with an excellent 42pts. Jeremy Matthews (40pts) won B Grade on a countback from Paul Davies as did Anna Puchalski (39pts) from Fiona Reynolds. Tom Tomlin (37pts A Grade) and visitor Erkin Aytakin (39pts C Grade) were the other winners.
- Two scores of 42pts highlighted the round on 29/11. Visitor Nicholas McDonald got the Overall nod on a countback from Ben Nottle who won C Grade. Rod Bridger(38pts) also won B Grade on a countback from Pat Maginness. Michael Kent (40pts) won A Grade. Anna Puchalski went back-to-back in the Women's Division although this time her 39pts did not require a countback.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Hi members,

As we run into the final weeks of 2025 I would like to thank all Sandringham members for their participation in another great year of golf. It was good to see a mix of old and new members winning trophies and other regular competitions throughout the year and some new names in the pennant rosters.



As we noted at the recent AGM, there has been continued refinement of our fixture for 2026 and the rules for the associated competitions and trophy events. All these details can be found on our club website.

I will shortly be sending out an email for expressions of interest for the pennant teams as our season starts in mid-February. Club championships start at the end of January, a mere 2 months away. Matchplay starts in March so get your names on the rosters and hit the practice areas or get some coaching to refine your game.

The Sandringham course will be closed for the week to support the Australian Open at Royal Melbourne, and I hope you are able to get across the road and watch some of the best players in the world play one of the top courses in the world.

Merry Xmas to all and a safe and Happy New Year.

Happy golfing.

Michael Kent

News and Notes

Best wishes

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

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.

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.

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

New Stroke Round Record - Cooper Ford

The Stroke round on 1 November saw some excellent scoring in perfect conditions.

Cooper Ford playing off 5 set a new scoring record for Stroke rounds in SGC competitions when he shot 66 on that day. He broke the previous record held by Matt Scott by 2 shots. Cooper's round included 3 birdies (14, 17 and 18), 4 bogies and 11 pars for a 1 over Par round.

Congrats to Cooper.

The hard luck story of the day was David Mallen who equalled the previous record with 68 playing off 6. The day was doubly unfortunate for David as his net 62 was the 4th best score of the day and because of the way the scores fell he missed out on a prize.

The winner on the day Sarah Adam-Gedge had a day out shooting 74 off a handicap of 15. Her net 59 won the Overall and her 74 equalled the 3rd lowest score by a Woman member in a SGC stroke round.

Well played Cooper, David and Sarah.

It can happen – the 12th hole jackpot.

Treasurer and new Life Member Christine Nicholson was playing with a visitor Hamish Fry(r) on 1/11. Hamish told Christine that he won over \$9,000 by scoring an ace on the 12th after entering the Ace Society competition.

Given that the sign board only says \$5,000 that's a lot of jackpotting \$5 entry fees. Christine's previous experience with the system was when the system filmed the wrong tee shot and the ball ended in the bunker anyway



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 and finished off the season with a win over eventual pennant winners Tirhatuan.

The team just missed the final but showed their quality by beating the top two teams in the last two weeks of the season. The away draw at Australasian was costly as the other contending teams both won at Edithvale.

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) W 10pts to 6pts

Congratulations and thanks to Emma Regos Manager and Mixed Pennant Player of the year and all those that represented the Club in 2025.

Emma Regos, Clayton Ford, Kate Caridakis, Craig Brenner, Terry McAleenan, Anna Puchalski, Ellesse Graham, Oliver Cunliffe, Sarah Adam-Gedge, Tom Campitelli, Ruth Branagh, Peter Bowen, Glenda McDade, Michael Kent, Andrew Rumbelow. Geoff Maynard and John McCarthy.

Pennant participation 2025 and 2026 Schedule

In 2025 forty-five different members represented the Club across our four pennant teams. This is nearly 10% of our membership. Pennant is a very enjoyable experience, and members should consider signing up for our teams in 2026. The 2025 Seniors team bought home the title and it would be great to get more than one in 2026.

In 2026 the action starts from late February.

Scratch and Handicap Pennant starts on 22 March and is played on Sundays. Senior Pennant (over 55s) is played on Thursdays and starts on 19 February. Mixed Pennant is played August to October – details to come next year.

The Scratch team will be in Division 2 and play home and away against Altona Lakes, Lakeside (Albert Park) and Westgate.

The Handicap Team is in Division 3 and will play Ringwood, Royal Park and Creekside (Morack Golf Course).

The Seniors Team will play against Dorset, Forest Hills and Glen Waverley.

To qualify you need to have played 3 rounds of golf in Sandringham competitions from 1 October 2025 and be a member of Sandringham on 1 January 2026.

Look out for notices with details on how to get involved or contact the Captain at captain@sandringhamgolfclub.org.au

Annual General Meeting Outcomes

The Club's AGM was held on 11 November. At the meeting the reports from the outgoing Committee were accepted (distributed by email to members prior to the AGM), the joining and annual membership fees were agreed for the year 2026-27 and a new Committee was elected. Club Treasurer Christine Nicholson was awarded Life Membership – see later.

As noted earlier the AGM agreed to increases in joining and subscription fees. The rationale for the increases was based on slowing down the Club's growing waiting list and maintaining the Club's healthy financial position to continue supporting members through competition prizes and subsidised events.

The last increase in Subscription Fees was in 2014 when they went from \$90 to \$110. At that time, the Golf Australia affiliation fee was \$45.62 per member. It is now \$68.62 – a 50.4% increase, or \$23 per member.

(Note: The increase in 2016, from \$110 to \$150, is not considered an increase in fees as this was offset by the removal of the \$3 competition fee. Members who played more than once per month actually saved money, and it was revenue neutral to the Club).

Without these increases in fees the Club's bank balance will drop by \$20,000 each year.

The following other items also received discussion in the meeting:

- The Committee reported on progress of discussions with course management and Council about the lack of toilets on the course. Discussions are ongoing and a meeting was scheduled with Council officers for 12 November.
- Questions were raised whether:
 - Members were asked to marshal at the Australian Open – no formal approach was received
 - Everyone can receive a discount at the Driving Range – by purchasing in bulk.

The outgoing Committee was given a vote of thanks and competition winners who were present were presented with bag tags to recognise their triumphs.

All current Committee members were re-elected so here is your Committee for 2025/26.

President	Robert Harris	Secretary	Colin Hockley
Vice President	Andrew Preston	Treasurer	Christine Nicholson
Captain	Michael Kent	Competition Steward	Jay Ramsden
Vice-Captain	Geoffrey Maynard	General Committee	Geoff Thornton
General Committee	Ruth Branagh	General Committee	Oliver Cunliffe

Are you keeping up with the Schefflers when it comes to putters?

Back in October 2024 Fairway News had a story about the creation of one of the most famous putters in golf history - the Ping Anser created by Karsten Solheim in 1967. For decades that style of putter – a perimeter weighted blade style ruled the roost but in recent times another style of putter is taking over the professional and to a certain extent the amateur game.

An article in Golfweek by David Dusek (11 November - link below) points out that preferences have changed and is titled ***“Has the era of the blade putter come to the end?”*** This is not a new trend, but it seems to be accelerating. In the professional men's game according to the World Golf rankings in early November every one of the top ten players was using a mallet style putter.



1. Scottie Scheffler	TaylorMade Spider X L-Neck
2. Rory McIlroy	TaylorMade Spider Tour X
3. Xander Schauffele	Odyssey Las Vegas prototype
4. Tommy Fleetwood	TaylorMade Spider Tour Black
5. Russell Henley	Scotty Cameron Phantom 5 X prototype
6. J.J. Spaun	L.A.B. DF3
7. Robert MacIntyre	TaylorMade Spider Tour Black
8. Justin Thomas	Scotty Cameron Phantom 5 prototype
9. Ben Griffin	TaylorMade Spider Tour Black
10. Justin Rose	Scotty Cameron Phantom T-5 prototype

The key names here are Scottie Scheffler and Rory McIlroy who both improved their putting stats after switching to a mallet style putter. Scheffler has made a huge leap. Using different blade putters, he won over \$21 million in PGA Tour prize money in 2023, while also being among the worst putters on the PGA Tour. He went from being ranked No. 162 in Strokes Gained: Putting with a blade in 2023 to 77th in 2024. As of Nov. 16, 2025, he was 21st and had won two majors in 2025.

A golf shop quoted in the article says they sell one blade to every ten mallets. So why?

The general response is that modern mallets are heavier, more stable and easier to align than traditional blade putters.

Two events are credited with kicking this trend along. First the launch of the 2-ball Odyssey putter in 2001. Versions of which are still in play today.



Then for the professionals Jason Day's astonishing putting season in 2016 when he became the first player to average over 1.0 strokes gained putting. His 1.13 strokes gained putting is still the best season on record. Day used a custom *TaylorMade Itsy Bitsy Spider Tour* putter(l) and inspired many other professionals to try this and similar models.



There have been many weird and wonderful putter designs over the years. Some have stood the test of time, and some have made their way to op shops and remainder bins.

High level putter technology ain't cheap with some models listed on the *House of Golf* website at near \$1,000 and some you have to request a quote for!



So, what's your preference (or poison) for holing those 2m putts and lagging the 10m putts inside half a metre?

Trivia Question

Since 2013 five Australians have led the PGA Tour in Strokes gained putting including Jason Day. See how many others you can name. One has led the stat twice in that time and it's not Day. See later for answers

The link to the Golf Digest story: <https://golfweek.usatoday.com/story/sports/golf/equipment/2025/11/11/are-blade-style-putters-dying-and-should-you-be-playing-a-mallet/87195430007/>

Cheltenham Golf Course

Bayside Council has renewed the Cheltenham Golf Club's lease on the Cheltenham Golf Course for 21 years. The decision is subject to Ministerial Approval as the site is Crown Land.

The lease renewal will maintain Cheltenham Golf Club's management of the site, where it has operated as a public golf club since 1930.

The lease has been awarded with the provision that the club will undertake works to rectify safety issues and revitalise the natural environment around the site.

Vale Brad McDiarmid

Brad joined Sandringham Golf Club in 2020 and was a regular face around the practice green in the mornings with a friendly greeting for all.

He started golf in his teens and lived an active life with global travel, 4WD holidays, motorbikes and all the good things in life.

Brad was married and had 3 daughters and was a Bayside resident for 30 years and at the young age of 65 still had a full life ahead.

Brad suffered a tragic accident at home. His passing is a reminder to be safe and enjoy life and always say hello with a smile.



25.08.1960 - 14.10.2025

SGC regain Southern Cross Cup

For only the third time since 2017 Sandringham Golf Club won the Southern Cross Cup in our annual battle with the Japanese Golf Association. The match was tight all the way. With two groups to come in the JGA lead by 1pt. Jay Ramsden and Craig Brenner put Sandy in front by 3pts in the second last group and Andy Moratis and Ollie Cunliffe extended the lead to 8 pts. The final score was SGC 376pts to the JGA 368pts – less than 1 point per player across the 12 players. Kate Caridakis was top scorer for Sandy with 38pts for the second year in a row whilst Tomonori Takei led the JGA with the best score of the day – 40pts.



This event has been running since 1967 and since records began in 1972, SGC has held the trophy 32 times and the JGA has had 20 wins. Part of the folklore around this event is that the original trophy was taken back to Japan by a JGA player and never seen again!



The teams gather in the café after the match(!!). SGC Captain Michael Kent receives the Cup from JGA Captain Yuji Ito (above). The last group gets ready to tee off (top)

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

Major Competition News

John Pittard Singles Match Play

Congratulations to Ben Akdag who won this year's Singles Match Play by defeating Matt Scott 2 and 1 in the final.

Ben received 10 shots from Matt and the match was tight all day - all square after the first nine. Matt then took the lead after the 12th hole (3rd hole of the course playing back to front) but Ben won 3 of the next 4 holes to go dormie 2 and despite Matt holing a 10m putt on the 17th Ben won the match with a 2-putt half.

The match was finished off in appropriate style with a beer and brisket burger at Bad Shepherd. Congrats to Ben and to Matt on making the final.

Right: Ben receives his Match Play medallion from Captain Michael Kent who is trying to remember what Round he went out in!



Olympic – Golden Geoff

Congratulations to Geoff Thornton who won this year's Olympic competition. After positioning himself beautifully in the first two rounds with a net 70 and 36pts Geoff dominated the field in the final round with a +7. Brett Ryan's +4 secured him an honorary silver.

Kate goes one better! VGL Champion of Champions 2025

Reigning Women's Club Champion Kate Caridakis represented Sandringham Golf Club in the recent VGL Champion of Champions event at Churchill Waverley (Endeavour Hills) Golf Course (Par 73).

Having finished runner up in 2024 by just one stroke on the final hole Kate promised herself that if she was close again, she wouldn't let the title slip.

And she kept that promise.

After a rough start on the front 9, Kate stayed patient and came home strong on the back 9 finishing with an 84 to this time win the Champion of Champions! As Kate said:

"After last year's heartbreak, it feels amazing to finally get my name on the trophy. 🍷🏆. What a day! What a feeling!"

Congratulations to Kate who becomes Sandy's first women winner of the Champion of Champions.*



* Note: SGC has only had a Women's Champion for a few years however a member of the Sandringham Golf Club Associates last won the Champions of Champions in 1955! Shout out to Mrs E Pengelly. The Associates Club was originally part of our Club but split into its own entity very soon after the Club was formed around 1937/38

Holes in One Part One

This year has been a bumper year for hole in ones in SGC Competitions with eight recorded so far.

Ace No 6 (for 2025) James Smith – 7th Hole 11/10/25

James was returning to golf after an 8-week hiatus (winter, skiing, travel) and the first 9 was very uninspiring.

As the days play was quite slow, James teed off on the 7th whilst two of his playing partners putted out on the 6th. (*Pace of Play Gold Stars all round!*). With 144m to the pin James struck his cleanest shot of the day with a 7 iron without using a tee. The ball sailed sweetly through the air slightly left of the middle of the green and started to roll on. Satisfied that his ball was on the green, James stopped watching and allowed his partners to tee off. However, as they approached the green, he could not see his ball and started to curse himself that the ball had rolled all the way through. (*Editors note: That never happens!*). Here's Jame's description of what happened next:



"I was looking for the ball out the back with no avail. Roger asked me how I hit the ball and I remarked that it was one of my better shots and I had seen it gently roll onto the green. He suggested to 'look in the hole'. I scoffed at such a remark thinking that this was the most unlikely of outcomes and I was more annoyed that I could now not see my ball in the grass anywhere. Ian walked past the hole and muttered "There's a Taylor Made in the hole". "I am playing Taylor Made!!" I remarked with some surprise and trepidation. "What number is it?". "Zero Ian said". "That's my ball!!" I said, now steamrolling my way to the pin. On inspection, it was indeed my ball and that made for my first hole in one."

Ace No 7 (for 2025) Pat Fitzgerald – 7th Hole 1/11/25

Another ace was scored on the 7th hole on 1 November. With the pin at about 150m Pat Fitzgerald flushed a six iron that sounded and looked very good.

Pat watched all the way as with one bounce, two bounces the ball went straight in the hole.

This is Pat's second hole in one having aced a hole at Sandhurst about 10 years ago.





Wednesday Whispers from the News' ace rolling reporter

- *Man with the Golden Ball* new member Paul "Bubba" Watson is set to launch on the 15th as a result of a birdie on the 14th, straight into the dam but was able to be retrieved using a gold detector.



- *Things are looking up in the golf ball garden on the 12th Fairway as two new shoots begin to sprout. These may be:*

- *Pittosporum 'Golf Ball', a dense, rounded shrub, and the Golf Ball Plant (Craspedia globosa), also known as Billy Buttons, which features spherical yellow flowers or more likely Apoxytitleist canhitinabush or Asleepias syrixonia. Special mention to Bob Okane who broke his divot repairer trying to harvest the crop before ripening.*



- *Wednesday players recently had the company of Southern FM Podcaster and comedian and SGC Club Champion Andy Moratis who was quite chuffed to be reminded of the name of the swagman in Waltzing Matilda which was Andy*

*"Andy sang as he watched and waited till his billy boiled
Andy sang as he shoved that jumbuck in his tucker bag."*

Strong SGC Showing in VGL Mixed Foursomes – a report from our regular VGL correspondent

Last year, Craig Brenner and I won the Mixed Foursomes shield, so naturally we entered again this year ready to defend our title. We arrived in good spirits... well, I did — Craig was already rumbling about something, weather before we even teed off. It was great seeing so many fellow Sandringham members out there too — awesome Sandy representation! 💜🏌️

But the golf gods weren't on our side this time. It was a tough day, and despite fighting hard, we finished one stroke short of the playoff, making us the runners up — or as I like to say... "first of the losers." 😅 But that's golf — humbling, hilarious, frustrating but always bringing you back for another crack.

Kate Caridakis

Other SGC teams also did well with Sarah Adam-Gedge and Michael Kent finishing 3rd and Ruth Branagh and Matt Scott 11th.

Congratulations to New Life Member Christine Nicholson

At the AGM Christine Nicholson was awarded with life membership of the Club. Christine joined the Club in 2010 and has been an active and dedicated member for the past 15 years.

Since joining the Committee in 2017, she has served as Treasurer. Throughout this time, she has given countless hours of selfless volunteer service, demonstrating exceptional commitment and reliability in every aspect of her work for the club.

She has been a major force and instrumental in the success of the club's charity days and has been encouraging and supportive of lady members to participate and enjoy their golf. Her contributions extend beyond the course, including her entertaining Fairway News articles such as *Surviving Lockdown* and *How to Avoid Becoming an Ancient Golfer*.

Christine also played a key role as part of the team that developed the new hole index for the Sandy-based clubs during the course redevelopment.

In recognition of her outstanding service, generosity of time, and invaluable contribution to both the club and the ladies' golf community, the Committee is proud to award Life Membership of the Club to Christine Nicholson.



Christine is congratulated by 4 other Life Members at the AGM. (l to r) Geoff Thornton, Christine, Alan Jameson, John McCarthy, Ian Blackie

Farewell to Paul

The Club's longest continuous member Paul Rich has decided not to renew his membership for 2026. Amazingly Paul brought up 40 years of membership in 2025 having joined in 1985.

Known for one of the shortest and quickest backswings ever seen Paul was B Grade Club Champion in 2011, multiple time winner of the Pairs Match Play, the LG McDonald Trophy and more (historical records are not complete) and served on the Club Committee.

Paul has indicated two reasons for his decision not to renew. Firstly, what he feels to be the excessive cost of a round at Sandy but mainly that his passion for the game decreased since the change to the new course. He felt that the layout of the course was not a fair challenge for a public golf course and that it had taken away his enjoyment of playing the game.

Farewell Paul and thanks for your contribution to the Club.



Professional golf (sports) - dominance or parity? Which do we prefer?

No this is not some new personality test for a dating app. However, be warned this story starts as a golf story and then wanders off on its own for a bit.

Until mid-October this year on the LPGA circuit there had been **26 different winners in the 25 events played in 2025** (2 winners of the pairs tournament). Remarkably Nelly Korda who won seven times in 2024 was not one of those winners. The streak was broken when Jeeno Thitikul won her second tournament for the year in Shanghai on 12 October.

This run prompted a debate to develop over whether professional sports are more interesting and better off when there is a dominant force that fans can either love or hate and whether spreading the wins around is detrimental to the growth of the sport.

Exhibit A for this argument is of course the Tiger Woods effect. Tiger's dominance of men's golf from 1997 had a profound impact on the perception of the sport and drove the economy of golf to new heights. Between 1997 and 2010 he won 13 of golf's major championships (including 7 of the 11 contested from August 1999 to June 2002). Tiger broadened the appeal of golf and much of the



money (sponsors, TV, endorsements) in the game today can be attributed to his career.

It wasn't just due to his dominance on the course, but evidence seems to suggest a

dominant force is good for the sport as a whole right? Greg Norman did something similar for Australian golf at the height of his career.



Exhibit B could be men's tennis where the dominant triumvirate of Federer, Nadal and Djokovic drove interest, sponsorship and TV coverage for well over a decade.

The LPGA may well suffer in the interest and money side of things from the lack of a dominant superstar (especially an American superstar) but it is a much more diverse league with many of the top players coming from across the globe – South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Australia etc. Korda is the only American ranked in the world top ten as at early November and she is 10th. So maybe the whole “we need a dominant player” really means “we need a dominant American player.” And being hard-nosed about it that is what is likely to grab the attention of American sponsors and TV companies. In any case you can't really manufacture a dominant player but on the other hand you can sure set up a system to ensure there isn't one.

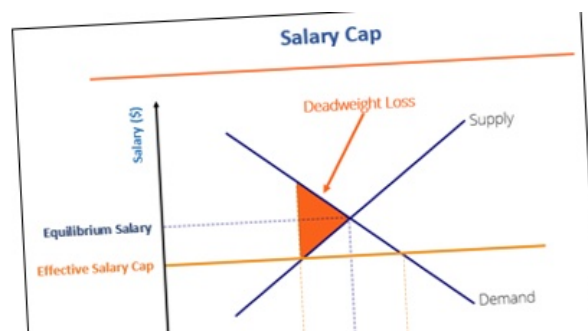


Of course, in amateur golf such as is played at our humble club the whole system is designed to level the playing field – handicaps, course ratings, slope all designed to give players of different skill levels a chance to be on the podium. But in team sports it is often a whole different kettle of fish.

Now the digression - dominance or parity in team sports?

Many leagues actively seek to spread the winners around with mixed success. The National Football League in the USA was ridiculed in the 1980s as being so focused on parity that it was said they wanted every team to finish 8 and 8 in a 16-round season.

The most common levers that competitions use are salary caps, player drafts, player free agency, promotion and relegation and a phone book of regulations - predominantly financial.



By way of illustration here are some terms that come from a discussion of salary caps across several leagues:

- Luxury tax, second apron, Bird rights, mid-level exception, financial fair play regulations, TPP, hard and soft caps, Gini coefficient

What do you make of that??? Fair warning - there will be a quiz later. (Just kidding!)

So, the question is do they work and have they been good or bad for the sport??



Extreme examples can be found for either case. In Scottish Premiership football and its forerunners there is no salary cap and Celtic and Rangers spend nearly 3 times the amount other clubs in the League in wages. And the result is? *The last time a Club other than Celtic or Rangers won the title was 1985 – a full forty years.* (although watch this space in the current season!)

On the other hand, Major League Baseball also has no salary cap, but the recently concluded season won by the Los Angeles Dodgers was the first time a team has won two in row since the New York Yankees in 1999/2000 – despite that it must be said that MLB is generally considered to be dominated by big spending franchises.



In the AFL whilst there have been bursts of dominance since 2000 (Brisbane and Hawthorn's 3 peats, Richmond's 3 in 4 years) 11 of the 18 teams have won the flag and only 3 teams have not played in a Grand Final in that time – Carlton(!), North and Gold Coast. Many long-standing title droughts have also been broken – Swans, Cats, Dogs, Tigers, Demons. So good right?

Are dominant teams or individuals good for the "sport" or are they just good for the business of the sport? Ask the likes of St Mirren and Kilmarnock in the Scottish Premiership and they might say tighten the leash on the "Old Firm" and give us a chance.



On the other hand, in Major League Baseball some small market teams are content to turn a profit and not try to challenge the big spenders e.g. the Miami Marlins who received \$317m in revenue and only spent \$86m on payroll – nice business! (For reference the Dodgers revenue was \$752m with over 80% of that spent on salaries!)

Team sports have the push and pull of the fans who want continual success, the club management/ ownership who want to make sure their Club is viable/profitable and the League who want to grow the revenue and profitability for the whole competition.

Decisions about whether parity is the norm or whether a free spending dominance is the rule are specific to the sport and the league and the way the end result is perceived is different if you are a fan or an investor or a league official.

Back to the LPGA

The LPGA now has a dominant player. Jeeno Thitikul won for the second time in 2025 in October and then dominated the field in the Tour Championship in mid-November. Her score of 26 under was a record for the event, she won by 4 shots, her scoring average for the year was also a record – 68.681 strokes per round and she collected over \$US7.7m for the year.

Will it make a difference? Will more people watch the LPGA because we have a clear dominant player? Who knows?



Holes in One Part Two: Ace No 8 (for 2025) Peter Hayden – 12th Hole 25/11/2

Well, here's a story. In early November eighty-three-year-old Peter Hayden suffered a heart attack on the 17th hole at Sandy and was taken by ambulance to hospital. Two weeks later Peter stood on the 12th tee with 5 wood in his hand. Peter and his group watched his shot fly high and land on the front of the green and roll up to and drop in the hole.

Needless to say Peter was pretty "stoked" as not only is he almost back to his normal self but it was his first hole in one!

Congratulations Peter.

There have now been 21 aces in SGC Competitions on the new course. These three bring the total to 4 on the 7th hole and two on the 12th. There have still been no holes in one on the 14th!



Trivia Question Answer

The five Australians who have led the *Strokes Gained Putting* stat on the PGA Tour since 2013 are:

2021-22	Lucas Herbert	0.853	2017-18	Greg Chalmers	0.790
2015-16	Jason Day	1.130	2014-15	Aaron Baddeley	0.722
2013	Greg Chalmers	0.857			

Note: In 2017-18 Jason Day was second and in 2013 -14 Greg Chalmers was second and Aaron Baddeley was third.

2025 Trophy Winners

Club Champions (gross score stroke)

Open: J C Goudie	Andy Moratis	71,72,73 (216)
Memorial Trophy		
B Grade	Russell Jones	83,82,84 (249)
C Grade	Tony Morgan	90,95,96 (281)
Women's Open	Kate Caridakis	74,81,81 (236)

Presidents Trophy (net scores stroke)

Andy Moratis	61, 62, 63 (216)
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The First Lady (net scores stroke)

Kate Caridakis	62, 69,69 (200)
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Captain's Trophy (Stableford)

Mark Johnston	30, 31, 38 (99)
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Ian Fraser Memorial Trophy (Pairs Match Play)

Ruth Branagh/ John White	1 up
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John Pittard Trophy (Singles Match Play)

Ben Akdag	2 and 1
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John French Memorial Trophy (best 16 rounds Stableford Jan to Aug)

Matthew Farrelly	570 pts Average 35.6pts
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JJ Meade Memorial Trophy (4BBB)

Sarah Adam-Gedge, Linda Best	43pts cb
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Ray Fraser Memorial Trophy (2- Ball Ambrose)

Craig Brenner & Cris Payne	56.5 net
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LG McDonald Memorial Trophy

Chris Labour

Les Stainsby Memorial Trophy

Danny Morgan	39pts
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Perpetual Founders Trophy (Eclectic Stableford)

Thomas Sneyd	64pts
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Olympic

Geoff Thornton	70, 36pts, +7
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VGL Medals (Stroke)

1/2/25	Andy Moratis (10)	61
1/3/25	Adam Canwell (17)	60
5/4/25	Scott Reed (19)	55
3/5/25	Ross Gordon (25)	59
31/5/25	Gavin Kinnaird (30)	58
5/7/25	Adam Canwell (14)	60
2/8/25	Colin Hunter (16)	61
6/9/25	Peter Bowen (19)	59

Star Medallist

11/10/24	Peter Bowen	65
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Club Par Medal (Mixed) Winners

15/3/25	Cris Payne	+ 8
17/5/25	Dara Danh	+ 7
19/7/25	John McCarthy	+ 4
13/9/25	Christine Nicholson	+ 5

Club Stroke Medal (Women)

1/2/25	Dale Gilkes (22)	60
1/3/25	not enough entries	n/a
5/4/25	no entries	n/a
3/5/25	Sarah Adam-Gedge (16)	66
31/5/25	Anna Puchalski (20)	61
5/7/25	Glenda McDade (23)	70
2/8/25	Lynda Douth (34)	64
6/9/25	Christine Nicholson (26)	72

Star Medallist (Women)

11/10/25	Lynda Douth	66
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Pennant Players of the Year

Scratch	Craig Brenner
Handicap	Oliver Cunliffe
Seniors	Paul Hurkmans
Mixed	Emma Regos

AGM Highlights



The Committee nervously waits to judge the temper of the meeting.



Club Champion, President's Trophy and VGL Medal winner Andy Moratis receives his gongs.



Peter Bowen won a VGL Medal and was Star Medallist for 2025



Lynda Douth won a Club Stroke Medal (Women) and was Women Star Medallist



Craig Brenner won Scratch Pennant Player of the Year.



The crowd breathlessly awaits the next award winner!



Ollie Cunliffe, Handicap Pennant Player of the year.



Emma Regos, Mixed Pennant Player of the year.



Mark Johnston won the Captain's Trophy



Thomas Sneyd won the Perpetual Founders Trophy (Eclectic)



Chris Labour won the L G McDonald Memorial Trophy

2025! What a year at Sandy and at the News

A Seniors Pennant win, new course records, 8 aces in SGC comps, success in VGL events, subsidised lessons and golf games away from Sandy.

It's been a big year for the Club and for Fairway News.

This year has seen more member contributions to the News than any other year. Thanks to Kate Caridakis, Fiona Reynolds, Liz Tanzimat, Roly Spencer, Julie Coupe, Geoff Maynard, Paul Hurkmans, George Bakrnchev, Christine Nicholson and our President and Captain for their contributions this year and to Geoff Thornton for his eagle-eyed proof reading!

Hope you enjoyed the newsletter this year and all the best for holiday season.

John McCarthy, Editor